



Parent and family involvement

Policy statement

We know that children benefit most from early year's education and care when families and settings work together in partnership.

Our aim is to support families as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and in the full life of the setting. We also aim to support families in their own continuing education and personal development.

Some parents/ carers are less well represented in early year's settings; these include fathers, parents who live apart from their children, but who still play a part in their lives, as well as working parents. In carrying out the following procedures, we will ensure that all members of the family are included.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean the mother or father of a child or young person, or to any foster carer, relative or friend who has been given responsibility for looking after or bringing up a child, for example through a supervision order.

When we refer to 'families' we are referring to people who are connected to the child by biology, adoption, marriage or strong emotional bonds.

The Children Act (1989) defines *parental responsibility* as '*all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property*'.

Procedures

- Families are made to feel welcome in our setting; they are greeted appropriately.
- We work to ensure all families are included - that may mean we have different strategies for involving fathers, or parents who work or live apart from their children.
- We make every effort to accommodate parents who have a disability or impairment.
- We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.

- We ensure ongoing dialogue with families to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies, through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- Information about a child and his or her family is kept confidential within our setting. The exception to this is where there is cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, or where there are concerns regarding child's development that need to be shared with another agency. We will seek parental permission unless there are reasons not to in order to protect the safety of the child. (See Information Sharing Policy for more information)
- We seek specific parental consent to administer medication, take a child for emergency treatment, take a child on an outing and take photographs for the purposes of record keeping.
- The expectations that we make of parents are made clear at the point of registration.
- We seek parents'/ families views regarding changes in the delivery of our service.
- Parents are actively encouraged to participate in decision making processes according to the structure in place within our setting.
- We encourage parents and families to become involved in the social and cultural life of the setting and actively contribute to it.
- We provide sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information with staff and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.
- Where applicable, our key persons work with parents and families to carry out an agreed plan to support special educational needs.
- Where applicable, our key persons work with parents and families to carry out any agreed tasks where a Protection Plan is in place for a child.
- We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally – and ensure parents have access to their children's learning journal through EYlog.
- We provide opportunities for parents and families to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- We support families to be involved in activities that promote their own learning and well-being.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional

language; making every effort to provide an interpreter for parents who speak a language other than English and to provide translated written materials.

- We welcome the contributions of parents and families, in whatever form these may take.
- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and we check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- We provide opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum offered in the setting and about young children's learning, in the setting and at home. There are opportunities for parents to take active roles in supporting their child's learning in the setting.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting.
- We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress.

This policy was reviewed October 2024

This policy is to be reviewed annually unless legislation requires before.