

Parents as Partners Policy

"Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support"
(EYFS 2021)

Introduction

Parents are a child's first and most enduring educators. Supporting parents' engagement in their children's learning is an effective way to make a difference to children's lives and outcomes. The aims of this policy are to support and enhance the development of the child and to respect, understand and value the contributions of the Parent to the child's learning.

It is important to remember that parents know the child best and to respect the parent's wishes even though they might differ from that of the practitioner. Practitioners should be willing to listen to the parent and show confidence in them to promote their parental skills.

Before and During the Child's Entry into the Nursery

Before the child starts at the setting the parents will be invited to bring them in for a settling in period. During this session the parents can ask questions of the staff team and be given the Nursery Prospectus & other parent information if not already received, which contains useful information relating to the setting. It is important to provide the parents with sufficient information about the setting before the child starts.

At the settling in visits the child's key person will talk to the parent about the child and complete an 'All about me' and ascertain further information regarding any special needs, health or other issues relating to the child through the About My Child permissions form. Practitioners should work with the Parents to build up an holistic picture of the child by completing a Unique Child Plan (EYFSCP1.13) in the first few weeks of starting at the setting. (see Key Person Policy CC2.4 & Key Person Procedure CC2.5)

Drop Off and Pick Up of Children

On the child's arrival at the setting it is important to greet the parents and the child with a friendly smile. Exchange meaningful information that either the parent or the practitioner has about the child's day. Practitioners should, where possible, involve the parents in any changes of routine that may have occurred regarding the child. The Communication Sheet for Under 3's (CC2.8) should be completed each morning.

Routines and Activities

Practitioners should value the home routines of the child as much as possible within the boundaries of the settings Health and Safety constraints and while guiding the child into the general routine of the setting. The Unique Plan (EYFSCP1.3) can assess and identify how we may do this over time.

Practitioners should keep the parents informed of any change in the child's routine at every opportunity.

The parents should be encouraged by the staff team to become involved with setting & outside activities. For example:

- Charity fundraising ideas
- Setting Trips
- Summer/ Christmas Bazaar
- Open Days & Evenings
- To upload photos onto online journal to share photos from home

Staffing

Practitioners are usually room based, in order to ensure consistency for children and to allow the key person procedures to be effective. Practitioners work to ratios of 1:3 for the under 2's, 1:4 for the 2-3yr olds and 1:8 for all children over 3 and under 8. Ratios can be relaxed once children are over 8, providing the care for under 8's is not unduly affected. We invite parents to discuss our staff deployment with us and contribute to the decisions we make regarding our staffing and their child's key person.

Information Transfer

The parents should be able to gain access to information regarding activities and events through discussion with the team, regular newsletters, posters, planning boards and the Parents Notice Boards. The Parents Notice Board will be updated on a regular basis.

The parents should be supplied with a Daily Diary for 0-2yrs children. A Daily Room Log for 2-4+yrs is available for them to look at, at the end of each day. These provide the parents with information on the child's daily routine. The Daily Diary needs to be brought with the child to each session the child attends. Practitioners will also talk to the parents about their child's day. In the Club verbal discussion will take place between the practitioners and the parent on how their child has been.

It is important to make sure that relevant practitioners are available to discuss any issue or problem that may arise. Frequent contact with the Parents by both phone, Zoom and meeting is recommended. Practitioners should provide opportunities for the Parents to discuss the child's progress. This can be achieved through regular Parent's evenings and providing written reports giving details of the child's progress.

It is important for practitioners to remember to give positive information as well as any difficulties or problems the child may have had.

Where appropriate practitioners should gently guide the parents using advice based on their own experiences and training. Also where appropriate they should give support and help to the parents and provide information on outside organisation sources of information or put them in touch with other Parents allowing them to support each other.

Parent Engagement

We aim to involve parent's views as much as possible within our settings and have an 'open-door' policy for parents. Additionally we offer 2 Parent's Evenings each year to specifically discuss children's progress and to allow families to meet with each other socially. A Parent's Forum or Parent Representatives offer us feedback and develop ideas and is available to parents at our settings. Annual questionnaires also allow us to received feedback for those that cannot make meetings.

The E-learning Journal system also allows parents to upload photos and enter information about their child. Practitioners should use these to link into the child's learning and development as this further supports good outcomes for the children.

Two year check

When a child is aged between 24 and 36 months, practitioners must agree a date to conduct the Two year check with parents to review progress in the prime areas of learning and development, and supply parents or carers with a short written summary of their child's development. The development and progress check at 24 -36 months must identify any areas where the child's progress is less than expected, and should shape a targeted plan to support that child's future learning and development in the setting. This should be available to inform the Healthy Child Programme undertaken by health visitors.

If there are significant emerging concerns or additional support is required in the area of special needs then the parent should be introduced to the SENCO for further information and guidance as laid out in the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy (CC3.2). Practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carers and other professionals as appropriate.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS and going to school

In the Final year the EYFS profile must be completed for each child. This profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually.

Review date – September 2023