

Parental Partnership Policy

To be reviewed Bi-Annually.

Policy Agreed September 2018. To be reviewed September 2020



Aim

Across all services in the school/centre, staff work in partnership with parents¹.

Objectives

That parents are:

- Able to access flexible, responsive services that work with children and their family
- Able to meet and take a break (e.g. at the cafe) within premises that are purpose built, welcoming and comfortable for adults and children
- Able to undertake adult learning opportunities
- Actively involved in their children's learning and care
- Involved in genuine discussion with those who provide services. This means that differences of viewpoint are accepted sensitively and that confidentiality is respected
- Consulted in identifying priorities in provision and how services for children and their families will be delivered
- Involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's/centre's development
- Enabled to make informed choices about what services they want to use and when they might use them
- Signposted to other local services where provision is not available on site

Within these objectives staff recognise that parents will access services in different ways, at different times for a range of purposes.

1. The school/centre uses the term 'parents' to mean all children's primary caregivers who may be accessing any of the services on site.

Principles

There are some strong principles that underpin how the school/centre works with parents. These principles have been informed by the diverse past experiences of staff across early childhood services and by their ongoing learning within an integrated team. The principles are:

- Recognising that parents/carers are children's first and enduring educators;
- Working alongside and with parents in listening to their views and building relationships based upon trust, respect and equity;
- Focusing upon shared learning and helping parents/carers to reach their full potential;
- Developing services that build upon the skills and strengths of parents/carers and children and helps individuals to have higher self-esteem;
- Promoting learning as a lifelong experience;
- Valuing one another's strengths.

These principles inform the work at the school/centre and staff recognise that over time they may be adapted but their fundamental focus remains. How they are translated into practice is what the school/centre is constantly striving to improve. Staff recognise that there are some parents/carers who find some services hard to reach and are reluctant to engage. Where this is the case, staff will conduct outreach support and services at the family home. Parental engagement is monitored regularly through ESTART.

Principle into practice

Some of the activities that the centre uses to put the principles into practice are:

- Staggered starts for children
- Staff greeting families daily at the school/centre entrance and in rooms
- Some flexibility of attendance patterns and hours
- Family Worker system and regular verbal information
- Sharing of observation profile and other nursery records and parents making a contribution to these

- Group meetings to learn about children’s learning
- Reviews of children’s progress and development at the centre
- With parents agreement and involvement, multi-agency meetings to discuss specific health and education needs
- Specialist 1:1 support and advice for parents from other professionals e.g. health visitor, Children Centre Core Team.
- Support with appointments and visits to other early years services
- Community consultation about major developments
- Adult education courses
- Parenting courses
- Adult family members on Governing Body
- Adult family members working on a voluntary basis in the nursery/Children’s Centre
- Open sessions where all families are invited to stay in nursery for some of a session e.g. Fun Fridays/Terrific Tuesdays
- Regular newsletters and leaflets
- Information boards/Plasma Screens
- Home Visits/Open Days
- Starting forms and introductory visits to the nursery
- Specialist targeted support at home where some families find services difficult to engage with.

This is not an exhaustive list but it is one that the school/centre is continually trying to expand and refine.

Monitoring and evaluation

Each day family workers link with families and this is developed through regular meetings of staff teams. Family workers and the Early Intervention Team link with a wide range of other professionals in support of individual children and parents – almost on a daily basis where appropriate. Practice is monitored through observations of staff practice and developed through staff training. In the regular supervisions and performance management/KITs (Keeping in Touch) of an individual staff member their work with parents is reviewed with a member of the Leadership Team. Practice is also evaluated with staff for the School/Centre Development Plan each year.

Policy Review

This policy is non-statutory. This policy will be reviewed bi-annually and is due to be reviewed September 2020.