**Partnership policy**

**Parental involvement**

**Policy statement**

We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and settings work together in partnership.

**Aim**

Our aim is to support parents 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 parents in their own continuing education and personal development.

Some parents are less well represented in early years 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 all parents are included.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean both mothers and fathers; these include both natural or birth parents as well as step-parents and parents who do not live with their children, but have contact with them and play a part in their lives. 'Parents' also includes same sex parents as well as foster parents.

'Parental responsibility' is a// the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property.

**Procedures**

In order to fulfil these aims we:

* have a means to ensure all parents are included -they may mean we have different strategies for involving fathers or parents who work or live apart from their children.
* consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
* are committed to ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families;
* 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;
* encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting;
* inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress;
* involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children -either formally or informally -and ensure parents have access to their children's written developmental records;
* provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting; .
* inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training;
* consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone;
* 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;
* hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all;
* welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take;
* inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure; and
* 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.

In compliance with the Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is in place:

• Admissions policy;

• Complaints procedure;

• Record of complaints;

• Developmental records of children.

**Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

• Summary Complaints Record (2006)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of………………………………………………………………………………………………

Held on: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….....

Date to be reviewed:…………………………………………………………………………………………...................................

Signed on behalf of the management committee………………………………………………………………………………..

Name of signatory:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Role of signatory (e.g chair/secretary):………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**Partnership**

**Working in partnership with other agencies**

**Policy statement**

We work in partnership with local and national agencies to promote the well-being of all children.

**Procedures**

* We work in partnership or in tandem with, local and national agencies to promote the well-being of children.
* Procedures are in place for sharing of information about children and families with other agencies. These are set out in the Information Sharing protocol, Safeguarding Children procedures and the Special Educational Needs procedures.
* Information shared by other agencies with us is regarded as third party information. This is also kept in confidence and not shared without consent from that agency.
* When working in partnership with staff from other agencies, we make those individuals welcome in the setting and their professional roles are respected.
* We follow the protocols for working with agencies, for example on child protection.
* Staff from other agencies do not have unsupervised access to the child they are visiting in the setting and do not have access to any other child(ren) during their visit.
* Our staff do not casually share information or seek informal advice about any named child/family.
* When necessary we consult with local and national agencies who offer a wealth of advice and information that help us develop understanding of issues facing us and who can provide support and information for parents. For example, ethnic/cultural organisations, drug/alcohol agencies, welfare rights advisors or organisations promoting childcare and education, or adult education.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of………………………………………………………………………………………………

Held on: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….....

Date to be reviewed:…………………………………………………………………………………………...................................

Signed on behalf of the management committee………………………………………………………………………………..

Name of signatory:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Role of signatory (e.g chair/secretary):………………………………………………………………………………………………..