

1.3 Parents as Partners

1.3.1 Parents as Partners Policy

The Pre-school aims to support and enhance the development of the children, and to respect, understand and value the contribution parents make towards their child's learning. We also aim to provide support, guidance and encouragement to parents as educators. To do this we:-

- Provide parents with information about the Pre-school before their child starts
- Work with parents in building up a profile of the child's development and needs when the child starts at the Pre-school
- Provide opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress
- Provide guidance, advice and resources to support home learning
- Ensure the child's file detailing their progress is readily available to their parents.

Procedures

Parents will have access to information regarding the curriculum activities and events through discussions with staff, regular newsletters and written information placed on the parents' notice board.

The parents' notice board will be updated on a regular basis. A description of each week's activities will be placed on the board. The Pre-school handbook will be updated when necessary to reflect any changes in curriculum or policies. Newsletters will be sent out as appropriate.

Staff will complete assessments on each child which will be available for parents to see and can be discussed as necessary. Such reports will be used to provide advice for parents to support learning at home.

1.3.2 Admissions and Settling In Policy

We want children and families to enjoy being involved with the Pre-school. Parents need to feel confident in the ability of our staff and the setting to look after and encourage their children to benefit from their time with us. Children need to feel confident and cared for and need to know that the

staff will help them to play with the activities offered. Upset children cannot relax and enjoy the activities offered.

There are 26 registered places, which is the maximum number allowed by the guidelines set by OFSTED. These break down as 10 places for 2-3 year olds and 16 places for 3-5 year olds. There can be more than 16 3-5 year olds but the 2-3 year old numbers must be altered accordingly.

The youngest age accepted to start at the Pre-school is 2 years 3 months. Children are accepted into the Pre-school by arrangement following them reaching the entry age.

A waiting list may have to be utilised, in which case the criteria for entry into the Pre-school is:

- Children from the villages of Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe
- Length of time the child has been on the waiting list
- Siblings already attending the group
- Children outside the Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe villages

A maximum of 2 mornings will be offered to the very young children, or those starting at a pre-school establishment for the first time. After a settling in period of half a term these children will then be offered further mornings if required and if spaces are available.

Children who have attended a pre-school establishment previously will be offered a maximum of 3 mornings if spaces are available.

Before a child starts at the pre-school parents will be invited to bring their child to a session during which the children can play and parents can ask questions of staff. Parents will be given access to a handbook which contains details of the Admissions Policy and the Curriculum as well as other useful information relating to the Pre-school.

During the settling in period when a child starts Pre-school a member of staff will talk to the parent about their child, and the parent may stay with their child for as long as they feel necessary in consultation with the staff. The duration of the settling in period will be flexible, taking into account

individual needs, and will continue until the child feels happy and secure in the Pre-school setting. Any special needs, health problems etc will be noted at this time.

It is *preferred* that comfort items such as dummies, blankets etc. Are not brought to Pre-School. However, as each child's individual needs will be taken in to consideration, it will be discussed with the parent/carer during the settling in period. As each child brings an item for the "interest table" each day it has been found that this often acts as the child's comfort item.

1.3.3 Equal Opportunities Policy

To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.

To ensure that all the children feel secure, included and valued.

To establish feelings of respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers.

To treat each child as an individual and provide equality of opportunity within the Pre-school.

To encourage self-confidence and a positive approach to learning in all children.

Procedures

When a child starts at the Pre-school a member of staff will talk to the child and the parents about the child's ethnic, religious and cultural heritage and experiences at home. Staff will use this information when planning and carrying out activities within the Pre-school to ensure that familiar experiences are used as starting points for learning.

When planning, setting up and altering the rooms, outdoor areas, displays and equipment within the Pre-school, the staff will aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning. This will include:

- Keeping the environment free from any discriminatory practice or stereotypical images
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities
- Using displays, resources and equipment that reflect the community in which the children live as well as the wider world.

The curriculum will include activities to encourage children to respect their own cultural backgrounds and beliefs and those of other people. These will include:

- Activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic and cultural festivals
- Visits to different places of worship and cultural centres
- Telling stories, listening to music and looking at pictures and videos from a range of cultures and religions
- Role play activities that reflect a variety of cultures
- Discussions with and between the children about the similarities and differences in their experiences and the reasons for those similarities and differences.

The staff will ensure that all children are given support to participate in activities, experiences, visits and discussions and to ensure that all children are listened to carefully and with respect.

The staff will carefully consider the need for equality of opportunity when planning activities and experiences. When necessary they will modify activities or provide additional equipment or materials to ensure children are not excluded.

If parents do not wish their child to take part in any multi-cultural festival please inform the staff.

1.3.4 Special Needs Policy

To identify and plan for each child's individual learning requirements and to provide appropriate additional support for children with special educational needs in order to allow them to make the best possible progress.

To promote an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance and respect for achievements in which all children can thrive; and to develop sensitivity to individual needs and a climate of warmth and support in which self-confidence and self-esteem can grow.

To identify any particular learning needs in any of the areas of learning and to develop an effective strategy to meet these needs.

To allow children with special educational needs to fully participate in all the activities of the Pre-school by providing additional support, adapting activities and environments and by using specialist equipment as appropriate.

To work together with staff from other agencies where appropriate (e.g. Speech therapists) to provide the best learning opportunities for each individual child.

To inform parents of the needs and progress of their child and to work in partnership with them.

Procedures

When a child starts at the Pre-school a member of staff will talk to the parent about their child, and will use this information to complete a profile sheet. Any existing special educational needs, disabilities or health problems will be noted at this time.

The Pre-school staff will regularly monitor each child's progress and record sheets for each of the six areas of learning will be regularly updated to record each child's development and achievements. This ongoing assessment and recording will be used to aid the early identification of any special educational needs.

If the Pre-school staff believe that a child has special educational needs the following action will be taken:

- The Pre-school Leader will gather information about the child and make an initial assessment.
- The Pre-school will consult with the child's parents explaining that there

is some cause for concern, ascertaining the parents' views and giving them ideas of how they can help at home.

- The Pre-school staff will provide special help, using different resources and methods to better meet the needs of the child. Notes will be kept to explain what has been tried and progress will be reviewed regularly.

If the staff believe more specialist assessment and support would benefit the child, they will consult with the parents and with their approval contact appropriate outside educational and/or health agencies to ask for their support.

When a child with special educational needs moves from the Pre-school to another foundation stage setting (eg. Reception Class) the Pre-school, with parental permission, will ensure that copies of all reports and other paperwork are passed to the new setting to ensure that they are fully aware of the child's needs, and of the support that has been provided to date.

We have regard to the code of practice for SENCO. Our SENCO is Leader Glennis Holmes.

1.3.5 Behaviour Management Policy

We do not administer physical punishment or punishment which causes pain or humiliation to a child. We recognize the importance of the adults' behaviour as a role model for the children and will not allow bullying in the form of physical or verbal abuse towards anyone.

We use positive discipline to set limits and manage behaviour.

Procedures

Leaders and helpers are consistent in their approach to good behaviour, which is always encouraged and praised.

There are well defined guidelines within the Pre-school as to acceptable behaviour. There is no kicking, spitting, biting or bullying allowed. Excessive noise, running, or disruptive behaviour are discouraged during a Pre-school session.

A quiet approach is taken to the correction of all children, and away from the main group. In cases of continued unacceptable behaviour the Leaders will discuss the matter with the parent/carer.

Any individual problems will be sorted out with staff and parents/carers and dealt with in the appropriate way. The Pre-school uses a system of home/Pre-school book if necessary. Staff record positive and negative behaviour. The book is taken home at the end of the sessions and comments are written in at home. This has proved to be very successful in the past.

Any inappropriate behaviour is recorded and the Pre-School will ask the child's parents to sign the behaviour management book.

1.3.6 Healthy Eating Policy

We recognise the importance of establishing healthy eating habits within our Pre-school.

We aim to reduce the intake of food and drink containing sugar and to encourage the children to eat healthily in Pre-school and establish good eating habits for the future.

Drinking Water will be available for children at all times during the session.

Children will be encouraged to play outside every day, weather permitting, as sunshine helps their bodies to make vitamin D.

Snacks and lunch time

- All children wash their hands before sitting down to snacks or lunch.
- Tables are wiped down with anti bacterial agent before snack or lunch begins.
- At snack times children are offered a portion of fruit and a sweet or savoury biscuit.
- All fruit offered at snack time will be washed if not peeled, and cherry tomatoes and grapes will be cut in half to avoid choking.
- Milk or water is offered at snack time. Any other drinks will be brought from home in a named container (not fizzy drinks)
- Adults model basic manners. Children will be encouraged to develop

- good eating skills and table manners. Children are expected to say please and thank you.
- A list of any medical conditions or dietary requirements is kept in the register, and all staff are made aware.

Note

Fruit brought from home in lunch boxes will not be chopped or prepared in any way.

1.3.7 Collection of Children Procedures

No child is allowed to leave the Hall until an adult authorised to collect them has arrived. The children wait in the Hall until their name is called by the Leader. No child is released to a stranger, unless a consent form/note has previously been signed by the parent/carer.

1.3.8 Lost or Uncollected Children Policy

In the event of a child having not been collected, all contact numbers held by the Pre-school will be tried. If no immediate contact can be made the child will be taken to the Leader's home, with another member of staff present. A note to this effect will be left visible at the hall in case the parent/carer does then arrive. If after 3 hours still no contact has been made the local authority duty social worker may have to be contacted, and they will decide if and when the Police need to be notified.

In the event of a child going missing from the Pre-school the Police will be contacted IMMEDIATELY. The Leader will then contact the parents. A note of all the circumstances surrounding the disappearance will be made in order to help the police as much as possible with their investigations.

1.3.9 Complaints Procedure

Anyone who has a concern about the Pre-school and the services it provides or about any members of the staff should feel free to discuss the matter with either the Pre-school Leader or the Chairperson of the Committee (or indeed any other member of the Committee). If, after a response has been given the person still feels uneasy, he/she should put their concerns in writing and a meeting with the Leader and the Chairperson will be arranged.

(within 2 weeks). Others may be invited to attend any such meetings and minutes of the meeting will be kept. Complainants should be notified of the outcome within 28 days.

If an agreement can still not be reached, an outside mediator such as the Early Years Advisor may be called in to offer advice. All discussions will be kept confidential.

It is hoped that all complaints will be made constructively and action will be prompt and to the satisfaction of all parties.

The Pre-School is regulated by Ofsted who can be contacted at

Ofsted
Field House
Station Approach
Harlow
Essex
CM20 2FS

1.3.10 Rota Duty Policy

Parents/carers are welcome to help at Pre-School sessions. This allows the parent/carer to be regularly involved and also gives a chance to get an insight into the facilities available and how they are managed. If a parent/carer does not wish, or is unable to help during sessions they may like to discuss other ways in which they could help.

We have a washing up rota, and ask that parents take their turn washing up at the end of the session.

All visitors to Pre-School (for any reason) must sign the visitors book and record their time of entry and time of leaving.

Parents/carers when acting as parent helper are not permitted to accompany any child other than their own to the toilets or to change another child's nappy unless they have been police checked.

1.3.11 Committee Membership

The Pre-School Committee is responsible for running the Pre-School and meets once a month or as necessary.

Volunteers run the Committee. At least 60% of the Committee must have children currently at, or soon to attend, the Pre-school. The Committee always welcomes new members. If you would like to join the Committee please speak to a member of staff or a Committee member.

Any private matter raised with the Committee regarding a child at the Pre-school will remain confidential to the Committee.

1.3.12 Fund Raising

Fund raising events are organised by the Committee and Leaders, who are responsible for organising and promoting the event.

Events are organised as and when required.

Social events are organised in the same way as fund raising events and are open to members of the public in addition to all parents/carers and friends of the children.

Parents/carers are generally not requested to assist with these events, however, any help offered is gratefully received.