Parental Involvement Policy

Statement of intent

At South Milford Preschool we believe in developing a strong partnership with parents and carers in order to support the early education of each individual child. We believe that parents are the children’s first and most important educators and wish to involve them fully in the life of the setting.

# Aims

At South Milford Preschool we aim to involve parents and carers in their children’s education and to become involved in the day-to-day life of the pre-school. 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 that 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.

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’*.

Objectives and Procedures

Through all the objectives we develop strategies to ensure the involvement and inclusion of all parents, including fathers or parents who work or live apart from their children.

1.We aim for all parents to be involved with their children within the preschool setting.

* Parents are made to feel welcome within the setting. Staff are available to talk to parents before and after each daily session. Parents are also able to make a more formal appointment with key workers at any time. Parents who work full time are welcome to have telephone/ email conversations regarding their child at mutually convenient times.
* A library service is available for parents/ children at the beginning and end of the day in order for children to support their child’s learning at home.
* Parents are asked to volunteer on a regular basis in order to work with all children within the setting and gain an understanding of the kind of activities the children participate in.
* We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting
* We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
* We involve parents in fundraising events for the preschool.
* 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
* Once children are settled, we offer a range of opportunities to come into sessions and to encourage parents/ carers to stay with their child during their pre-school session and to join them in their play activities. E.g. Stay and play; Dad’s reading week; Christmas crafts; Sports day
* We have a means to ensure all parents are included – that may mean that 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 on-going dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.

2. We keep parents informed of their child’s progress in the setting and welcome information about a child from a parent.

* We ensure ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
* We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress.
* We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally.
* We arrange meetings to be accessible and appropriate for both parents and key workers.
* We actively encourage parents to take a role in their child’s learning through informing us of observations, experiences and learning that has taken place in the home environment. We like to hear about a child’s new interests in order that these can be followed up at preschool.
* We encourage home-learning by sending home guided learning that can be done at home e.g. to practise a song; to practise putting on their coats etc
* Where applicable, we work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support Special Educational Needs.
* Where applicable, we work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a Protection Plan is in place for a child.

3. We keep parents up-to-date with what is going on in our pre-school.

* We have newsletters each half-term that inform parents of information about pre-school. These are sent out to parents via email but are also available in paper format.
* We send home longer observations on the children and ask for parental observations and comments regarding their learning.
* We have a private FB page for current parents and carers only. We use photos and comments to demonstrate the activities and experiences that the children enjoy at pre-school.
* We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies through access to written information, including our Safeguarding Policy and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, 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. We provide you with a privacy notice that details how and why we process your personal information. 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. Reference is made to our Information Sharing Policy on seeking consent for disclosure.
* We 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.
* Through open evenings, 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. We also provide information sheets and an opportunity to talk to staff about the curriculum and children’s learning experiences.

4. We consult with parents about our pre-school setting:

* We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them and about times for meetings to avoid excluding anyone. If required, telephone conversations can be made in the evenings to support working parents.
* In our initial meetings, we ask parents about how pre-school could help their child and any areas of concern they may have.
* We send out questionnaires to parents to ask for their views and ideas about the running of the preschool.
* We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the organisation of the setting.
* We welcome the contributions of parents in whatever form these may take.

5. We support parents in their continuing education and personal development

* inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training

Through all the objectives we develop strategies to ensure the involvement and inclusion of all parents, including fathers or parents who work or live apart from their children.

In compliance with National Standard 12, Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers, the following documentation is in place:

* admissions policy
* complaints procedure
* record of complaints

M Riches - July 2023