



Policy Document:

# Working with Parents to support Children's learning.

# Policy Document:



## **Working with Parents to support Children's learning.**

### **Policy Statement**

Parents are 'children's first and most enduring educators' (Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, QCA 2000), making partnership with parents and carers essential if early years practitioners are to plan effectively for a child's learning.

At the Meadows Day Care Centre, we hold a genuine commitment to work co-operatively with parents and believe that it should be a feature of any high-quality setting and should impact on every aspect of our practice.

As practitioners, we build up expertise in how young children learn and how each child operates within our setting. But it is the parent who knows their child best, and unless there is a sharing of information between practitioners and parents, a child's learning needs will be neither fully understood nor, ultimately, met.

### **Procedures**

#### Sharing information with parents

Opportunities for talking to parents about their child's learning may happen informally, and spontaneous exchanges can generate useful information.

Practitioners manage their time effectively and they can schedule such discussions, for example, at dropping-off and picking-up times, so allowing a culture of informal information sharing to develop.

A trusting and warm relationship between key worker and parents begins with the initial contact meeting, and it is crucial that, from the start, parents understand that staff value their knowledge and understanding of their child.

However, we appreciate it may not always be possible for practitioners to speak to parents on a day-to-day basis about their child's learning milestones, current interests or recent experiences. Parents' working hours may prevent them from having daily or even regular contact of any kind with the nursery, and a two-way diary may be used where contact time between practitioner and parent is limited.

In some instances, it may be the key worker who is unavailable to talk to the parent, perhaps because of other professional commitments. In such cases, practitioners should make it clear to the parent that they will arrange a convenient slot to discuss the child's progress.

Practitioners try to engage both parents where possible and make sure that our setting is a place where both male and female carers feel comfortable.

#### Parent and key worker meetings

At the Meadows we organise parent and key worker meetings on a regular basis and in a more structured way. Again, the timing of these meetings will depend on the parents' daily routines and commitments, and the staff team will have to be flexible when arranging them.

These meetings offer an opportunity for the practitioner and parents to share their observations and to consider the implications of these in terms of planning for the child's learning. They are conducted

in an atmosphere of mutual respect and staff ensure they act as *genuine listeners*, responding to what they hear from the parent and not allowing discussions to be driven by a pre-set agenda based on what has been observed in the nursery. There should be an emphasis on celebrating what the child has achieved and on looking for ways of building on their current interests and achievements.

Key worker meetings usually take place in the nursery, but where parents prefer and staffing allows, they may be planned to take place in the home environment. Home-based meetings can offer a more relaxed context for the parent.

Pre-arranged meetings give both parties time to prepare and think about issues that they want to discuss.

During individual meetings with parents, time is set aside for looking at the implications of observations from home and nursery. Planning together for children's learning should result in a more holistic approach, an enhanced curriculum and continuity for the children.

There will be opportunities to look at the child's learning journeys and to talk about appropriate provision and support for the child's developmental stage.

Where a pattern of behaviour or personal learning interest has been identified, the key worker and parent can discuss experiences that could be offered at home and in the nursery in the hope that they would engage the child and further extend learning.

Summative reports offer parents a written summary of the child's learning and are organised under the six areas of learning.

These should be discussed with the parents and their contributions incorporated in a section provided on the format.

#### Sharing information about the curriculum

We understand that in a high-quality setting, practitioners will share with parents information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and about young children as learners, as opportunities arise.

During 'taster sessions' and home visits staff:

- explain how the setting plans and assesses a child's learning within the six areas of learning
- discuss the importance of the learning process
- highlight high-quality learning experiences with no concrete outcome
- emphasise the importance of child-initiated learning
- talk about schemas
- discuss appropriate expectations and contexts for learning.

#### **Display**

We acknowledge that display, such as a permanent board designated for parents' information, can be an effective way of sharing up-to-date news about events in the nursery and the community. Copies of nursery newsletters and guidance leaflets are made available there. On the settings' Facebook page, we celebrate children's work and inform parents of special occasions and events to make clear to parents the significance of their children's play and learning.

#### **Newsletter**

The nursery provides parents with a newsletter on various occasions throughout the academic year (minimum once a term) providing important information that affects their child's daily life at nursery, as well as information about the curriculum and termly topic information.

### **Tapestry Online Learning Journal**

The Centre strongly urges parents to request access to their child's online learning journal using either the Tapestry app, or website.

Once a parent has access, they will be able to see what activities their child has been taking part in at the nursery through the staff posts of observations, photos and videos. Parents are also permitted to post their own observations and comments.

**ADOPTION AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

This policy was adopted on:.....- 18 May 2018  
Signed:.....SK

This policy was reviewed/amended in:.....- September 2019  
Signed:.....SK

This policy was reviewed/amended in:.....- October 2020  
Signed:.....SK

This policy was reviewed/amended in:.....- October 2021  
Signed:.....SK

This policy was reviewed/amended in:.....- August 2023  
Signed:.....JRS

This policy was reviewed/amended in:.....-  
Signed:.....

This policy was reviewed/amended in:.....-  
Signed:.....

