

## ST ANDREW'S METHODIST CHURCH PRE-SCHOOL

### Parental involvement Policy

#### Policy statement

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

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 our 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 that all parents are included.

When we refer to 'parents', we mean both mothers and fathers; these include both natural or adoptive 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*'. (For a full explanation of who has parental responsibility, refer to the *Safeguarding Children* (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2013).)

#### Procedures

- We ensure that 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 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.
- We inform parents about how the setting is run and its policies, through access to written information, including our *Safeguarding Children and Child Protection* policy and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, and through regular formal and informal communication and on our website.
- Information about a child and his or her family is kept confidential within our setting. We provide a privacy notice that details how and why we process 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 seek specific parental consent to administer medication, take a child for emergency treatment, take a child on an outing and take photographs for the purposes of record keeping.
- The expectations that we make on parents are made clear at the point of registration.
- We seek parents' views regarding changes in the delivery of our service.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in decision-making processes according to the structure in place within our setting.
- We encourage parents to become involved in the social and cultural life of the setting and to actively contribute to it.
- We provide sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information with staff and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.

- Our key persons record information about the activities and progress of individual children using their individual online profile (Tapestry) which is available to parents.
- Our key persons are available to parents by arrangement to discuss their child's progress and to share concerns if they arise.
- Where applicable, our key persons work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support special educational needs.
- Where applicable, our key persons work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a Protection Plan is in place for a child.
- We 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.
- We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- 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.
- We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all.
- Parents are invited to join the Pre-School Management committee and Board of Trustees. Parents can be voted onto the Committee at the Annual AGM. They can also be co-opted at any time during the year subject to the necessary background checks (DBS check).
- Parents are also invited to act as advisors to the Management Committee, attending meetings as parent representatives.
- We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and we check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to the written complaints procedure.
- 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. There are opportunities for parents to take active roles in supporting their child's learning in the setting: informally through helping out or taking part in activities with their child, or through structured projects engaging parents and staff in learning about children's learning.

In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is also in place at our setting:

- Admissions Policy.
- Complaints procedure.
- Record of complaints.
- Developmental records of children.

This policy was adopted by St Andrew's Preschool (name of provider)

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 (date)

Date to be reviewed 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory Linda Bowker

Role of signatory Chair of Management Committee

