**Tring Stepping Stones Preschool**

**Parental involvement**

**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 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.

The Children Act 1989 defines Parental responsibility as *all 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.* (For a full explanation of who has parental responsibility, refer to the Pre-school Learning Alliance’s Safeguarding Children publication.)

**Procedures**

* Parents are made to feel welcome in preschool; they are greeted appropriately,

 We have a means to ensure all parents are included – that may mean 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. If a parent works full time and is not able to drop off or collect their child from pre-school, we would keep them regularly updated by using a link book or email system and would send their child’s learning journal home more regularly for them to share with their child.

 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 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 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 preschool. 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 the Information Sharing Policy on seeking consent for disclosure.
* Preschool 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. This is all done on the registration forms.
* The expectations that preschool makes on parents are made clear at the point of registration.
* Preschool seeks parents’ views regarding changes in the delivery of preschool, this is done in committee meetings where parents are expected to vote on any changes.
* Parents are actively encouraged to participate in decision making processes according to the structure in place within preschool
* Preschool encourages parents to become involved in the social and cultural life of the setting and actively contribute to it.
* As far as possible our service is provided in a flexible way to meet the needs of parents without compromising the needs of children.
* We provide sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information with us and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.
* We meet regularly with parents to discuss their child’s progress and to share concerns if they arise.
* Where applicable, the SENCO or key worker will work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support special educational needs.
* Where applicable, the key worker will work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a Protection Plan is in place for a child.
* We support families to be involved in activities that promote their own learning and well-being; informing parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training.
* We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.

 We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting by joining the committee/attending committee meetings and fundraising events.

 We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress through regular open mornings and parent consultations at a time to suit each parent.

 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 send the children’s learning journals home each half term so the parents can share them with their child and add to them with a learning journey/ photos/drawings that they have done at home. We encourage parents to share “wow” moments the children have had at home.

 We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting and a help parent help rota is put up each term.to encourage parents to come in and see their child in the setting.

 We inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training by displaying posters on the notice board.

 We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.

 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 pre-school which isaccessible and appropriate for all.

 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 check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our 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.

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

Admissions policy

Complaints procedure

Record of complaints

Developmental records of children.

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Tring stepping stones pre school |
| Held on |  |
| Date to be reviewed | April 2024 |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee |  |
| Name of signatory |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Staff name | Signature | Date |
| Lucy Brittain |  |  |
| Nicola Poulton |  |  |
| Nicola Reynolds |  |  |
| Kim Smith |  |  |
| Nicke Cooke |  |  |
| Jo Davis |  |  |

May 2012 review- added a statement about the parent help rota and that we ask parents to add to the scrap books when they go home with photos, learning journey etc.

May 2013- added that we encourage parents to join the committee or fundraising committee or events held at preschool

September 2014 review-

* added that we get parental consent for administering medicines, outings etc, we provide parents with information on activities and course to promote their own learning Information about a child and his or her family is kept confidential within preschool. 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 the Information Sharing Policy on seeking consent for disclosure.
* Parents are encouraged to share “wow” moments the children do at home.
* Where applicable, the senco or key worker will work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support special educational needs.
* Where applicable, the key worker will work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a Protection Plan is in place for a child.

September 2015 review

Added reference to Children’s Act 1989 when defining parental responsibility. Updated useful publications to show the 2015 version of the Complaint Investigation Record

October 2016 review

Added reference to our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty to the section detailing parental access to written information about how the setting is run and our policies. Updated the useful publication list.

October 2017- no changes

May 2018- we provide you with a privacy notice that details how and why we process your personal information

June 2019 – no changes

April 2020- no changes

March 2022 - no changes, although current covid restrictions apply so meeting with the parents hasn’t been happening as it normally does. We are beginning to bring back more parent meetings as of March 2022.

March 2023 – amended scrapbook to Learning Journal for consistency across policies.