

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS/CARERS POLICY

We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents/carers and settings work together in partnership. Our aim is support parents/carers as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and striving to create professional, trusting relationships with their families. We also aim to support parents/carers in their own continuing education and personal development, and provide a wide range of resources and links to information on topics that may be relevant to them. When we refer to parents/carers, we include 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, same sex parents and foster parents. Where suitable, we extend our partnerships into extended families too e.g. acknowledging grandparents as main carers.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

- We provide all parents/carers with an in-depth welcome pack at the time of accepting a place with us, which contains information about our setting, but also other important factors into their child's early years, such as advice on potty training
- We can provide hard copies of our policies when requested
- All pre-school children are offered a home visit prior to starting, so that the Keyperson and buddy can start forming partnerships immediately. Sally Wingham may occasionally arrange a 'lone working' risk assessment for a keyperson visiting a family alone, but this would be dependant on our prior relationship with the family, background knowledge, availability / cost of staff, agreement of staff member etc.
- We use parent/carer information to obtain a child's starting points, which gauges their level of development, and forms the basis for their Progress Check at Age 2. Staff discuss with parents/carers what they can do to support learning at home, and provide them with a copy of the Check that can also be shared with other professionals, including the health visiting team
- The Keyperson creates an 'open door' approach to their relationship with parents/carers, whereby they can be available at most times of day for a catch up, or to answer any queries
- We ensure we have a place available for parents/carers to talk to someone confidentially when needed
- Parents/carers actively participate in their child's learning and development by contributing to their Learning Journal, as well as being invited to regular parent consultations (three times annually)
- Parents/carers are invited to discuss any concerns with us at their earliest opportunity, and in return, we will speak with them inline with usual procedures should we have any (e.g. special needs, safeguarding etc)
- We enable a regular, two-way flow of information between us and parents/carers, and also with other providers if a child attends more than one setting
- We welcome families into the setting as much as possible, to share their way of life, in order for us to maintain our ethos of equality and to provide all children with experiences that broaden their minds
- We provide information events and workshops for parents/carers, such as 'EYFS Evening'
- We encourage families into the setting for various events, including sports day, stay and play sessions, den building workshops etc.
- We inform parents/carers about relevant workshops and training held locally that may be of interest to them
- We include parents/carers in decisions about the setting when possible
- We regularly obtain parent/carer feedback to assess how well we are running the setting, and seek ideas for improvement
- We have a large Parent Information Board in our entrance area, containing a varied range of support and information
- We inform all parents/carers of our Complaints procedure via the welcome pack and parent information board, and make details of how to contact Ofsted available via their published poster, on the parent information board
- We provide regular newsletters via our email system
- We have a Business Page on Facebook
- We have a text system in place for reminders
- We notify parents/carers if their child has an accident in our care, as well as completing an accident form, to ensure they are informed, and can provide advice where necessary e.g. to seek medical advice
- We will provide different formats of communication to suit parent/carer needs e.g. Braille, multi-lingual, paper or electronic
- We obtain information about children's dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and health requirements via our Registration form
- We notify parents/carers if we become aware that we will be receiving an Ofsted inspection, and will supply of copy of the report following it

PARENTS WHO MAY BE CHALLENGING

We believe that we have a strong partnership with our parents/carers and provide an 'open door' ethos to discuss any matters arising so we can deal with them quickly and efficiently. In the unlikely event that a parent/carer starts to act in an aggressive or abusive way at the setting, our procedure is to:

- Direct the parent/carer away from the children and into a private area such as the office or staff area
- Ensure that a second member of staff is in attendance, where possible, whilst continuing to ensure the safe supervision of the children
- Act in a calm and professional way, ask the parent/carer to calm down and make it clear that we do not tolerate aggressive or abusive language or behaviour
- Contact the police if the behaviour escalates
- Once the parent/carer calms down, the member of staff will then listen to their concerns and respond appropriately
- A report will be compiled, to log the date, time, details of the incident, and any action taken

- Management will provide any support and reassurance that staff may need following the experience, and seek further support where necessary
- Management will also signpost parents/carers to further support where applicable
- Staff will protect the privacy of the children in our care and ensure that information regarding the incident is kept confidentially

SEPARATED FAMILY

At Clocktower Childcare, we recognise that when parents/carers separate it can be a difficult situation for all concerned. We understand that emotions may run high and this section sets out how we will support all parties involved, including our staff team. The Keyperson will work closely with the parents/carers to build relationships which will support the child's emotional wellbeing and report any significant changes in behaviour. We can signpost families to relevant services and organisations for support for the whole family.

In England, if the parents of a child are married to each other at the time of the birth, or if they have jointly adopted a child, then they both have parental responsibility. Parents do not lose parental responsibility if they divorce, and this applies to both the resident and the non-resident parent. This is not automatically the case for unmarried parents. According to current law, a mother always has parental responsibility for her child. However, a father has this responsibility only if he is married to the mother when the child is born or has acquired legal responsibility for his child through one of these three routes:

- By jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother (From 1 December 2003)
- By a parental responsibility agreement with the mother
- By a parental responsibility order, made by a court

We will:

- Ensure the child's welfare is paramount at all times they are in the setting
- Comply with any details of a court order where applicable to the child's attendance at the setting where we have seen a copy/have a copy attached to the child's file
- Provide information on the child's learning and development to both parents, where both hold parental responsibility
- Invite both parents to parent consultations, where both hold parental responsibility
- Ensure any incident or accident relating to the child is reported to the person collecting the child, or the usual main carer
- Ensure that all matters known by the staff pertaining to the family and the parent's separation remain confidential
- Ensure that no member of staff 'takes sides' regarding the separation and treats both parents equally and with due respect
- Not restrict access to any parent with parental responsibility unless a formal court order is in place. We respectfully ask that parents do not put us in this position

We ask parents to:

- Provide us with all information relating to parental responsibilities, court orders and injunctions
- Update information that changes any of the above as soon as practicably possible
- Work with us to ensure continuity of care and support for the child
- Not involve our staff or the setting name in any family disputes, unless this directly impacts on the care we provide for the child
- Talk to the Keyperson away from the child if it may be upsetting to them
- Not ask us to 'take sides' in any dispute. Our 'side' is with the child and this will require us to be neutral at all times

IMMUNISATIONS

We expect that children are vaccinated in accordance with the government's health policy and their age. We ask that parents/carers inform us if their children are not vaccinated so that we can manage any risks to their own child or other children/staff/parents in the best way possible. Management must be aware of any children who are not vaccinated in accordance with their age. Our setting does not discriminate against children who have not received their immunisations and will not disclose individual details to other families. However, we will share the risks of infection if children have not had immunisations and ask parents/carers to sign a disclaimer. We record, or encourage parents/carers to record, information about immunisations on the registration form, by asking if their child is up to date with all immunizations due. We can advise parents/carers to refer to their 'red health record books' if they're unsure.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Clocktower Childcare Ltd held on 30th August 2019. Latest date to be reviewed: 31st August 2020.

Signed on behalf of Clocktower Childcare Ltd:

J. Law

Jane Law, Director

S. Wingham

Sally Wingham, Director

L. Baverstock

Lara-Jane Baverstock, Director