

THE ORCHARD COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL

Registered as Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales
Registered Office: 17a Elmside, Milford, Godalming, Surrey, GU8 5EG
Registered Number: 8791069
Registered Charity Number: 1154900

43. Parental involvement

Policy Statement

We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and pre-schools 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 pre-school.

Some parents are less well represented in early years pre-schools; 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 all those who have legal access to the child as parents with parental responsibility: 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. 'Parental responsibility' is *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 *Child Protection Record* publication.)

Procedures

- 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 consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
- 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 pre-school is run and its policies through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the pre-school.
- 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 - 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 pre-school.
- We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the pre-school in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language.
- We offer support with internet access and form-filling etc. to those parents who need it (e.g. for making on-line applications for school places)
- We hold meetings in our pre-school, as it is accessible 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 pre-school and about young children's learning, in the pre-school and at home.

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

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