

10.5 Parental involvement

Policy statement

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*. Therefore when the term "Parent" is used in this policy it also refers to carers and guardians. (For a full explanation of who has parental responsibility, refer to the NSCB website and "Thresholds and Pathways" document).

We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and settings work together in partnership. We believe the role of parents in the running of the Pre-School is critical for its success and development. All comments, suggestions and criticisms will be treated with respect, and as confidential where appropriate.

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. Parents are recognised as partners in their child's education, sharing knowledge, successes and concerns about their individual child, as well as providing feedback and suggestions about the activities available to them.

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.

Procedures

- Parents are made to feel welcome in our setting.
- We provide assistance to parents who need help to read or understand our policies and documentation and can assist parents to complete any forms as necessary. We will provide information in any language as the need arises.
- 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 through informal discussion, committee meetings and questionnaires.
- 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.
- Parents will be treated with respect and Pre-School expects parents to treat staff, committee and other parents with respect. Abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Information about a child and his or her family is kept confidential within our setting. 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, where there are concerns regarding child's development that need to be shared with another agency or when information is shared for transition to school. 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 make clear our expectation that parents will participate in settling their child at the commencement of a place.
- We seek parents' views regarding changes in the delivery of our service.
- We encourage 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 staff and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.
- Our key persons meet regularly with parents 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.
- Parents are expected to respect opening and closing times, follow the requests and policies relating to illness and collection as well as ensuring that children are clothed appropriately.
- Parents are expected to pay fees when required. Information regarding any changes to charges for Pre-School will be sent to parents with sufficient notice (see 10 1 Charging Policy).
- Parents are encouraged to support fund-raising as this is an essential aspect of the running of the Pre-School
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting through:

- Representation on the committee
- Attendance at the AGM and other meetings
- Participating in an activity during a Pre-School session, specifically arranged for parents to attend
- Support with fund raising
- Completing questionnaires at regular intervals
- We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally - and ensure parents have access to their children's developmental records. The setting uses the Tapestry Online Learning Journal application, which emails the parents when new observation entries are made. Each observation can include notes, photographs, videos and EYFS assessments, characteristics of learning and videos. Parents can comment on every observation and even add their own.
- Parents have access to “up to date” information about Pre-School (from registration of their child) and their child’s progress through:
 - Welcome pack
 - New starter home visits
 - Notice board (updated daily) listing activities and snacks and any other important information
 - Weekly newsletter
 - Open access to arrange discussion times and share issues as necessary
 - Tapestry Online Learning Journal application
 - Parents’ evenings three times a year
 - Website www.crickpreschool.org, which includes details of forthcoming events, policies and copies of all newsletters
 - Regularly reviewed policies
- We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- 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 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.
- 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. 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.

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



Crick Pre-School



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

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Crick Pre-School

Held on

26th June 2019

Date to be reviewed

June 2020

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Clare Thompson

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

Chair

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Complaint Investigation Record (2015)
- Engaging Mothers & Fathers (2010)
- Safeguarding Children (2013)
- The First and Foremost Series (2008)
- Playcards for the Home Environment (2016)