

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to ensure the needs of all children are met.

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 and extended family members who may be acting as the parents/ primary carers for a child. The Children Act (1989) defines '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 Safeguarding Children publication.)

Procedures

- We aim 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 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 informal communication.



- 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, 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.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting. We aim to have two parent representatives on the Board each year.
- 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 setting.
- We are flexible with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting.
- 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. 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.

* Record of complaints.

*Developmental records of children.

* Complaints procedure.

This policy was adopted at a board meeting of Hopscotch Playgroup, held on the 13th May 2014.

Reviewed 20th May 2015

Reviewed 25th May 2016

Reviewed 24th June 2017

Reviewed and updated 15th May 2018