

Participation Policy

This policy is to ensure the involvement of all children and families who use the setting. Staff are committed to the meaningful engagement of children and their families. All children and families benefit from being involved in the decision-making process and involving children and families will benefit the setting. Participation is a right; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that:

‘It is the right of children and young people to express their views in relations to matters that affect them and to have those views taken into account’.

Adults working directly with children have a vital role to play by listening and responding to the voice of the child. It is key to provide an environment where children feel confident and safe by ensuring they have the time and space to express themselves in whatever form suits them.

In Holy Trinity After School we have a role to play in developing a listening culture which nurtures day to day listening and provides opportunities for children to make decisions about matters that directly affect them. Listening to children is an integral part of understanding what they are feeling and what it is they need from their childcare experience.

There are many ways we encourage children and families to participate, such as:

- Engaging children and asking their opinions on things that affect them.
- We listen to the views of each child.
- We make decisions with them rather than for them.
- we encourage positive attitudes towards participation within our setting.
- We support and encourage children to take responsibility.
- Children are very much involved in the planning of activities and choose which resources they would like to play with each day. The children are also involved when we are buying new resources by giving their ideas on what new resources they would enjoy.
- We encourage child initiated play to promote children’s own ideas, we discourage adult led play.
- We encourage parental participation by encouraging parents to give us their views, opinions and feedback.

Participation provides many benefits to our setting by:

- Giving children and families a voice.
- Giving children choices helps to increase their self-esteem.
- Helping children to feel valued thus giving them a sense of worth.
- Encouraging children to gain new skills and confidence in making a real difference in something that matters to them.
- Improving accessibility to children and families.
- Making staff more aware of children’s needs therefore more able to meet their needs.
- Encouraging reflection and valuing difference.
- Enhancing the experience for children and their families of the service they receive.

Participation is part of a process of involvement therefore communicating and consulting with other adults who help us is also part of the participation process. All adults are involved in and influence decision making matters that affect them and those views are listened to and taken into account.

Adults involved in the setting will participate by:

- Regular Meetings
- Staff supervision and appraisals
- Good communication skills
- Open door policy for parents/carers
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals

In Holy Trinity After School we believe that participation is essential to review practice and can be developed as a means of auditing, evaluating and evidencing children, families and staff participation in the service provided.

We encourage quality practice by being able to demonstrate that we consult regularly with our children, families and staff. This approach reflects the views and ideas of those with whom we work and helps us to provide the best service possible.