

Relationship with Parents Policy

The Staff and Governors of Ashgrove Nursery fully believe in the importance of parental involvement and support, in order to ensure a happy, caring and stable environment for our children.

Definition of High Quality Relationships with Parents:

'Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the school and its parents'. Every School a Good School, 2009, Quality Indicators, A School Linked to its Community.

Purpose and Scope

This policy is put in place in order to ensure that this Nursery welcomes parents into the life of the school and cultivates a partnership between the adults in the child's home life and the staff in the school.

This is a relationship which:

- Acknowledges the parent as the child's first educator;
- Reflects a two-way, non-judgemental process with knowledge, mutual respect, information and trust flowing freely both ways, in order to bridge the gap between home and school;
- Supports parents in understanding how they can best share in and contribute to their child's education;
- Provides parents with the opportunity to realise their child's learning capabilities/potential;

- Creates as many varied opportunities as possible to enable parents and staff to support each other and work together;
- Allows for a wider understanding of each other's needs and beliefs;

We are wholeheartedly committed to delivering high quality Nursery provision where our *'services are designed to support children and their families by providing positive early years education and learning experiences'*. Learning to Learn, A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning, Department of Education, October 2013.

The Nursery School Policy is implemented in the following ways:

Before the child starts school, advertisements for a Parents' Open Evening are distributed in the community. Application forms and Open Enrolment advice are given to all parents attending that evening and any other parent/ person who makes enquiries (See also Admissions Policy).

Once places have been offered through the Open Enrolment process, parents are invited to attend an Induction Meeting to discuss the organisation of the school, curriculum, Child protection/Safeguarding details etc.

The new intake of children is then invited to the Nursery for a short visit with their parent during the month of June.

Sharing of information during this time is crucial. This will include:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Order Forms;
- Child Information Details including collectors/ medical details/consent requirements etc.;
- Parents' Handbook;
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Information;
- Pledge Form for Parents;
- Summer Sharing Booklet;
- 'All about Me' Booklet;
- Home Photograph;
- Details of Home Visits Process;
- School Holidays for incoming year.

Home Visits Process if applicable year to year [TBC]

Parents will be provided with a time slot for a visit by two members of staff at the end of August. 'All About Me' booklets, completed by parents by the Visiting Days will be used as discussion points for these visits. Photographs will be taken of the child in their own home which will be displayed in the Nursery Entrance Hall. A unique symbol will be provided for each individual child and a backpack will be provided for use each day at Nursery School. The emphasis will be on establishing positive relationships between all involved. (See also Home Visits Folder/ Transitions Policy).

Starting Nursery School

Trust is fundamental to establishing positive relationships with parents / carers. Staff will spend time not only building a rapport with the children but also making supportive connections with parents/ carers. Parents / carers will be encouraged to stay with their child for the duration of their initial day at Nursery School. Subsequently, the Entrance Hall will be available for adults, along with magazines, tea and coffee. This facility will be available until each individual child has settled and based on each child being unique in terms of what might be required

during this crucial settling in time. The Special Box is used for staff to get to know children throughout the year and Pablo the Travelling Dog.

Throughout the Nursery School Year, Staff will:

- Invite all parents/ carers to an initial 'Get to Know You Better' coffee morning/afternoon;
- Provide time and space within the school for our 'Nursery Natter' which will take place when possible and more often if required/requested;
- Inform parents on how they can best support their child's early years' education;
- Consult on matters which affect our Parents and their children, including Policy formulation;
- Ask for written and verbal feedback to support our Self-Evaluation process;
- Organise Parents' & Friends Groups Evenings/outings;
- Provide Positive Parenting Sessions;
- Provide monthly News Bulletins giving up to date and relevant information about happenings in the Nursery School and the local community;
- Keep an up to date Parents' Noticeboard with details of the school policies, monthly themes and forthcoming events, as well as interesting articles from magazines and useful contacts in the community;
- Provide a library service to parents and children (inclusive of Story Sacks/Early Maths Kits);
- Display of photographs/videos on our website which depict every day and special events;
- Provide photographs/videos sharing the learning in Nursery School through the See-Saw App (parents having firstly signed up and agreed to adhere to Social Media agreement);

- Take up offers to support the Nursery School from initial Pledge Forms or through requests in monthly bulletins;
- Send out invitations to come along to 'Stay & Play';
- Provide consultations to share information on the children's progress and areas for development (See Record Keeping and Assessment Policy);
- Encourage parents to join in and help within the Nursery/Educational Visits etc. This will also include input on Policy development;
- Meet with parents of children with Special Educational Needs, reviewing progress and setting IEPs together;
- Liaise with other agencies and supporting parents;
- Provide time to talk as required,

See also:

- Transitions Policy and Folder
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Home Visits Folder
- Admissions Policy
- Record Keeping and Assessment Policy
- Self-Evaluation Documentation

This policy is driven through a true desire to recognise that parents are each child's first teacher and as such, have a vital role to play. We believe that with parental support and involvement in the life and works of this Nursery School, each child *'can achieve in education and improve their life chances'*. Department of Education Northern Ireland, Education Works Campaign, September 2012.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Policy will be monitored in an on-going way within the self-evaluative culture of the Nursery School.

This Policy was adopted by the Governors on 05/01/16.

It was last reviewed on 24/01/17 and will be further reviewed on an annual basis.

To be reviewed Jan 26.