



# Smalley Pre-school Working in Partnership with Parents and Other Agencies Policy

(Registered Charity No. 1033193)

**Church Hall, Main Road, Smalley, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 6EF**

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## **Aim**

Smalley Pre-school will actively promote partnership with parents and recognise the importance of working in partnership with other agencies to promote the wellbeing of children and their families. This includes signposting parents to support as appropriate.

## **Objectives**

- We believe that parents are children's first and most enduring educators, and our practice aims to involve and consult parents on all aspects of their child's wellbeing.
- We also recognise the important role parents must play in the day-to-day organisation of the provision.
- We consider parents' views and expectations and will give the opportunity to be involved in the following ways:
  - sharing information about their child's needs, likes, achievements and interests;
  - settling in their child to the agreed plan according to our settling-in procedures;
  - taking part in children's activities and outings;
  - contributing with ideas or resources as appropriate to enhance the curriculum of the setting;
  - taking part in early learning projects, sharing knowledge and insights with educators about their child's learning;
  - contributing to assessment with information, photos and stories that illustrate how their child is learning within the home environment, taking part in day-to-day family activities;
  - taking part in planning, preparing or simply participating in social activities organised within the setting;
  - contributing to the work of or joining the committee to oversee the day-to-day organisation of the setting, consulting about new developments and other matters as they arise; and
  - involvement in the review of policies and procedures.

Ofsted and setting contact details are displayed on the parent notice board for parents who have a complaint that cannot be resolved with the setting manager in the first instance, or where a parent is concerned that the EYFS standards are not being maintained

## **Partnership and signposting to other agencies**

We are committed to ensuring effective partnership with other agencies, including:

- local authority early years services about the EYFS, training and staff development;
- local programmes regarding delivering children's centres or the childcare and early education element of children's centres;
- social welfare departments regarding children in need and children who need safeguarding or for whom a child protection plan is in place;
- child development networks and health professionals to support children with disabilities and special needs;
- local community organisations and other childcare and early education providers; and
- Ofsted.

Setting contact details are made available to other agencies that have a complaint that cannot be resolved with the setting manager in the first instance or where a parent is concerned that the EYFS welfare standards are not being maintained.

## **Legal references**

Childcare Act 2016

Education Act 2011

## **Working in partnership with parents and other agencies**

Smalley Pre-school believes that families are central in all services we provide for young children. They are involved in all aspects of their child's care, their views are actively sought and they are actively involved in the running of the setting in various ways.

We work in partnership with local and national agencies to promote the wellbeing of all children.

## **Families**

- Parents are provided with written information about the setting, including the setting's safeguarding actions and responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
- Parents are made to feel welcome in the setting; they are greeted appropriately, and there is adult seating and provision for refreshment.
- Every effort is made to accommodate parents who have a disability or impairment.
- The expectations we make on parents are made clear at the point of registration.
- There is a clear expectation that parents will participate in settling their child at the commencement of a place according to an agreed plan.
- There is sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information with staff, and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.
- Key persons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.

- Key persons regularly meet with parents to discuss their child's learning and development and to share concerns if they arise.
- Key persons work with parents to carry out an agreed plan to support a child's special educational needs.
- Key persons work with parents to carry out any agreed tasks where a child protection plan is in place.
- Parents are involved in the social and cultural life of the setting and actively contribute.
- As far as possible, the service is provided in a flexible way to meet the needs of parents without compromising the needs of children.
- Parents are involved in regular assessment of their child's progress, including the progress check at age two.
- There are effective means for communicating with parents on all relevant matters, and the complaints procedure for parents and service users is referred to when necessary.
- Every effort is made to provide an interpreter for parents who speak a language other than English and to provide translated written materials.
- Information about a child and their family is kept confidential within the setting. 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 their child's development that need to be shared with another agency. Parental permission will be sought unless there are reasons not to, such as to protect the safety of the child.
- Parental consent is sought to administer medication, take a child for emergency treatment, take a child on an outing and take photographs for the purposes of recordkeeping.
- Parents' views are sought regarding changes in the delivery of the service.
- Parents are actively encouraged to participate in decision-making and management processes via the committee, including joining the committee.
- There are opportunities for parents to take active roles in supporting their child's learning in the setting: informally through helping out or activities with their child or through structured projects engaging parents and staff in their child's learning.

## **Agencies**

- We work in partnership or in tandem with local and national agencies to promote the wellbeing of children.
- Procedures are in place for sharing information about children and families with other agencies.
- Information shared by other agencies (third-party information) is also kept in confidence and not shared without consent from that agency.
- When working in partnership with staff from other agencies, individuals are made to feel welcome in the setting and professional roles are respected.
- Staff follow the protocols for working with agencies, for example on child protection.

- Staff from other agencies do not have unsupervised access to the child they are visiting in the setting and do not have access to any other children during their visit.
- Staff do not casually share information or seek informal advice about any named child/family.
- We consult with and signpost to local and national agencies that offer a wealth of advice and information promoting staff understanding of issues facing them in their work and that can provide support and information for families. For example, ethnic/cultural organisations, drug/alcohol agencies, welfare rights advisors or organisations promoting childcare and early education, or adult education.

## **Schools**

- We work in partnership with schools to assist children's transition, as per our transition procedures, and we share information as per our procedure on the transfer of records.
- The setting manager actively seeks to forge partnerships with local schools with the aim of sharing best practice and creating a consistent approach.

## **Complaints procedure for parents and service users**

There is a fair way of dealing with issues as they arise in an informal way, but parents may wish to exercise their right to make a formal complaint. They are informed of the procedure to do this and complaints are responded to in a timely way. The same procedures apply to agencies that may have a grievance or complaint.

### **Parents**

#### *Stage 1*

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of our setting's provision talks over their concerns with the setting manager first of all.
- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- We record the issue, and how it was resolved, in the child's file.

#### *Stage 2*

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the Complaint Investigation Record; the form may be completed by the setting manager and signed by the parent.
- Our setting stores all information relating to written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, our manager may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, our manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.

- We inform parents of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of them making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record, which is made available to Ofsted on request.

### *Stage 3*

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they request a meeting with our manager and the committee chair. The parent may have a friend or partner present if they prefer, and our manager should have the support of the management team.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, we log the summative points in our Complaint Investigation Record.

### *Stage 4*

- If at the stage three meeting the parent cannot reach agreement with us, we invite an external mediator to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help us to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. They can hold separate meetings with our staff and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice they give.

### *Stage 5*

- When the mediator has concluded their investigations, a final meeting is held between the parent and our manager and committee chair. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.
- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

At any stage of the complaints procedure, complainants are entitled to make a complaint directly to Ofsted, particularly if the complainant believes that there has been a breach of the EYFS requirements. The manager will assist in any complaint investigation, as well as in producing documentation that records the steps that were taken in response to the original complaint.

The setting manager ensures that parents know they can complain to Ofsted by telephone or in writing at any time as follows:

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD or telephone: 0300 123 1231.

If a child appears to be at risk, we follow the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board or Local Safeguarding Partners. Both the parent and the setting will be informed of this.

If a complaint relates to how an individual's data is being handled, they may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or ico.org.uk. Please see our privacy notice for further information on our data handling.

### Agencies

- If an individual from another agency wishes to make a formal complaint about a member of staff or any practice of the setting, it should be made in writing to the setting manager.
- The complaint is acknowledged in writing within 10 days of receiving it.
- The setting manager investigates the matter and meets with the individual to discuss the matter further within 28 days of the complaint being received.
- An agreement needs to be reached to resolve the matter.
- If agreement is not reached, the complainant may write to the committee chair, who acknowledges the complaint within 5 days and reports back within 14 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they are entitled to appeal and are referred to the trustees.

### Ofsted complaints record

- Legislation requires settings to keep a record of complaints and disclose these to Ofsted at inspection or if requested by Ofsted at any other time.
- The record of complaints is a summative record only.

A record of complaints (stage two or above) will be kept for at least three years.

- In all cases where a complaint is upheld, a review will be undertaken by the trustees to look for ways to improve practice where it is required.

This procedure is displayed on the parent notice board.

### Further guidance

[Complaint Investigation Record](#) (Early Years Alliance)

This policy was adopted by Smalley Pre-school

On 23.12.25

Date to be reviewed 23.12.26

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory

Joanne Rothwell

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Chair of the Committee