PARENTAL/CARER INVOLVEMENT POLICY

We believe that children benefit most from early years' education and care when parents/carers and the playgroup work together in partnership.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean both mothers and fathers; these include 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 and foster parents.

'Parental responsibility' is defined 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/her property.

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 playgroup.

In order to fulfil these aims:

- When parents/carers enquire about the playgroup, they are given a Playgroup Handbook which gives details of the playgroup, how the playgroup is run, policies and procedures and registration requirements. The Handbook is discussed carefully, pointing out important points at this first meeting. We ask the parents/carers to read the Handbook carefully in their own time and if they wish their child to join Kingshurst Caterpillars, we ask them to return with the completed Registration Forms and birth certificate.
- We ask parents/carers for information about their children and their individual needs in order to ensure the best possible care for them.
- We endeavour to develop partnerships between parents/carers and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect and which promote the sharing of information and knowledge for the benefit of the children in our care.
- Parents/carers can have access to their children's written developmental records at any time.
- We have an open-door approach and encourage parents/carers to talk to staff if they have any difficulties, queries or complaints. If extra time is needed, an appointment will be made to allow staff time to arrange cover.
- All children have a diary which is completed weekly by their key person and is sent home for parent/carer to view. Parents/carers are encouraged to comment and exchange information if they wish.
- Staff also communicate with parents online using the app Class Dojo. Key workers can exchange information with parents about their children's progress and send photos of their children engaged in activities. Class Dojo can also be used for online teaching, for example, reading stories, singing songs, music and movement and demonstrating activities.
- At the beginning of each half term parents/carers receive a newsletter.
- We have a parent's information board attached to the fence by the entrance gate where the latest newsletter or other information can be found for parents/carers to view.
- There is a Parent Information folder available for parents/carers to view. This folder includes a copy of the Playgroup Handbook, Registration Forms, copies of all letters given to parents etc.
- Parents/carers meet with their child's key person to discuss their child's progress and current/next target(s) at least twice in the school year.
- We have a suggestion box in our reception area for parents/carers to give suggestions for improvements.
- We provide information on weekly themes and activities via a half termly topic letter in the children's weekly diaries.
- We provide opportunities for parents/carers to learn about the curriculum offered in the Playgroup, for example Parents Guide to the EYFS.
- We encourage parents/carers to come in to help in playgroup as volunteers (subject to DBS check).

- We encourage parents/carers to become CIO trustees.
- We ask parents/carers to complete an annual questionnaire; this helps us to know how theyview playgroup, what they are happy with and anything they feel we should change.
- We provide opportunities for parents/carers to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the playgroup.
- All parents/carers have access to our written complaints procedure.
- Events are planned throughout the year that provide opportunities for parents/carers to see children demonstrating things they have learned and to take part in workshops where parents/carers work with their children on particular projects supervised by members of staff.

Updated – April 2009, January 2013, September 2013, March 2014, April2017, May 2018, August 2018, February 2020, January 2021, January 2022, January 2023, January 2024, January 2025.