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.

2.6 Parental involvement – Working in partnership.

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 our 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 that 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.

The Children Act (1989) defines *parental responsibility* as *'all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property'*.

Procedures

- Parents are made to feel welcome in our setting; they are greeted appropriately, there is adult seating in the lobby and provision for refreshment.
- We have a means to ensure all parents are included - that may mean that we have different strategies for involving fathers, or parents who work or live apart from their children.
- We make every effort to accommodate parents who have a disability or impairment.
- We consult with all parents to find out what works best for them.
- We ensure on-going dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.

- We follow up unexplained or prolonged absence promptly, using agreed contact arrangements and recording actions taken, because attendance and absence information may be relevant to a child's safety and welfare.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies, including our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, whistleblowing arrangements, child absence procedures, safer eating arrangements, privacy notices and complaints procedure. We provide information in accessible formats wherever possible and check that parents understand the information given to them.
- Information about a child and their family is kept confidential and processed in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and our privacy notice. We only collect and share information that is necessary, proportionate and relevant. Where information needs to be shared to safeguard a child, support their welfare or meet a legal duty, we do not allow data protection concerns to delay appropriate action. We seek consent where this is appropriate, but recognise that consent is not required where there is a safeguarding concern, a legal obligation or another lawful basis for sharing information.
- We maintain at least two up-to-date emergency contacts for every child wherever possible and ask parents to update contact, collection, allergy, dietary, medical and safeguarding information promptly when circumstances change.
- We seek specific parental consent where required, including to administer medication, arrange emergency medical treatment, take a child on an outing, use photographs or recordings for agreed purposes, and share non-safeguarding information with other professionals. Consent arrangements are recorded, reviewed and updated as needed.
- The expectations that we make on parents are made clear at the point of registration.
- We make clear our expectation that parents will participate in settling their child at the commencement of a place according to an agreed plan.
- We seek parents' views regarding changes in the delivery of our service.
- Parents are actively encouraged to participate in decision making processes according to the structure in place within our setting.
- We encourage parents to become involved in the social and cultural life of the setting and actively contribute to it.
- As far as possible our service is provided in a flexible way to meet the needs of parents without compromising the needs of children.
- We provide sufficient opportunity for parents to share necessary information with staff and this is recorded and stored to protect confidentiality.
- Our key persons meet regularly with parents to discuss their child's progress, wellbeing, attendance and any emerging concerns, and records of relevant discussions are kept securely.
- Where applicable, our key persons work with parents, the setting's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and relevant professionals to agree and review plans that support children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Where applicable, our key persons and designated safeguarding lead work with parents and partner agencies to support any child subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan, early help or family help plan, unless doing so would place the child or another person at risk.
- 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 support families to be involved in activities that promote their own learning and well-being; informing parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language; making every effort to

provide an interpreter for parents who speak a language other than English and to provide translated written materials.

- We consider children's and families' protected characteristics and individual circumstances when planning communication and involvement, and we promote inclusive, anti-discriminatory practice in partnership with parents.
- 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 and [we/I] check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to [our/my] 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. There are opportunities for parents to take active roles in supporting their child's learning in the setting: informally through helping out or taking part in activities with their child, or through structured projects engaging parents and staff in learning about children's learning.
- We have regard to current statutory requirements and guidance on safeguarding, safer sleep, safer eating, screen use, information sharing, data protection and children's welfare, and we review this policy whenever legal or statutory guidance changes.

In compliance with the current EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements and related statutory guidance, the following documentation is also in place at our setting:

- Admissions Policy.
- Complaints procedure.
- Record of complaints.
- Developmental records of children.
- Privacy notice and data protection policy.
- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, including information sharing, child absence, safer eating and whistleblowing procedures.

This policy was adopted by	Stowey Bears Preschool	*name of provider*
On		*(date)*
Date to be reviewed	Reviewed annually	*(date)*
Signed on behalf of the provider	Rachel Penny	
Name of signatory	Julia Jameson	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chairperson	

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Complaint Investigation Record (2015)
- Engaging Mothers & Fathers (2010)
- Safeguarding Children (2013)
- The First and Foremost Series (2008)
- Play cards for the Home Environment (2016)