



# Partnership with Parents and Carers Policy

## **Arrangements for Review:**

**Marian Horton** is responsible for the implementation of this policy and conducting regular reviews. This policy was adopted in July 2010 and will be reviewed in **July 2011**.

### **Policy Context:**

Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery are committed to working in partnership with all parents and carers accessing our services, and to reach out to those in the local area who have not yet come into contact with the centre. Our aim is to promote an open dialogue with families, to encourage families to play an active role and take part in the activities on offer at the centre, and to help them support their child's early learning and development at home. In line with the KCC 'Parents Charter' (available at: [www.kent.gov.uk/publications/education-and-learning/the-kent-parents-charter.htm](http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/education-and-learning/the-kent-parents-charter.htm)) parents/carers can expect to be involved and listened to, have access to high quality staff and services and be treated with respect at all times.

*This policy is linked to all Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery policies, but is particularly relevant to Behaviour, SEN Revised Code of Practice, Confidentiality, Information Sharing, Equalities and Diversity, Emergency Closure, Medication, Food and Drink, Hygiene, Complaints and where appropriate Late or Non-Collection of Children.*

### **Purpose:**

To develop best practice in creating and maintaining strong working relationships with parents and carers to support their child's early learning and development.

### **References/Legislation that inform this policy**

Standard 12 in the OFSTED (2001) National Standards.

Data Protection

Freedom of Information

### **Aims:**

At Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery we aim to:

- Keep all parents/carers informed and involved with how the centre operates, opening times, activities and services on offer, and our policies and procedures.
- Treat all information we receive sensitively, always following our Confidentiality policy. Where information needs to be shared, we will always follow our Information Sharing policy (*available at: [www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Policy/ig\\_home.cfm](http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Policy/ig_home.cfm)*) to ensure that information is shared appropriately and sensitively to safeguard the child and/or the family.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to contribute their own skills and encourage them to become actively involved in the centre, whether by helping with activities and outings informally or by becoming a regular volunteer. We will also support and encourage parents' and carers' own learning and development wherever possible.
- Encourage parents and carers to become active members of the centre (e.g. through a Parents'/Carers' Forum and Seashells Steering Group) and to get involved wherever possible, sharing their skills and ideas or helping with activities and outings.

- Listen to all suggestions, comments and concerns and involve parents/carers as much as possible in developing and reviewing the Centre's policies and procedures, for example by becoming part of a parents' involvement group.
- Ensure that any complaints are dealt with effectively in line with the timescales specified in our Complaints Policy.
- To provide the best for each individual child the Nursery will welcome children and their parent/carers and provide a keyperson to ensure the wellbeing of their child.
- The keyperson will keep parents/carers of Nursery children up to date with the activities their child has been involved in and the progress they are making as part of an on-going dialogue. All parents/carers are welcome to discuss their child's development and progress, and how they can support their learning at home with Nursery staff at any time. Where appropriate this may also involve the Health Visitor / other appropriate professionals.

## **Practices**

### **Communication with Parents and Carers:**

- We will do this through newsletters, letters, parent notice boards, website, and informal communication as well as through our Child and Parents' Involvement Group. We will provide information in a variety of formats or languages as appropriate to make it accessible to as wide an audience as possible, in line with our Equalities and Inclusion policy.
- All parents and carers are entitled to make a complaint if they wish, and the procedures we will follow for responding to complaints are outlined in our Complaints Policy.

### **Promoting good behaviour:**

We will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote positive behaviour among children and, where necessary, to help them challenge any behaviour that gives cause for concern. We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour, through which children learn to respect themselves, other people, and their surroundings.

At Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery children, mothers, fathers and carers are encouraged to begin to:

- Promote positive behaviour
- Understand the effects their words and actions can have.
- Consider the needs and feelings of others, in their words and in their actions.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour, and attempt to make amends when things go wrong.
- Develop self-discipline.

- Respect the need for boundaries and respond to behavioural expectations.

In line with the Parents' Charter, we ask that parents/carers commit to helping their child to be part of a community by modelling good behaviours for them: for example showing them the difference between right and wrong, respect by example, and being fair, loving and kind in the way we treat other people.

For further information on this, please see Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery Behaviour Policy.

### **Recording and Sharing Information:**

- We will treat all information shared with us by parents/carers sensitively, following our Confidentiality policy. There may be occasions when we need to share this information to safeguard the well-being of children or their families; for more information on the processes we will follow please see our Information Sharing policy and Child Protection policy.
- If parents/carers are leaving their child in an on-site nursery they must provide us with the following basic information about their child: name, address, contact details of parent/carer, doctor's name and address, names and contact details of authorised people who may collect the child, and names of anyone who does not have legal access to the child. We ask that parents keep this information updated at all times. We will store all of our records securely.
- In line with our policies on Sickness and Hygiene, we ask that parents/carers do not bring children who are unwell with infectious illnesses into the centre to prevent the spread to other children, families and staff. However, it is helpful if parents/carers inform the centre if their child is diagnosed with any infectious illness, so that we can inform parents, staff and visitors that we have had a case of that infection or illness in the centre. This allows other parents to be on the lookout for the symptoms in their child or themselves.
- **In our nursery and crèches** - We will record details of any health and safety incident, or of a child's sickness, or of medication that parents/carers ask us to administer, so that if necessary we can provide feedback on the care that has been provided by the centre. These records will be kept in a locked cupboard.
- We also ask that parents/carers inform us of any changes to personal circumstances that may have an effect upon a child, e.g. change of doctor, new address, separation etc.

### **Collecting children:**

***For detailed information, please see our Late or Non-Collection of Children policy.***

- Parents/carers who are leaving their child in the care of the nursery or centre must provide the following information:

- Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable);
  - Mobile telephone number (if applicable);
  - Names, addresses and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents/carers to collect their child from the children's centre, for example a child minder or grandparent;
  - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child;
  - Who has parental responsibility for the child.
- On occasions when parents/carers or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they will inform staff of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. A password known by both the children's centre, parent/carer and collecting adult will be used to check the identity of the person who is to collect their child.
  - Parents are advised that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can make arrangements to ensure care is provided for their child. We provide parents with our contact telephone number for this purpose.
  - In the event that children are not collected after a reasonable time (half an hour) from the centre by an authorised adult and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises, we will follow the procedures set out in our Late / Non-collection policy.

**Working with other agencies:**

- Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery work as part of a multi-agency team to support children and families, and particularly to provide support to children and families who have identified needs or who are vulnerable. For more information, see our Information Sharing Policy.
- We will work with wider children's services colleagues if we think a child or a family is vulnerable to ensure that support is put in place to help them. For more information on the processes we will follow, please see our Child Protection policy.

**Policy Implementation:**

- All staff are made aware of this policy as part of their induction, reviews, and training.
- All parents/carers are made aware of this policy and are encouraged to follow the guidelines.
- Partner agencies are made aware of this policy and support its implementation where appropriate.

**Arrangements for complaint:**

These are defined in the Children's Centres Complaints Policy.