



Parental Involvement

We believe that children benefit most from Early Years education when parents and providers work together in partnership.

At Whitsers, 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 Pre-school Playgroup. 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 rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property*'.

Procedures

- We consult with parents to find out what works best for them – that may mean we have different strategies for involving fathers, or parents who work or live apart from their children.
- We ensure ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
- We inform all parents about how Whitsers operates and our policies, through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of Whitsers.
- We inform all parents on a regular basis about their children's progress.
- We involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children – either formally or informally – and ensure parents have access to their children's developmental records.
- We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- We inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- We consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone.

Document Name	Revision Number	Revision
Parental Involvement Policy	Date 2 21/05/2017	
Parental Involvement Policy	Reviewed – no changes 01/09/2019	



- We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and for all.
- We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
- We inform all parents of the system for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and we check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- We provide opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum offered in the setting and about young children's learning, both at Whitsers and at home.

In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is in place:

- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Record of Complaints
- Developmental records of children

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