



Partnering with Parents Policy

The Montessori approach is based on respect for *all* children and every family. Parents are recognised as their child's primary educators and fundamental to their child's experience of a loving and secure attachment base, from which children are able to develop their potential.

EYFS (Revised)

- Good parenting & high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities & talents as they grow up. (EYFS 1.)
- The EYFS seeks to provide...partnership working between practitioners & with parents & /or carers (EYFS III)
- The key person must seek to engage & support parents & /or carers in guiding their children's development at home (EYFS1.11)
- Parents &/or carers should be kept up to date with their child's progress & development. Practitioners should address any learning & development needs in partnership with parents &/or carers, and any relevant professionals (EYFS 2.2)
- When a child is aged two, practitioners must review their progress, with parents &/or carers and Health professionals (Integrated Review). Practitioners should encourage parents &/or carers to share information from the Integrated Review with other relevant professionals. Providers must have the consent of parents &/or carers to share information directly with other relevant professionals. (EYFS 2.5)
- Providers must maintain records & obtain & share information (with parents & carers, other professionals working with the child, & the police, social services & Ofsted as appropriate). Providers must enable a regular two-way flow of information with parents &/or carers. Providers should incorporate parents' &/or carers' comments into children's records. (EYFS 3.67)
- Providers must make the following information available to parents &/or carers: how the EYFS is being delivered in the setting & how parents &/or carers can access more information;....the range & type of activities & experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, & how parents and carers can share learning at home;...how the setting supports children with special educational needs & disabilities; food & drinks provided;...details of policies & procedures;..staffing in the setting, name of key person, telephone number for parents &/or carers to contact in an emergency (EYFS 3.72)
- Providers must make available to parents &/or carers details about how to contact Ofsted. (3.74)

Effective Practices

Staff

- All parents and carers are welcome and it is hoped that they *feel*/ valued in the nursery. *Oaklea* encourages informal discussions, dialogue and questions between staff and parents.
- Staff acknowledge parents' fundamental role in providing a secure attachment base and as their child's primary educator. They recognise that parents' involvement is crucial to their child's learning and development.
- Information is routinely shared with parents in a spirit of co-operation and respect. Parents are invited to read documentation regarding their child's progress on request.
- Staff celebrate children's successes routinely with parents. These include all aspects of their development (social, emotional, physical, language and intellectual).
- Staff may also dialogue with parents and advise on ways in which achievements and challenges may be managed at home. Where parents and staff share strategies and maintain the same routines and boundaries, children are supported and make optimum progress.
- Formal information sharing may be in the form of ITCHs (Invitation to Celebrate Hours), meetings, written brochures, regular letters, articles, observation reports etc.
- Summative assessments based on children's demonstrated development statements and early learning goals EYFS reports are given to parents at the end of their child's time at nursery. They may also be given to parents at other times (Invitation to Celebrate Hours, Integrated Reviews, OnePlan reviews etc.).
- Occasionally, it may benefit a child to involve other professionals with particular expertise. Parental permission and their full involvement will always be sought in these circumstances.
- Key persons have a particular responsibility to build close links individual children and their families. However, most staff will be involved with all the children's learning in a way that complements the Montessori vertically grouped nursery.
- With parental consent, the nursery will enable a two-way flow of information with other providers, if the child attends more than one setting.
- *Oaklea* follows the NSPCC recommendations which state that children should not be left in the care of anyone under the age of 16 years old as they cannot be held legally responsible for a child's safety. In addition, if the duty manager judges anyone unsuitable to care for a child (even if they are over 16 years old), they will contact the legal parents/carers to advise them of their concerns and request that their child is collected by a responsible person.

Parents

- Oaklea acknowledges parents are the child's primary carer. Consequently, *when a parent/carer arrives on the premises, responsibility for that child passes to the parent/carer concerned.* Until that time, staff remain 'in loco parentis'.
- Partnerships with every parent are sought, based on shared responsibility, understanding, mutual respect and dialogue. Opportunities to meet parents with whom we have less contact, such as fathers, will be made wherever possible.
- Unacceptable behaviour. Under no circumstances will the nursery tolerate rude, abusive or intimidating behaviour (either verbal or physical) from parents or adults. Warning letters will be issued and follow on actions will be taken if interactions cannot be conducted respectfully and courteously.
- Wherever possible, Oaklea will find common ground with parents for supporting children at nursery. However, where there is significant discrepancy, staff must adhere to nursery policies and procedures. This includes aspects of managing behaviour (smacking, shouting, naughty chair etc.). See Behaviour Management and Language Policy. In extreme cases, Oaklea may involve external agencies in order to ensure the safety and well-being of children.
- It is recognised that family members and carers have expertise. Oaklea invites parents to use their expertise to support children's learning both at nursery and at home and welcomes parental participation.
- *It is vital that parents use the opportunity at the start of the session to disclose any information that might affect their child's wellbeing at nursery. This includes: the child's health, accidents that have occurred in the last 24 hours, late nights, changing circumstances at home etc.*
- Oaklea encourages parents to develop children's interests in particular activities at home. Likewise, experiences initiated at home are often used to stimulate meaningful learning opportunities at nursery. Parents are invited to communicate these with staff.
- Oaklea's fundamental concern is the children in our care. Therefore, informal information-sharing may need to be re-scheduled to a more appropriate time or place to ensure that the children's needs are met.
- All policies and procedures are available for parents to read and they are invited to contribute to these. In addition, copies of *Reach* are given to all parents so that parents may further understand the special ethos of the nursery. Forms are available for parents to subscribe to *Montessori International* magazine
- Parents are invited to 'Learning Together' a six week discussion based parenting programme.
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Children

- Staff observations of children are documented and inform our planning. These may be shared with parents. All photographs, pictures, recordings etc. are given to parents when their child leaves nursery.
- Children's choices of activities at nursery reflect their interests and sensitivities. These will be routinely celebrated and shared with parents.
- Children are vulnerable and need to be protected by adults. *Oaklea* has a duty of care to safeguard every child (see 'Safeguarding Children Policy').
- Children must be protected from inappropriate behaviour by adults. Should adults exhibit unacceptable behaviour in the nursery setting, they will be asked to leave the premises and authorities may be involved.
- In accordance with other policies, such as, 'Behaviour Management Policy', 'Inclusion Policy' 'Health and Safety Procedures' there may be occasions when it is our duty to inform parents of a specific incident relating to their child. Our intention is for parents and carers to be fully informed of their child's needs, progress and achievements as in all areas of their development. Parents' questions, feedback and views are always valued.