

Parental Involvement Policy

Our Aim

St Augustine's Nursery believes that children benefit from early years education and care most when parents and settings work together in partnership. Parents are their children's first and most important educators.

Our aim is to support parents in this work by involving them in their children's education at Nursery and in the full life of the setting.

Method

A. Communication about the Setting

- We are committed to ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
- We utilise the New Child Induction Procedure to formally collect details about the children on their first day and help settle them into the setting.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies through access to written information, our website, through regular informal communication, emails and our Newsletters.
- We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions; all parents have access to our written Complaints Procedure, which is kept with the Policies.
- 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.

B. Volunteering

- We greatly value parents and carers' involvement and contribution to the children's experiences. It could be to share some of their special skills with the children like cooking, playing a musical instrument, dancing, gardening, to celebrate a cultural event or to speak about their profession, their hobby, or just anything else that might interest our children. We also welcome parents and carers who just want to offer their time with the children.

- Younger siblings are always welcome during parent volunteer days. Older siblings cannot be accommodated, unless on an occasional basis, and agreed with the Nursery Manager.
- Whilst volunteering for a session or a few hours, parents will see what their children do during the day, and how they interact with their peers. It allows parents to develop their own parenting skills and get the support from the trained staff in some areas of parenting they might need advice. The volunteering days help with communication between staff and parents and are greatly appreciated by the children who love to have their parents involved in the setting.
- Volunteering also means helping out with tasks that support the Nursery, for example weekly laundry, the occasional shopping trip, fundraising, photocopying or distributing leaflets.
- The parent volunteer rota is located in the entrance of the setting; parents should write their name on the rota and inform a member of staff.

C. Staff Cover

- On an occasional basis, parent volunteers will be required to cover staff illnesses or mandatory training. Staff will ask parents to volunteer for those specific days and support the team.
- In the case where there is no parent volunteer on the volunteer rota, the setting will post a sign outside the door to advise that a parent volunteer is required for sickness cover. Parents and carers will be encouraged to help out on that day.
- If no parent can be found, the setting will have to close that day - Nursery requires strict adult to child ratios to be maintained to ensure the children's safety and welfare.

D. Outings

- From time to time Nursery children are taken on outings, as these can be an important way to enhance the learning curriculum of young children and help them to understand the world around them. These excursions can include an outing to the local park, library or shops or may be a more distant outing such as to a museum or to the theatre.
- In order to ensure that Nursery outings are planned and carried out with safety in mind, the following guidelines are followed:

Adult:Child Ratio	Activity Description
1:4 & 1:8	Local outing using Walkadile®; children are allowed out of the Walkadile® when the venue is safe to supervise by the number of adults present (i.e: gated area)

1:3	Local outing such as to the local park, library or shops
1:2	Specific outing or using public transportation
1:1	A child with behavioural difficulties or a child whose needs warrant additional support

- In the event that there are not enough parent volunteers for an outing, the outing will be cancelled

E. Communication about the Child

- Parents are informed on a regular basis about their children's progress.
- Parents are involved in the shared record keeping about their children - either formally or informally. The setting ensures parents have access to their children's written developmental records such as Profile books and Tapestry Online Learning Journal and encourage parents to contribute to them.

F. Parents' Committee and other parental expectations

- The Parents' Committee is essential to the running of the setting. Due to our charity status, the Nursery cannot operate without this committee to govern it.
- All parents are encouraged to play an active part in the governance and management of the setting by joining the committee, either by taking on a main role, or a shadow role.
- Parents who do not join the committee will be divided into Support teams. All carers are expected to get involved in other Nursery events that support the organisation. This includes organising fundraising events, manning cake stalls and marketing initiatives.
- Parents should endeavour to attend Committee meetings to be kept informed about the running of the Nursery and share their own ideas and expertise to make improvements where needed. They will be given advance notice of the times of meetings via a posted sign or email so they can attend.
- The Nursery welcomes the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take. It is expected that every family takes active involvement in the running of the Nursery, whether they are a member of the committee or not.
- Parents of each child at Nursery must donate food for the children snacks on a weekly basis.
- Once a term, each parent is asked to wash and dry the Nursery dirty laundry (tea towels, hand towels) at the end of the week and return it on the following week.

- Fundraising events take place throughout the year; proceeds of this are used to buy resources for the children (for example toys, books). It is expected that all parents involve themselves in some way in the running of these.
- As stated in the Admissions Policy, lack of involvement from parents as detailed above may result in future siblings being denied an admission to the Nursery in later years.