

## Parents and Carers as Partners

At Downside we believe that parents and staff need to work together in a close partnership in order for children to receive the quality of care and early learning to meet their individual needs. We welcome parents as partners and support a two-way sharing of information that helps establish trust and understanding. We are committed to supporting parents in an open and sensitive manner to be an integral part of the care and early learning team within the preschool.

The key person system supports engagement with all parents and will use strategies to ensure that all parents can contribute to their child's learning and development. This is done through our online learning journey. Parents contribute to initial assessments of children's starting points on entry and they are kept well informed about their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to support and share information about their children's learning and development at home. The key person system ensures all practitioners use effective, targeted strategies and interventions to support learning that match children's individual needs.

Our policy is to:

- Recognise and support parents as their child's first and most important educators and to welcome them into the life of the preschool
  - Generate confidence and encourage parents to trust their own instincts and judgments regarding their own child
  - Welcome all parents into the preschool at any time
  - Welcome nursing mothers. The preschool will make available a private area whenever needed to offer space and privacy to nursing mothers
  - Ensure that all parents are aware of the preschools policies and procedures. A detailed parent pack will be provided and our full policy documents will be available to parents at all times at the front desk and on the preschools website
  - Maintain regular contact with parents to help us to build a secure and beneficial working relationship for their children
  - Support parents in their own continuing education and personal development including helping them to develop their parenting skills and inform them of relevant conferences, workshops and training, and signpost and display activities in the children's centre.
  - Create opportunities for parents to talk to other adults in a secure and supportive environment through such activities as open days, parents' evenings.
  - Inform parents about the range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, the types of food and drinks provided for children and events through regularly distributed newsletters the preschool website
- Operate a key person system to enable parents to establish a close working relationship with a named practitioner and to support two-way

information sharing about each child's individual needs both in preschool and at home. Parents are given the name of the key person of their child and their role when the child starts.

Inform parents on a regular basis about their child's progress and involve them in shared record keeping. Parents' evenings will be held at least twice a year. The preschool will consult with parents about the times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone

Actively encourage parents to contribute to children's learning through sharing observations, interests and experiences from home. This may be verbally, sharing photographs, in written form and on tapestry.

Consider and discuss all suggestions from parents concerning the care and early learning of their child and preschool operation

Provide opportunities and support for all parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the preschool

Inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, compliments, complaints or suggestions

Share information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, young children's learning in the preschool, how parents can further support learning at home and where they can access further information

Provide home loan bags and reading books to parents.

Provide a written contract between the parent(s) and the preschool regarding conditions of acceptance and arrangements for payment

Respect the family's religious and cultural backgrounds and beliefs and accommodate any special requirements wherever possible and practical to do so

Inform parents how the preschool supports children with special educational needs and disabilities

Find out the needs and expectations of parents. We will do this through regular feedback via questionnaires. We will evaluate any responses and use these to promote preschool practice, policy and staff development.

There will be some amendments needed to this policy as we minimise the time parents spend at the preschool. We will communicate via telephone, email and our usual online channels and ask you to do the same to share information about your child. Staff will maintain safe distancing when sharing information about your child's day. We may contact you via phone or video conferencing to discuss any other matters rather than face-to-face.

This policy was adopted on	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023
Signed on behalf of the Pre school	Julie Russell
Date disseminated to staff	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023
Date for review	September 2024