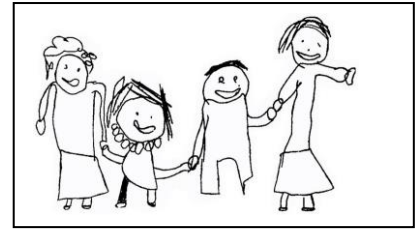


The Ambleside Centre

Parent Partnership Policy



At Ambleside we recognise that:

- Parents are the child's first and enduring educators.
- Children have a unique personal culture, based on their home environment.
- Parent(s) and child(ren) are in a very close emotional relationship.
- Other carers may also be very involved with the child.
- Relationships formed by the child at the Centre may be the first ones made independently from the parent.
- Care for the child's overall welfare is of paramount importance to all.

At Ambleside we aim:

- To establish an equal partnership with parents and children.
- To treat each family with respect, building a relationship with them.
- To demonstrate our belief by the personal way in which we work with each child and their family.

Definition of Terms

In this policy:

- The term parent is used to refer to mothers, fathers, legal guardians and the primary carers of children in public care
- The term Key Worker refers to nursery staff with responsibility for a group of children

Practice

Registration:

Parents are encouraged to visit the Centre to register. Time is given by our experienced admissions team to each family to discuss any issues they may have as well as being sure that they understand all aspects of their application to the Centre. Prior to this, or following registration, parents may choose to go on a tour of the Centre.

Allocation of places in Meadows:

When an offer of a place is made, parents are encouraged to:

- Attend a new parents meeting. These are usually held in the evening to make them as accessible as possible to all parents.
- To accept the offer of a home visit. During these, staff share photographs of activities in the Centre and complete the 'getting to know you' information sheet. Opportunity is also taken to discuss visits to the nursery.
- To visit the nursery with their child/ren. Families are allocated a day and time of the week when they are encouraged to visit sessions prior to entry. During this parents and children familiarise themselves with the environment and some of the routine.

Allocation of places in Pastures:

When an offer of a place is made, parents are encouraged to:

- Accept the offer of a home visit. During these, staff share photographs of activities in the Centre and complete the admissions forms. Opportunity is also taken to discuss visits to the nursery.
- Visit the nursery with their child/ren. During these family visits, parents and children familiarise themselves with the environment and some of the routine.

Settling in:

- Each child and family find starting nursery a different experience. The Staff work in partnership to make this transition process as smooth and positive as possible.
- Meadows - It may be necessary for parents to remain with their child during this settling process and sometimes children may attend for shorter sessions to start with. It is essential that someone (family member/carer) is quickly available in case a child should need them in their first few days at nursery.
- Pastures – Parents/carers are asked to visit on a number of occasions with their child to help them to become familiar with the setting. A plan is agreed where the child visits alone for short periods.

Joining in:

- Parents are encouraged to spend sessions at the centre, joining in or leading specific activities e.g. story sacks. Parents celebrating cultural events or with particular interests, are encouraged to share these with the children.

Children's Records:

- The Learning Journey is shared with parents/carers on entry and is available at any time.
- Parents are encouraged to record evidence of their child's learning at home in the same way that practitioners do. This is added to the record book. Practitioners support parents with this.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN):

- We work in close partnership with parents and others to ensure that all children's needs are met. For further information please see our SEN policy.

Consultation with Parents:

- Parents' views are sought through a variety of methods including:
- Annual Questionnaire
- Transition Questionnaires
- Parent Evenings
- Transition meetings
- 1:1 meetings
- Formal discussion groups
- Parent Tours/Learning Tours
- Evaluation/feedback from sessions and parental courses
- There are parent representatives on the Governing Body

Information gathered is used to help the centre review and develop services.

Communication with parents/carers throughout the Centre is facilitated through the following means:

- An 'open door' policy – parents/carers can visit the Centre during opening hours, at any time (required to sign in)
- A meeting with the Head Teacher can usually be arranged at short notice
- Variety of information – leaflets, letters, emails and flyers
- Centre website
- Parent information boards – Nursery corridors, Reception Areas and Family Room
- Centre newsletter (monthly)
- Daily opportunity to exchange information with Key Worker/staff member
- Policy documents – filed in reception, available to read, or copy on request