



Parent Partnership Policy

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Intent

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up (DfE 2014).

At Living Spring Montessori, we believe that children benefit most from an Early Years education in which parents* and the setting work in partnership. We acknowledge the integral role that parents play as their child's first educators. We engage parents in dialogue about their children's developmental progress, listening and responding to their views to ensure that two-way communication and sharing of information takes place.

When we refer to **parents, we mean both mothers and fathers; which can be birth parents, step-parents or parents who do not live with their children but who still play a role in their child's life through regular contact. Reference to parent also includes carers, adoptive parents, foster parents and same sex parents.*

Our aims are to:

- Support parents as their children's first and most important educators.
- Involve parents in the life of the nursery and their children's education.
- Support parents in their own continuing education and personal development.

Method

To ensure an ongoing dialogue with the parents so that we may work together to support the children's well-being, learning and development, we make the following information available to parents:

- Activities provided for the children and sharing suggestions about learning at home.
- How the Early Years Foundation Stage is being delivered at Living Spring Montessori and how parents can get more information about what their child is learning.
- Details of policies and procedures, including Late Collection, inclusion/SEND (including details of Local Offer), Admission, Complaints, Non-collection and Missing Child.
- All parents are given information about structures, routines and important procedures in their Parent Information Handbook.
- The food and drinks we provide for children.
- Staffing structure in the Nursery, including Key Persons and who to contact in an emergency.
- We ensure that parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with us and that they are kept informed of updates as they occur. Parents can access our Safeguarding Policy from our website and a copy is also kept in our office along with relevant documents such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).

To ensure a two-way flow of information to link home and Nursery, we use the following:

Regularly updated Notice Boards:

- Each classroom has their own notice board so that parents can see who their child's key person is, the daily routine of each class and what activities have been planned. The notice boards also have information about up-coming events in the whole Nursery, as well as developmental information and photo displays so that parents can see the different types of activities each class has available to the children.
- On the parents' information board, parents will find information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Montessori Method, the monthly menu as well as any upcoming parent education meetings.
- As we are an accredited Healthy Early Years Setting, we also provide information to the parents about what they can do to help their children to stay healthy, such as dental hygiene tips and suggestions for healthy eating. Parents may also access information about support for stopping smoking.

- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all children. The United Nations Rights of the Child are displayed on our main notice board. We also display the contact numbers for Brent Family Front Door in prominent places in the nursery so that everyone understands that “Keeping Children safe is everyone’s responsibility” and that they have the phone numbers and email addresses necessary to take action if there are any concerns about any child. We also have displays on E-Safety and how parents can keep their children safe online.

Regular Written Communication:

- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and check to ensure that these are understood.
- We have all our terms and conditions clearly stated and copies are given to all parents.
- Parents sign consent forms such as medication, outing and medical treatment release when they complete the booking process to join our nursery.
- All parents have access to our policies and procedures, which are available on the website or from the office.
- Parents are encouraged to read our policies and procedures as well as the Parent Handbook.
- We check to ensure parents understand the information which is given to them.
- We have regular news letters to share news and events.
- News and details of instructions for the parents are also given in the form of letters and emails.
- We regularly update our website, which contains extensive information for parents.

Ongoing dialogue with parents about their children’s progress and development:

- Regular informal communication; we operate an open-door policy in the office so that parents may come and see us with queries or concerns.
- Upon joining the Nursery, parents provide detailed information about their child in the “All About Me” booklet they fill in as part of the booking in process to ensure transition to our nursery is smooth by knowing as much about your child and their needs as possible. Parents can also comment and contribute to their child’s “Starting Point” so that their child’s interests and special skills are shared.

- As part of the booking in process, all parents are given a Parents' handbook with information about our processes and routines; including staffing structure and who to contact in an emergency.
- Parents are invited to a personal conference with their child's key worker at least 3 times a year. The key worker will summarise the child's activities at school and future plans for development. This is the best time for detailed exchange of information as the child will not be present.
- Informal discussions occur on a regular basis between staff and parents when children arrive and are collected.
- We involve parents in suggesting and participating in outings, themed planning activities and projects for the school.
- Parents are given copies of our termly planning and they are encouraged to come into the classes to share their interests and areas of knowledge.
- Parents are given a written summary each term, including suggestions of activities/strategies to use at home.
- Parents are also given opportunities to contribute to their child's planning and next steps by making comments on the child's termly report.
- We inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training, either by telling them or by showing them what we have displayed on our notice boards.
- Parents are given the opportunity to observe their child in class. This is the most direct way of finding out about the child's experiences at school. By discreetly watching the child, the parents may observe how freely he/she interacts with other children and adults.
- We keep a diary system to exchange information with the parents about food, sleep, nappy changes and daily routine for the very young babies.
- Parents are given daily feedback about their child's day: participation in activities, food and drink and sleep times.
- We discuss with the parents if there are any unusual issues relating to their child during the day and if necessary, make an appointment for a further discussion of any issues which may arise.
- We keep records of children's developmental progress and activities to share with the parents and we encourage the parents to contribute to our planning by suggesting activities their child enjoys at home.
- We ensure that parents have access to their children's written developmental records.

- Through regular assessment and observation, if a child's progress in any areas is a cause for concern, the child's key person will discuss their concerns with the child's parents so that they can work together on a support plan.
- We make links with outside agencies, and help families to access additional support services if required.
- We seek to share information between settings in situations where parents have advised us that their child also attends another setting.
- In the Statutory Framework for the EYFS – Progress check at age two, we are legally obligated to provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development. At Living Spring this process is part of our termly written summary. This progress check will identify a child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, Living Spring Montessori will develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carer, Living Spring's Montessori Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDSCO) and other professionals if necessary (See Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy including the Local Offer, 2019).
- EyLog is a system which enables the teachers to make photographic, video and audio observations of the children. Parents can see and upload observations of their child by logging into the parent portal. Parents are encouraged to share and upload observations from home. Eylog is a great way to track each child's progress and interests, it can also be used as a method of communication between teachers and parents. Each child's profile is confidential and can only be viewed by the child's parents and the teachers.
- All information between parents and staff is strictly confidential and is not discussed other than in a professional manner between staff members. In situations where specialist advice is required with outside professionals information will only be shared with parental permission.

Legal Framework

The children's Act 2004

Working together to safeguard children. A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)

Keeping children safe in education (2019)

Policy Dated: October 2019

This policy is reviewed regularly in line with changes and updates in legislation.

Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2015).

Links with the Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2017:

Section 2: Assessment

Section 2: Progress Check at age Two

Section 3: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

- Staff qualifications, training, support and skills
- Key Person
- Managing Behaviour
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Information and Records
- Information for Parents and Carers
- Complaints
- Information about the Provider