

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to ensure the needs of all children are met.

12.2

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

- We believe that in order for our students to receive quality care and early learning that suits their individual needs, parents/carers and The Ark Centre team need to work together in a close partnership. The two-way sharing of information is key to this.
- The Ark Centre team welcome parent/carers as partners and this relationship needs to be built on trust and understanding. It is important that we, as practitioners, are able to support parents/carers in an open and sensitive manner.
- The Ark Centre wishes to ensure parents are an integral part of the care and early learning team within the Centre.

The Children Act (1989) defines *parental responsibility* as '*all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property*'. (For a full explanation of who has parental responsibility, refer to the Pre-school Learning Alliance publication *Safeguarding Children*.)

Procedures

- Recognise and support parents/carers as their student's first and most important educators, and to welcome them into the life of the Centre.
- Generate confidence and encourage parents/carers to trust their own instincts and judgement regarding their own child.
- All parents/carers are welcome at the Centre, following an appointment booked, where necessary and appropriate.
- Ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the Centre's policies and procedures.
- A detailed parent prospectus will be provided and our full policy documents will be available to parents/carers on the Centre's website.
- Maintain regular contact with parents/carers to help us build a secure and beneficial working relationship for students.
- The therapist will send home a record of what the student has done within the session.
- The parent/carers will be invited once every six weeks to come and observe their child within The Ark Centre.

- Support parents/carers in their own continuing education and personal development and inform them of relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- Create opportunities for parents/carer to talk to other adults in a secure and supportive environment through such activities as open days, parents evening and a parents' forum.
- Inform parents/carers about The Ark centre activities and events through newsletters and emails.
- Operate a key person system to enable a close working relationship with all parents/carers. Support two-way information sharing regarding each student's individual needs both in the Centre and at home.
- Inform parents/carers on a regular basis about their student's progress and involve them in the shared record keeping.
- Consider and discuss all suggestions from parents/carers concerning the care and early learning of their child and The Ark Centre operations.
- Provide opportunities and support for all parents/carers to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the Centre.
- Inform all parents/carers of the systems for registering queries, compliments, complains or suggestions, and to check that these systems are understood by parents. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to learn about the Early Years Foundation Stage and about young children's learning in the Centre and at home.
- Provide a written contract between the parents/carers and The Ark Centre regarding conditions of acceptance and arrangements for payments.
- Respect the family's religious and cultural backgrounds and beliefs and to accommodate any special requirement wherever possible and practical to do so.
- Find out the needs and expectations of parents/carers. These will be obtained through regular feedback via questionnaires, suggestion system and encouraging parents to review working practices. These are then evaluated by The Ark Centre to promote Centre practice, policy and staff development.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies, through access to written information, including our *Safeguarding Children and Child Protection* policy and our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- Information about a child and his or her family is kept confidential within our setting. We provide you with a privacy notice that details how and why we process your personal information. The exception to this is where there is cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, or where there are concerns regarding child's development that need to be shared with another agency. We will seek parental permission unless there are reasons not to in order to protect the safety of the child. Reference is made to our *Information Sharing* Policy on seeking consent for disclosure.
- We seek specific parental consent to administer medication, take a child for emergency treatment, take a child on an outing and take photographs for the purposes of record keeping.

Settling in

- When a new student joins The Ark Centre it can be a very difficult time.
- Each parent/carer will be asked when they register the student any specific difficulties.
- The *Settling In* policy details The Ark Centre process fully.

In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is also in place at our setting:

- Admissions Policy.
- Complaints procedure.
- Record of complaints.

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Complaint Investigation Record (2015)
- Engaging Mothers & Fathers (2010)
- Safeguarding Children (2013)
- The First and Foremost Series (2008)
- Playcards for the Home Environment (2016)