

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS NURSERY POLICY**

### **Parents as Partners**

At EKC Group Nurseries we believe that parents and staff need to work together in a close partnership in order for children to receive a high quality of care and early learning in order 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 each EKC Group nursery.

This policy sets out how we work with our parents to ensure that:

- Their child has the best possible experience
- The needs of their child are met
- Their child is in a safe and nurturing environment

It covers the mutual obligations of both parties and the actions that parents can take if standards are not met.

EKC Group Nurseries will:

- Recognise and support parents as their child's first and most important educators and to welcome them into the life of each nursery.
- Generate confidence and encourage parents to trust their own instincts and judgement regarding their own child.
- Welcome all parents into each EKC Group nursery at any time
- Welcome nursing mothers. Each nursery will make available an area whenever needed to offer space to nursing mothers
- Ensure that all parents are aware of EKC Group nursery policy and procedure. A detailed parent prospectus will be provided, and our full policy documents will be available to parents at all times in each EKC Group nursery reception area.
- Maintain regular contact with parents to help us 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.

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Date of approval:

- Create opportunities for parents to talk to other adults in a secure and supportive environment through such activities as open days, parents' evenings and a parents' forum.
- 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 and emails.
- 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 nursery 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' consultations will be held at least once every 12 weeks.
- Actively encourage parents to contribute to children's learning through sharing observations, interests and experiences from home. This may be verbally, sharing photographs or in written form.
- Agree the best communication method with parents e.g., email, face-to-face, telephone and share information about the child's day, e.g., food eaten, activities, sleep times etc.
- Consider and discuss all suggestions from parents concerning the care and early learning of their child and nursery operation.
- Provide opportunities and support for all parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of each nursery.
- Inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, compliments, complaints or suggestions, and to check that these systems are understood by parents.
- Make sure all parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- Share information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, young children's learning in each nursery, how parents can further support learning at home and where they can access further information.
- Provide a written contract between the parent(s) and each EKC Group nursery 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 EKC Group 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, suggestion system and

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encouraging parents to review working practices. We will evaluate any responses and use these to promote nursery practice, policy and staff development.

## **Procedures**

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their families and we do so by:

- Storing confidential records in a locked filing cabinet
- Ensuring staff, student and volunteer inductions include an awareness of the importance of confidentiality and that information about the child and family is not shared outside of each nursery other than with relevant professionals who need to know that information. It is not shared with friends and family, discussions on the bus or at the local bar. If staff breach any confidentiality provisions, this may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, dismissal. Students on placement in each nursery are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it
- Ensuring that all staff, volunteers and students are aware that this information is confidential and only for use within each nursery and to support the child's best interests with parental permission
- Ensuring that parents have access to files and records of their own children but not to those of any other child, other than where relevant professionals such as the police or local authority children's social care team decide this is not in the child's best interest
- Ensuring all staff are aware that this information is confidential and only for use within each nursery setting. If any of this information is requested for whatever reason, the parent's permission will always be sought other than in the circumstances above
- Ensuring staff do not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs
- Ensuring staff, students and volunteers are aware of and follow our social networking policy in relation to confidentiality
- Ensuring issues concerning the employment of staff remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions
- Ensuring any concerns/evidence relating to a child's personal safety are kept in a secure, confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a 'need-to-know' basis. If, however, a child is considered at risk, our safeguarding/child protection policy will override confidentiality.
- Training staff and students in data protection requirements.

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All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of each nursery, which is to the safety and well-being of the child.

### **Image Use Procedure**

We ensure that any photographs or recordings (including CCTV) taken of children in our nursery are only done so with prior written permission from each child's parent. This is gained when each child is registered and is updated on a regular basis to ensure that this permission still stands.

We ask for individual permissions for photographs and video recordings for a range of purposes including: use in the child's learning journey, for display purposes, for promotion materials including our nursery website and brochure and to use in the local press and for security in relation to CCTV. We ensure that parents understand that their child may also be on another photograph, but not as the primary person, that may be used in another child's learning journey.

If a parent is not happy about one or more of these uses, then EKC Group Nurseries will respect their wishes and find alternative ways of recording their child's play or learning.

Staff are not permitted to take photographs or recordings of a child on their own cameras, mobiles or other devices and only use those provided by each nursery. Each nursery manager will monitor all photographs and recordings to ensure that the parent's wishes are adhered to.

Parents are not permitted to use any recording device or camera (including those on mobile phones) on any nursery premises without the prior consent of the manager.

During special events, e.g., Christmas or leaving parties, staff may produce group photographs to distribute to parents on request. In this case individual permission will be asked for each child before this event. This will ensure all photographs taken are in line with parental choice.

Staff use tablets to record children's development and learning journeys. These tablets must be stored securely each night in a locked drawer. Additionally, tablets should not be left unlocked in classrooms or taken into the toilet areas by staff. All data, including photographs, is classed under the GDPR and data protection act and should be treated as such.

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## **Access and Storage of Information**

At EKC Group Nurseries we have an open access policy in relation to accessing information about each nursery and parents' own children. This policy is subject to the laws relating to data protection and document retention.

Parents are welcome to view the policies and procedures of each nursery which govern the way in which each EKC Group Nurseries operates. These may be viewed at any time when each nursery is open, simply by asking a manager or by accessing the file in reception. Each nursery manager or any other relevant staff member will also explain policies and procedures to parents or use any other methods to make sure that parents understand the policies in relation to their children.

As we hold personal information about staff and families, we are registered under data protection law with the Information Commissioner's Office. A copy of the certificate can be viewed at reception. All parent, child and staff information is stored securely according to the requirements of data protection registration including details, permissions, certificates and photographic images.

Each nurseries records and documentation are kept and stored in accordance with minimum legal archiving requirements. We currently archive records for at least 21 years and three months.

For more information please refer to the main GDPR and Data Protection EKC Group policy

## **Conflict Resolution with Parents**

At EKC Group Nurseries we believe that we have a strong partnership with our parents and an open-door policy to discuss any matters arising (if applicable).

### Verbal and Physical Alterations

In the unlikely event that a parent starts to act in an aggressive or abusive way our policy is to:

- Direct the parent away from the children and into a private area such as the office (where appropriate)

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- Ensure that a second member of staff is in attendance, where possible, whilst continuing to ensure the safe supervision of the children
- Act in a calm and professional way, ask the parent to calm down and make it clear that we do not tolerate aggressive or abusive language or behaviour
- Contact the police if the behaviour escalates
- Once the parent calms down, the member of staff will then listen to their concerns and respond appropriately
- An incident form will be completed detailing the time, reason and action taken
- Management will provide any support and reassurance that staff may need following the experience, and seek further support where necessary
- Management will also signpost parents to further support where applicable

## **Complaints**

EKC Group's Complaints Procedure sets out a clear and transparent process on how complainants can submit a complaint or appeal, how the complaint or appeal will be managed and the timelines in which they will be dealt with.