

Parents and Carers as Partners

At Grantham Farm Montessori School, we welcome all 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 and include them as an integral part of the care and early learning team within the school. Working together ensures we can meet the individual needs of the family and child and provide the highest quality of care and education.

The key person system supports engagement with all parents and we use strategies to ensure that all parents can contribute to their child's learning and development. We ask parents to contribute to initial assessments of children's starting points on entry and they are kept well informed about their children's progress. We encourage parents to support and share information about their children's learning and development at home and the key person seeks to engage them in guiding their child's development at home too. The key person system ensures all practitioners use effective, targeted strategies and interventions to support learning that match most 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 school
- Generate confidence and encourage parents to trust their own instincts and judgement regarding their own child
- Welcome all parents into the school at any time and provide an area where parents can speak confidentially with us as required
- Welcome nursing mothers. The school will make available a private area whenever needed to offer space and privacy to nursing mothers
- Ensure school documentation and communications are provided in different formats to suit each parent's needs, e.g. multi-lingual, printed and electronic communications
- Ensure that all parents are aware of the school's policies and procedures. Detailed parent information is provided on the school website and our full policy documents are available to parents at all times in the school office and on the school 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, where required
- Create opportunities for parents to talk to other adults in a secure and supportive environment through such activities as open days, new parent talks, parents' evenings, school events and to arrange personal communications with each other using the contact information on their child's My Montessori Child portal
- 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 regular emails, the school website and My Montessori Child parent portal

- 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 school and at home. Parents are given the name of the key person of their child and their role when the child starts and updates are given as they transition through the setting
- Inform parents on a regular basis about their child's progress and involve them in shared record keeping. Parents' evenings are held at least twice a year and parents in school mornings are arranged (Covid-19 permitting). The school actively consults with parents about the platform and times of meetings to avoid excluding anyone. We are as flexible as possible to ensure that all parents can be involved
- 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, such as a child's personal 'work book' from home and / or through My Montessori Child
- Agree the best communication method with parents e.g. 'What I did today' forms, email, face-to-face meetings, telephone to share information about the child's day, e.g. learning and play, friendships enjoyed, food eaten, activities, etc.
- Consider and discuss all suggestions from parents concerning the care and early learning of their child and school operation
- Provide opportunities and support for all parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the school including signposting to relevant services, agencies and training opportunities
- 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, Key Stage 1, young children's learning in the school, how parents can further support learning at home and where they can access further information
- Provide a written contract between the parent(s) and the school 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 school 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, active engagement and open dialogue, and encouraging parents to review working practices. We will evaluate any responses and publish these for parents with an action plan to inform future, policy and staff development.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the school	Date for review
<i>September 2021</i>	<i>E. Wetherley</i>	<i>September 2022</i>