

Policy Document No: ELC17
Category: Early Learning
Topic: **Parent Involvement Policy**



Date of issue: January 2008
Last Review Date: December 2016

Considerations:

Philosophy: We recognise that parents/guardians are the first and continuing carers and educators of their children. Therefore, we recognise the right of parents/guardians to be consulted about their own social and cultural backgrounds and have opportunities to participate in the service, to feel a valued member of the centre.

Children's needs: To see that their parents and extended families are made welcome into the service.

Parent's needs: To feel welcome by the services staff at all times and to know that their role of primary care giver is respected and valued.

Staff needs: Staff require the parent's understanding of their role, respect of their professional judgement and advice.

Management needs: Families and staff prepared to work collaboratively to achieve the best results for the children enrolled in this service.

Background and Legislation:

- *Guide to the National Quality Standard, Area 6*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations Part 4, regulations 157, 74, 76, 168 (2.k).. Ministerial Council For Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 2011*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*

Policy Statement

The centre will provide a quality child care service and will operate according to all legal requirements. It will make every effort to reflect the special nature of the community and will encourage parent input and take into account both parents, children's and staff needs in the operation of the service.

How the Policy will be implemented – specific practices and procedures

Parents will be actively encouraged to participate in the management of the service.
Our management and staff work to form effective partnerships with parents through:

- open and honest communication
- genuine trust and understanding
- a commitment to working towards shared goals in relation to the children.

Partnerships in action occur when:

- Parents spend time at the centre to gain a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning environment. By doing this parents can feel confident to contribute their ideas so the teacher can consider them in curriculum decision making.
- Parents participate in social and fundraising events and build a real sense of community around the centre and feel enriched by the experience.
- Parents serve on the Parents' Association and are actively involved in decisions on management and all aspects of the centre. This kind of involvement allows parents to be part of the long-term planning of the centre.

- Parents are involved in a diverse range of review processes during the year. Parents are encouraged to fill out questionnaires and surveys regarding the orientation and induction process, parents are invited to be a part of the policy review process and feedback on the program is invited all year round.

Orientation

- The centre will provide options for orientation to the service for families which will include:
 - An orientation evening/meeting for new families to meet one another and the staff in a relaxed atmosphere outside normal service hours.
 - Inviting new families to visit the service with their child at times that suit them, to familiarise families with the centre prior to the child's attendance.
 - Providing all new families with a conducted tour of the premises which includes introductions to other staff, children and families at the centre, and highlights specific policies and procedures that parents need to know about the service.
 - Ensuring each family has a copy of the Parent Handbook and an opportunity to have any questions answered.
 - Giving family members the opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process.
 - Ensuring all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regard to enrolling their child at the centre.
- When children first attend the centre the needs of both parents and children will be respected. Parents will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period as the parent and/or staff feel may be necessary to ensure the child's well being. The parent may telephone the centre during the day for reassurance that their child has settled in. Staff will make a special point of discussing the child's day with the parent.
- The centre will always consider the feelings and time constraints that families may have in regard to participating in orientation processes and aim to make the experience a positive and welcoming introduction to the service.

Approved by the College Principal:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Keane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'J' and 'K'.

Date: December 2016