

## Supporting Children and Families Policy




### Definitions

- When we refer to “parents”, these include natural or birth parents, including parents who do not live with their children but have contact with them and play a part in their lives, step-parents, same-sex parents, foster parents and other carers with parental responsibility.
- A “looked-after child” is a child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours, whether through being taken into care by the local authority, or being accommodated by them through a voluntary care arrangement. This includes such children living with foster parents or a relative, in a residential children's home or other residential settings, or placed back home with their natural parents.
- “Foster carer” may also refer to more than one foster carer, where there is a joint foster care arrangement.
- Where relevant, “Staff” may also refer to volunteers and students on placement.

### Policy statement

- We are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable all children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.
- We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by:
  - creating an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background,
  - encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence, and
  - enabling children to have the self- confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We promote secure attachments in children’s lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of wellbeing underpin the child’s responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.
- We believe that children benefit most from early years education and care when parents and settings work together in partnership. Our aim is to support parents as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and in the full life of Little Fishes. We also aim to support parents in their own continuing education and personal development.
- Some parents are generally less well represented in early years settings; these include fathers, parents who live apart from their children, but who still play a part in their lives, and working parents. We will ensure that all parents are included.

- We have regard for the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years.
- We ensure, as far as possible, that our provision is inclusive to all children with special educational needs or disabilities and we support those children and their parents.
- We identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs or disabilities and meet those needs through a range of SEND strategies.
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs and those of their family.
- We monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.
- We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked-after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being.
- We believe that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to, who knows them and their parents well, and who can meet their individual needs. Research shows that a key person approach benefits the child, the parents, the staff and the setting by providing secure relationships in which children thrive, parents have confidence, staff are committed and the setting is a happy and dedicated place to attend or work in.
- We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in Little Fishes and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with Little Fishes.
- We aim to make Little Fishes a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.
- We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.
- Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within our programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.
- Biting can be fairly common among children and a concern for both parents and staff. Biting can often be painful and frightening for the child who has been bitten. It can also be frightening for the child who bites, because it upsets the child and can make adults cross. Biting happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances. We aim to understand the reasons behind such behaviour and to provide strategies which enable children to express their emotions in more appropriate ways.

<i>This policy was adopted by:</i>	Little Fishes Pre-school      on    1 September 2024
<i>next review date:</i>	July 2025
<i>Signed on behalf of the provider by</i>	 Alison Carr, Chair of Little Fishes Management Group