

Blackhall Nursery

Partnership with Parents Policy

Blackhall Nursery is committed to a genuine and meaningful partnership with the parents/carers of children at our community nursery. We:

- protect the rights and promote the interests of the children and families who use the Nursery (in accordance with the Scottish Social Services Codes of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers and Social Service Workers).
- meet the needs of children and their families so that children can reach their full potential.
- build positive relationships with our families in keeping with our ethos and values.
- recognise that communication is key to positive attitudes to learning and to children and their families if they need to access extra support.
- support the principles of the National Improvement Framework and are ready to learn and improve from its annual findings.

Our commitment to home - nursery partnerships is embedded in the life of Blackhall Nursery in many different ways.

The Governance Structures of Blackhall Nursery

- Blackhall Nursery is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Scottish charity. The Nursery has a voluntary Board of Directors/Trustees and a Parent and Carer Committee and is run by staff with support from the Board and the Committee. The Nursery's governance structure comprises three groups which all include parents:
 1. the Board of Directors (made up of volunteers who are usually either former parents or current parents) who have overall responsibility for everything the Nursery does.
 2. the Parent and Carer Committee (made up of current parents) which is a sub-committee of the Board.
 3. the Members of the Company (former parents and current parents) who have ultimate control of the composition of the Board and hence the Nursery.

All parents/carers of children at the Nursery are automatically entitled, and are warmly invited, to put themselves forward for election to any or all of the three groups.

Before Children Start

We are delighted to welcome parents/carers and children into Nursery. Opportunities to visit us include:

- an annual Open Day (for an informal visit).
- the Annual General Meeting, to which all are invited, in May/June each year. Directors and members of the Parent and Carer Committee are elected at this meeting.
- an induction/familiarisation visit in June for each child to meet staff and their classmates
- appointments out with these times by arrangement.

Starting at Blackhall Nursery

- A welcome pack is circulated to all parents/carers before their child starts. It includes several forms and policies to enable families to become familiar with Nursery practices and procedures. Our intention is to work with parents to provide consistency for children and support for families. Policies are regularly reviewed by staff and the Board of directors, ensuring that parents are involved in policy-making along with staff.
- You are welcome to stay with your child until they have settled at Nursery. Staff are happy to discuss support strategies with you to help your child settle, as required.
- We host a Parents' Welcome Evening in September to welcome parents/carers and to share information about children's experiences in Nursery. Nursery staff attend this Evening; it is an informal and social opportunity for you to make contact with other parents and with the staff who will care for your children.

Supporting Children's Learning

Children learn best when staff and parents work together. From the outset, staff at Blackhall Nursery introduce parents to key aspects of the Scottish Curriculum, as we recognise that we are the gateway to parental involvement in children's learning. There are many ways in which we encourage parents to support children's progress. These include:

- explaining what Learning Through Play looks like.
- a rich programme of curricular learning which we share with parents through regular emails, the Class Dojo App and your child's 'All About Me' book. Advice on supporting your child's literacy learning at home is included in your child's library bag.
- keeping parents/carers engaged with current practice and thinking about childhood e.g. risky play.
- sharing information through a weekly email and /or Class Dojo App
- Stay and Play sessions.
- celebrations of your child's home and Nursery learning goals.
- parent involvement in our Health and Wellbeing programme
- regular newsletters.
- transition documentation.
- Partnership with Parents advice bags on a range of topics.

Supporting Children's Health and Wellbeing

We work within the national Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) framework to ensure that children are able to learn and progress as they should and that they are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.

If you have any concerns at any time about your child's wellbeing, please do speak to a member of staff. We are always available to you and can help you to access help and support, if required. Health visitors are also an excellent source of help and support to young families. The health visitor is the Named Person until your child starts school and we work closely with health visitors. We also have a parent lending library of books and advice bags which cover topics such as sleeping, positive behaviour etc.

In Nursery, children enjoy activities which may include:

- the Childsmile tooth-brushing programme
- healthy snacks

- learning about healthy eating and making healthy choices
- outdoor play
- regular opportunities for energetic play (including ball skills, football)
- relaxing with mindfulness
- Woodland Walks

To support healthy eating in nursery, we ask parents not to distribute cake or sweets for children's birthdays at nursery – we will celebrate every child's birthday in fun and imaginative ways without sugar.

Communicating with Parents/Carers

- A member of staff is always available, either informally or by appointment, to discuss any concerns or queries you may have.
- There are also opportunities throughout the year at which you can discuss your child's progress with staff, including a 'getting to know you' chat, Stay and Play sessions and a formal parent consultation.
- Photographs and Information about the children's day is shared through the Class Dojo App.
- Nursery staff issue regular newsletters to keep you informed of activities in the Nursery, to suggest ideas on how children's learning can be promoted and extended at home and to provide you with dates for upcoming events.
- Parental visits are greatly encouraged at Nursery to build closer home-nursery links - if you can observe Nursery practice and routines, it gives you a better idea of your child's experience. Stay and Play sessions held during the year provide an opportunity to discuss and share your child's learning and progress.
- Annual social events - the Welcome Evening, the Nursery fancy dress party, the Nursery Sports Day, and fundraising events - are a further opportunity for home-Nursery links to be forged.

Sharing your Skills: Volunteering in Nursery

- We very much welcome parents/carers who wish to come in and help on an occasional, voluntary basis or share their skills and knowledge. Our Volunteer Policy supports our volunteering opportunities.

Policies and Procedures

- We have a number of policies to which we would especially like to draw to your attention: this Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy; the Confidentiality Policy; the Privacy Policy for Parents; the Child Protection Policy; the Complaints Policy and Procedure. These and all our policies are available to read on our website here: www.blackhallnursery.co.uk/governance.

Effective Communication is Essential and Feedback is Always Welcome

- We communicate with parents both informally and formally in many ways including: by email, by text, through our website and Class Dojo, by telephone, with newsletters, with conversations and chats at pick up/drop off, by appointment, through communications in children's busy bags and via the Parent/Carer Noticeboard.
- Parent Committee meeting minutes and Board meeting minutes are available on request.
- Parents/carers have the opportunity to complete Parent/Carer Questionnaires at times throughout the year. Once collated, the results are fed back to staff, parents/carers and the

Board and where appropriate will be incorporated into the Standards and Quality Improvement Plan (SQIP) and into forward-planning for the Nursery. However, we welcome parent comments and suggestions all year round and a suggestions box and comments book are always available in the cloakroom.

- Parents are updated on the SQIP progress and have the SQIP process explained at the AGM and at the Welcome Evening.

Partnership and the Wider Community

As a community nursery, we place great importance on a sense of community involvement. To this end, we organise local visits, build relationships with other local establishments (especially Blackhall Primary School) and through this, help the children to develop a sense of their place in a wider context. To support children and to help their learning and development, we work with a wide range of partners such as health visitors, speech and language therapists, as well as specialists in physical activities such as tennis and yoga.

This policy links to:

Curricular Area(s): Health and Wellbeing

Care Standard(s): 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8

Quality Indicator(s)(HGIOELC): 1.3, 2.5, 2.7

UNCRC Articles : 3, 5

- National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education
- The proposed changes to the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 (to have parent councils for early years centres)
- Setting the Table
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- Volunteer Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

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