Involving and Consulting Children

# Policy

Our setting and all its members of staff are committed, wherever appropriate, to the principle of involving and consulting children when decisions are made that affect them.

**Procedures**

We believe that actively promoting the participation of children in decision-making process is beneficial to children, staff and the setting as a whole.

Our setting’s commitment to involving and consulting children stems from the “listening to children” provisions set out in Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These state that:

* A child’s opinion should be taken into account in anything that affects them.
* Children should have information disseminated in a way that enables them to make choices and decisions.

For children, involvement and consultation helps them to develop new skills such as negotiating, sharing and understanding the perspectives of others. It helps them to understand how decisions are made, and recognises that their opinions are important.

For both the staff and the setting, there are multiple benefits of such an approach such as improved behaviour, a relationship with children based on partnership, a more cohesive environment and activities and decisions over which children feel a sense of ownership.

All children will be listened to and consulted actively. This will take a number of forms, including:

* Listening to what they say in speech and other forms of communication.
* Observing body language and behaviour.
* Role play.
* Through play and creative expression and the use of visual aids.
* Feedback on activities.
* Notice boards and displays that carry important information about activities and any other relevant topics.

Age, maturity and the type of decision being made will determine the extent and nature of children’s involvement. However, the emphasis should always be strongly in favour of involving children.

Consultation and involvement will be regularly monitored and acted upon so that children are able to see that their input has led to visible outcomes. The setting and its staff will also be clear about what decisions children will be involved in, and attempt to offer clear explanations if and when consultation and involvement is deemed inappropriate.