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Parents in Partnership Policy

Effective from: 1 September 2025
Next Review Due: 1 September 2026

Policy Statement

At St Mark's Preschool, we believe that children thrive when their parents and carers are actively involved in their Early Years journey. We are committed to fostering positive, respectful, and supportive relationships with our families. In line with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** and **Ofsted guidance**, we see each child as part of a wider family and community network and aim to build meaningful partnerships that reflect this.

We view each child holistically, considering their learning, development, wellbeing, and home life. Our aim is to create a preschool environment where parents feel welcomed, listened to, and empowered to work alongside us as co-educators.

Policy Aims

- To create a shared understanding between parents and Preschool about each child's needs, interests, and progress.
- To ensure communication channels are clear, respectful, and solution-focused.
- To provide structured opportunities for parental feedback, input, and collaboration.
- To promote the wellbeing of every child through consistent support.
- To uphold our commitment to professional conduct and safeguard the welfare of staff, children and families.

Our Commitment as a Preschool

We will:

- Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families.
- Build strong relationships with parents based on trust, respect and shared responsibility.

- Ensure that each child has a key person, who acts as the main point of contact for parents and helps nurture strong bonds between home and preschool.
- Keep parents informed about their child's learning and development, using observations, assessments, and informal conversations.
- Offer regular opportunities for parents to contribute their views, such as via parent meetings, surveys, and informal feedback.
- Ensure all staff are well-trained, supported, and supervised, and that they act professionally at all times.
- Respond promptly to parental concerns and take all feedback seriously.
- Protect the rights and wellbeing of staff by maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to abusive or threatening behaviour.

What We Ask of Parents

We ask that parents:

- Engage regularly with their child's key worker and stay up to date with their progress and experiences.
- Share information about their child that may affect their wellbeing, development, or emotional needs.
- Attend meetings, workshops, and events where possible to build a shared understanding of their child's journey.
- Communicate in a respectful and constructive manner, particularly when raising concerns or offering feedback.
- Use the designated feedback systems in place and follow the correct channels for queries or complaints (see flowchart below).
- Recognise that staff are professionals working in the best interest of the child and treat them with courtesy at all times.

What the Child Brings

Each child is at the heart of everything we do. We recognise that children:

- Are individuals with unique needs, backgrounds, and personalities.
- Benefit from consistent messages and relationships between home and preschool.
- Learn best in a safe, nurturing environment where adults work together to support their development.
- Deserve to be surrounded by adults who prioritise their wellbeing, voice, and interests.

Safeguarding

St Mark's Preschool is committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all children, staff and families in our community. Staff are trained regularly in our procedures and work in line with the EYFS to ensure that our standards of safeguarding are consistently high.

Occasionally, we may need to speak with parents at the end of the day if we have a safeguarding concern regarding their child. In this instance we will ensure that a conversation is had discretely, away from the child and other families, and that we show respect and understanding in our efforts to understand the context of the incident. We appreciate the cooperation of parents during these conversations, to provide us with any information that might be helpful to us to further support the child at Preschool.

If parents or carers would like to raise a safeguarding concern with the Preschool, we ask that you speak to one of the following people:

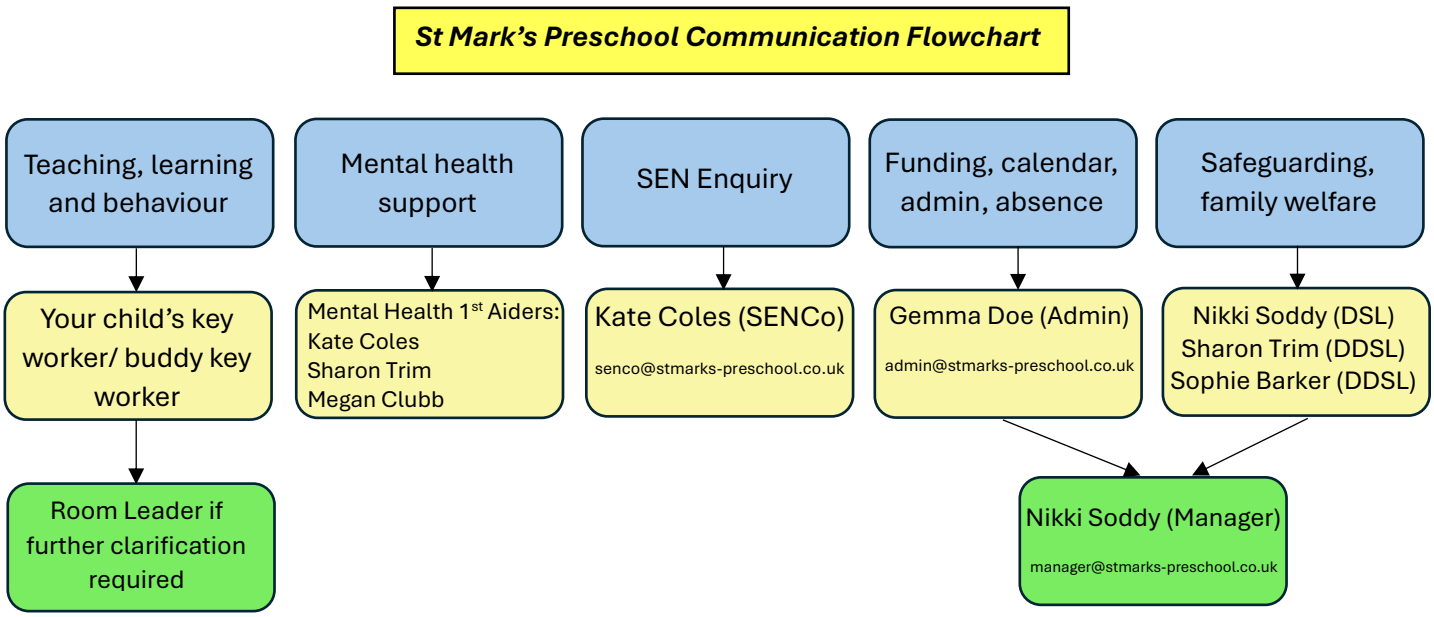
Nikki Soddy (Manager) – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Sharon Trim (Deputy Manager/Room Leader) – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Sophie Barker (Room Leader) – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Communication Flowchart

For questions or concerns about your child's learning, wellbeing, or progress, please follow this flow of communication:



Parental Feedback – Traffic Light System

To support constructive communication and protect the wellbeing of all involved, we operate a **Traffic Light Feedback System**:

🟢 **GREEN – Encouraged**

- Sharing observations or milestones from home
- Asking questions about your child's progress
- Offering suggestions or feedback in a respectful tone
- Praising staff or offering positive feedback
- Requesting a meeting to discuss concerns privately

🟡 **AMBER – Needs Caution**

- Voicing dissatisfaction in a public or emotional way (e.g., at drop-off time)
- Sharing concerns via social media rather than appropriate channels
- Speaking to staff when they are supervising children
- Discussing complaints or concerns in front of your child, out of courtesy and to protect the child's emotional wellbeing

These types of feedback should be redirected to the proper communication flow for resolution.

🔴 **RED – Not Acceptable**

- Defamatory or threatening language
- Shouting or using aggressive or intimidating body language
- Making personal accusations or insults
- Any form of verbal abuse towards staff

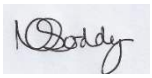
Any parent or family member found to be verbally abusive will be asked to leave the premises immediately**.** A follow-up meeting with the Manager and a Committee member will be arranged to determine whether they may return to the setting.

Protecting Our Staff

Our staff are highly trained, regularly supervised, and committed to providing exceptional care for your children. We have a duty of care to protect our practitioners' physical and emotional wellbeing. We ask that families work with us in a spirit of mutual respect, understanding that we always aim to act in the best interest of the child.

Policy Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes. It will be shared with staff and families and reflected in our staff induction and ongoing training programme.

Signed:  (Manager, St Mark's Preschool)

Date: 1/9/25