St Nicolas Playgroup

Communication Policy

1.0 Policy statement

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality is respected, and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message but also how that message is communicated. Good communication promotes partnership.

2.0 Aim

To ensure that St Nicolas Playgroup is thriving and successful, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our children, with their parents, and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the pre-school community are clear, professional, timely, and appropriate.

Staff should not give their personal details to children or carers. Unless under extraordinary circumstances. They should give specific reasons to management for doing so and seek agreement. Staff should ensure all communications are open to scrutiny. Staff should only make contact for professional reasons.

3.0 Means of communication

- Messages will be relayed via newsletters, notice boards, phone calls, emails, and Blossom.
- The Secretary will post updates to our website, WhatsApp group, and/or via email.
- The Fundraising Group will communicate details of upcoming events to all parents.
- The playgroup committee are responsible for uploading playgroup activities on the Facebook group.

4.0 Communication

Communication is the foundation of relationships and is essential for learning, play, and social interaction. Communication is 'everything', being an effective communicator is essential to developing and forming both personal and professional relationships. Children need to be able to understand and be understood. This policy details the forms of communication utilized within the setting.

5.0 Forms of Communication

- Verbal
- Nonverbal body language, facial expressions/eye contact, gesticulations
- Written - recorded
- Listening

6.0 Communicating with Children

The way we communicate in terms of our tone of voice, body language, facial expression and attitude, impact what we say and how we are perceived. Active listening is key to communicating effectively; being in the moment and giving full attention to what is being said contributes to the child's personal, social and emotional development. Staff should physically be on a child's level when communicating, encouraging eye contact whilst supporting conversation skills. For example, getting down to welcome a child at drop-off time, whilst changing a nappy or feeding a young child.

Staff should give children space to describe and explain their activities and feelings. Children should be given time to think considering their level of knowledge and understanding, use of spoken language, both home and English, and breadth of vocabulary. Staff should remember some children require significantly longer to translate, think, respond and/or communicate, for example, a child with English as an additional language or a less confident child. Children should have their feelings validated; it's okay to feel sad and miss parents or feel cross there isn't a spare bike to ride. Having affirmation for feelings can support a child to self-regulate, make sense of their feelings and grow emotionally. Children should never have their feelings belittled.

Children should have opportunities to think and answer questions without being rushed, an example being, 'What do you like about playgroup' helps the child to think and formulate ideas, express himself, and engage in two-way communication. Closed questions limit or close down the need to think and express ideas, for example 'Do you like playgroup?'. Staff should offer opportunities for children to talk to them and be ready to 'listen' to a child who has something to communicate which supports our Safeguarding Policy. Staff should be approachable, able to listen, and welcome child-initiated conversation. Staff should narrate or provide parallel talk as a child engages in activities to expose them to meaningful language.

6.1 Pre-Verbal Communication

Staff must support pre-verbal communication which is dependent on the age and stage of development. A sensitive practitioner will be able to 'communicate' with children by noticing pointing, staring, facial expressions, etc. Staff can have a 'conversation' with the child. For example, 'oh you would like a story!' Staff should initiate or support the development of pre-verbal conversation skills as a child plays peekaboo or takes turns to pat a drum. Pre-verbal / nonverbal communication can be particularly relevant to babies, children with English as an additional language or children with additional needs.

7.0 Adult Communication

Staff should maintain effective communication channels with team members, parents, stakeholders, and visitors. Personal events or moods should not intrude on the professional management of the day. Always consider how you interact with everyone around you. Staff should communicate with everyone politely and courteously and speak to others as they would like to be spoken to. **Children should never be exposed to any friction between staff.** Conflict happens occasionally, but this should be handled in a professional manner away from the care of children. Staff can speak to the manager about such issues away from the group to find a resolution. Where possible staff are required to try and resolve conflict themselves so that there is a healthy and happy work environment for all.

We are role models and children should not hear staff speaking unprofessionally of each other. Repeat offences will be dealt with by management and disciplinary action may be needed. Bullying is not tolerated.

It is accepted that some adult conversation will take place within the play areas, but as professionals providing 'Quality childcare' we must monitor how much conversation is carried out whilst working with the children. Lengthy or inappropriate personal conversations must not take place over the heads of the children. When working in the play areas discussions/conversations should be in relation to playgroup, area, routines, or planned play activities or experiences. Staff must not discuss individual children in front of the children, or where they are able to hear what is being said.

In staff meetings, staff will get the opportunity to discuss issues and views. Meetings will be held every half term. Minutes will be recorded and made available for staff to refer to.

When communicating with each other outside of work hours, individuals' personal time should be respected and work-related matters should be kept to a minimum. All staff deserve downtime and staff should ask themselves if it is an appropriate time to contact each other over work-related matters or if it can wait.

8.0 Communicating within Playgroup

All staff have access to their manager and the chair of the Committee to discuss issues, views, etc. We operate an 'open-door policy' and staff are welcome to discuss issues with the manager at any point. Time will always be found to discuss any issues/problems if they arise.

9.0 Communicating with Parents and Carers

Parents and staff have a responsibility to share information as they arrive and leave playgroup, with particular reference to any specific information relating to the child, also discussing any key event information and incident/accident which has occurred during the day. Parents will know who their child's key person is and the rest of the team who work with their child. It should be explained that they will not see the child's individual key person every time, but a significant other will be able to feedback on their day. Staff should consider carefully how they speak to parents, describing how their child has been that day, always try and end the conversation with a positive point about the day or child.

Staff should be conscientious, about how, where and when they discuss issues about a child, if necessary, take the parent into another area if the content of the conversation is private, or better discussed out of the child's hearing.

9.1 Parents Information Boards / Displays

Information and news are clearly displayed on notice boards at the playgroup. These boards can be found in the top room. Information will be displayed about news and events, working practices and how parents can report a concern for a child or a complaint about a staff member.

9.2 Playgroup Website

The website provides information to families about the Playgroup.

9.3 Blossom Educational

Blossom is an information management system that stores information about each child who attends the setting. Blossom supports two-way communication between parents and the playgroup. Parents are encouraged to share observations about their child or perhaps significant events that the child can talk about with their peers. Parents that work together with the playgroup in this way contribute to their child's learning and development supporting practitioners to implement individualised planning.

9.4 Working in partnership with parents

Parents are invited to join the Committee management team meetings for coffee, the agenda is created from parent suggestions, and parents are invited to discuss any issues, ideas, or suggestions which impact on the delivery and quality of the provision. If parents wish to join the committee, they are welcome to sign up during the AGM held every October.

9.5 Open days

Twice yearly we hold parent open sessions for parents/carers to come and meet the staff and discuss children's progress, development, and time spent in the setting. Here we can also discuss important subjects such as oral health, the EYFS, and healthy living practices.

9.6 Parent training / Information sharing

We implement information sharing in several ways:

- Telephone communication
- Visual display in the entranceway
- Face to face conversations
- Emails to individuals
- Parent Questionnaire/Surveys
- Letters
- Parent / Child review meetings
- Parent social events
- Posters

This policy was adopted on: 27/02/2021

This policy was reviewed by:	The Manager	Signed
On:	Date: 21 August 2025	VE Evans
Date of next review:	Date: 21 August 2026	