

Partnership working in Out of School settings

To further improve provision and outcomes for children and families, strengthening partnership working is a key statement found within Ofsted inspection reports. This includes working in partnership with not only children and their parents or carers, but also schools and any other professionals involved in helping to meet children's/young people's needs.

Below is a series of extracts taken from various government publications about what the statutory requirements are and how Ofsted judge settings to meet these requirements, in relation to partnership working.

These are followed by examples of statements taken from recent Inspection reports for Out of School settings. Together these will help you identify and plan for what you need to do to improve this aspect of your club's practice.

If you feel you need further support in this area, please contact your Childcare Improvement Sufficiency Officer for support and ideas, or other out of school settings for peer support

Extracts from the EYFS – [Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage 2021](#)

- 3.41 (footnote 5 at paragraph 1.1) Providers offering care exclusively before and after school or during the school holidays for children who normally attend reception (or older) class during the school day do not need to meet the learning and development requirements. All such providers should discuss with parents and/or carers (and other practitioners/providers as appropriate, including school staff/teachers) the support they intend to offer.
- 3.69 Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information (with parents and carers, other professionals working with the child, the police, social services and Ofsted or the childminder agency with which they are registered, as appropriate)

to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met. Providers must enable a regular two-way flow of information with parents and/or carers, and between providers, if a child is attending more than one setting. If requested, providers should incorporate parents' and/or carers' comments into children's records.

- 3.74 Providers must make the following information available to parents and/or carers;
 - how the EYFS is being delivered in the setting, and how parents and/or carers can access more information
 - the range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, and how parents and carers can share learning at home
 - how the setting supports children with special educational needs and disabilities
 - food and drinks provided for children
 - details of the provider's policies and procedures (all providers except childminders must make copies available on request) including the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent and/or carer failing to collect a child at the appointed time, or in the event of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting
 - staffing in the setting; the name of their child's key person and their role; and a telephone number for parents and/or carers to contact in an emergency

Extracts from the [Early Years Inspectors Handbook for Ofsted registered provision 2022](#) that relate to partnership working

- Point 63 and 70 states that when carrying out an onsite inspection the Ofsted inspector must make arrangements to talk to parents. Talking to parents to gain their views on the quality of care and education provided enables the inspector to gain evidence towards the quality of care, teaching and learning that takes place at the setting.

- Point 101 states that wherever possible, the inspector must find out the views of parents during the inspection, including those of any parents who ask to speak to them. This will contribute to judgements about how well the provision works in partnership with parents to support children's learning and development, and the promotion of their well-being.
- Point 102 – says that where the provision has been notified in advance, parents will know that an inspection is taking place. The inspector should consider the arrival times of children and parents to the setting and should set aside time to speak to parents. The inspector may arrange to speak to parents by telephone if this is more convenient for parents.
- Point 103 states that if the inspection is carried out with no notice, the inspector must check how the provider obtains and uses their views to improve its service. If there is no evidence relating to this, the inspector must consider whether the partnership with parents is good enough and the inspector may choose to contact parents by phone to request their views.

In applying the EIF to inspections of before and after school care and holiday provision:

- Point 240 states that the provider must demonstrate how they work in partnership with parents, carers and others.

Extracts from recent Ofsted inspections within Leicestershire in relation to partnership working for those out of school settings that have been graded as 'met'

Working in partnership with parents

- The manager strives for strong partnership working between staff and parents. Staff make timely referrals to services that offer extra support to families when this is needed. They communicate with parents effectively and share daily information about children's care and activity. Parents say that they are very happy with the service that the staff provide.

- Parents are very positive about the club. They say one of the strengths is the excellent communication from staff. Parents say when they collect their children, they are always informed about what they have enjoyed doing and what they have eaten. Parents comment that they would not hesitate to recommend the club to other parents.
- Partnerships with parents are effective. Staff take time to talk to parents at the end of the session and share important messages from the class teacher. Parents are happy with the service offered by the club. They express how staff are wonderful and how their children enjoy the play activities offered to them.
- Managers share a termly newsletter to keep parents informed of activities, news and upcoming events. Staff speak to parents regularly and communicate important messages by text, email and on a parent noticeboard
- Any concerns are dealt with swiftly and resolutions communicated to parents clearly.
- Staff are keen to get feedback from parents on the quality of the club. They value this information to help them continue to provide a quality service for families.

Partnership working with schools

- The manager communicates regularly with the school leaders. They discuss children's welfare and ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and included in all activities. This results in a partnership which promotes children's continuous care.
- Effective communication takes place between the club and the host school. Staff find out about topics children are covering in class, so they can plan further activities at the club. They ensure any messages from school are passed on to parents when they collect their children.

- Staff work well in partnership with schoolteachers from the host school. They find out what children are learning during their day at school. Staff use this information to broaden children's experiences.
- The manager and staff work closely with the host school and the teachers who work there.
- Staff work well with teachers and parents to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in the club and that their individual needs are met.

Working in partnership with children

- Staff use verbal and written feedback from children to evaluate and improve the provision. They encourage children to have their say and to be involved in making decisions.
- Children feel comfortable telling staff about their home and school lives. Staff are interested in children and listen to them. They take the time to have meaningful conversations with children. This helps children feel valued and heard.
- Staff find out about the experiences and interests' children have at home and include these in their planning.
- They listen to children's comments and make changes to improve the experiences they have at the club.
- Before children start at the club, staff find out from their parents all about their children's likes and dislikes. Children visit with their parents for a taster session to meet the staff. When children start at the club, they settle quickly as they are already familiar with the staff and routines of the club.

(Ofsted, 2022/23)

Useful resources

[Building successful relationships with your host school – a guide for Out of School providers](#)

[Building effective partnerships with your Out of School provider – a guide for schools](#)

[Working with others – PACEY fact sheet](#)

[Foundation Years – working with parents](#)

[Out of School Information, support, and resources](#)

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