

2.1 Respecting Each Other

Every interaction is **based on caring professional relationships** and respectful acknowledgement of the **feelings** of children and their families.



Friendships

- Friendships and relationships are an important part of children's development from birth.
- As children develop socially they begin to choose best friends and show preferences for the children they wish to play with.
- While friendships and relationships are a source of fun, they also offer children the chance to give and receive practical help and emotional support.
- Remember that making friends is not easy for all children, particularly those who are shy or who find it difficult to cooperate with others.

Understanding feelings

- At times we all experience strong emotions as we deal with difficult or stressful events.
- Adults and children experience a wide range of feelings. Children gradually learn to understand and manage their feelings with support from the adults around them.
- Recognising their own feelings helps everyone to understand other people's feelings and to become more caring towards others.
- When each person is valued for who they are and differences are appreciated, everyone feels included and understood, whatever their personality, abilities, ethnic background or culture.

Professional relationships

- If you value and respect yourself, you will do the same to others.
- Professional relationships focus on respecting and valuing the strengths, skills and knowledge of the people you work with and recognising the contribution made by everyone in your setting.
- There should be open communication to ensure that everyone's views are listened to and considered fairly, always keeping the needs of the children firmly in mind.
- Professional relationships are based on friendliness towards parents, but not necessarily friendship with parents.



Effective practice

- Make time to listen to parents to learn about their feelings and identify any concerns.
- Be aware that many factors will influence children's and families' sociability. They may be tired, stressed or trying to communicate in more than one language.
- Help children who find it difficult to get on with others by showing them how to play and be friendly with other children.
- Recognise the strengths of professional relationships in creating an approach that best meets the needs of individual children.



Challenges and dilemmas

- Having strong feelings about an issue which may be a barrier to supporting a child or their family if they encounter a similar event or experience.
- Having strong relationships in the team which make other team members feel excluded or inadequate so they stop speaking up.
- Maintaining a professional distance from parents while working closely in partnership with them.



Reflecting on practice

How does the setting support mutual respect between the following:

- individual staff members or teams;
- staff members and parents;
- staff members and children;
- parents and children;
- children and children;
- diverse groups?

What do I do next?

- **Welfare requirements** are explained in full in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* booklet.
- **Areas of Learning and Development** including effective practice, planning and resourcing at different stages are detailed in the *Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage* booklet and on the CD-ROM.
- **Early Support** information is available on the CD-ROM under areas of Learning and Development.
- **Research and resources** are available on the CD-ROM.

