

SHIRLEY CHILDREN'S CENTRE USE OF CHILDREN'S CENTRE BY OTHER AGENCIES

This policy links to the following:

- Child Protection and safeguarding
- Equality and Diversity
- Sun protection
- Complaints
- Volunteering
- Smoking, alcohol and drugs
- Partnership with parents
- Confidentiality
- Learning, play and play equipment
- Publicity and marketing
- Family trips and off-site activities
- Food management

Document Control

Amendment History

Version/Issue Number	Date	Author	Remarks/Reason for change	Review Date
1	October 2014	Eyullahemaye Henry-Miller	To be ratified by the governing body	October 2015
2	October 2018	Nicky Cook & Katie Coomber	As above	October 2019
3	November 2019	Katie Coomber	Reviewed	November 2020

Use of Children's Centres by other Agencies

Statement of intent/policy approach

Shirley Children's Centre recognises that agencies from the private, voluntary or independent sector may wish, or have a duty, to provide services to the local community, with a particular focus on children/ young people and their families. Where possible, and with appropriate agreement from both parties, this centre welcomes the contribution that other agencies can make, and seeks to collaborate with such parties. In some cases this may involve allowing staff to base themselves in the centre, and use its facilities to work with families.

Shirley Children's Centre encourages the use of income generation by hiring out centre facilities, at the discretion of the centre manager.

Aim/purpose

Shirley Children's Centre will:

- Work in partnership with all local agencies, recognised by Croydon Council, who may wish to provide services to local families
- Inform, advise and support local groups and organisations on providing services to families
- Contribute to the strategic planning, fund raising and other relevant activities of local groups and organisations if requested
- Direct families to other local community groups as appropriate
- Liaise, on a regular basis, with local community partnerships
- Identify and consult over services appropriate to local needs and activity, which may include the provision for outreach work
- Contribute to the running costs of the centre by hiring out rooms to external groups and agencies, if not needed for core centre activities

Scope

This policy applies to everyone in the centre including staff, volunteers, families and visitors.

'Staff' includes both those employed by the Croydon Council as well as those from other agencies who provide services for the centre, as part of the multi-agency framework delivering the Every Child Matters change for children agenda.

This also applies to staff from the statutory and non-statutory sector; the latter includes private, voluntary and independent groups.

Legal context

This policy is covered by:

- Statutory Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Early Years Foundation Stage Principles 2018: **A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments, Learning and Development**
- The Children Acts 2004, Adoption and Children Act 2002

- The Childcare Act 2006
- Information Sharing: practitioner's guide 2006
- Child and family wellbeing assessment and outcomes based plan 2019
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Children's Centres Statutory Guidance 2013
- The Duty to Promote Community Cohesion 2007
- The Equality Act 2010

Mandatory systems and procedures

After an initial enquiry from an external agency, a meeting will be held between the centre manager and the worker, or the relevant manager, from the interested agency. This meeting should cover the following points:

- The core business of the agency/organisation needs to be checked against the Every Child Matters (ECM) core offer for the Children's Centres, services to young people and/or families
- An examination of the practical nature of the proposed activity. This represents part of the risk assessment process
- The hire charge for the rooms needs to be agreed. This should have been set in advance by the centre manager, and should reflect a comparable local rate for similarly resourced venues. A standard hiring agreement form should be used; see appendices 1 and 2
- Room availability, duration and any specialist equipment needed e.g. overhead projector, TV/DVD player; Shirley Children's Centre may make an additional charge for this
- Any refreshments that are needed, for either the staff or families that they might work with, will need to be budgeted for separately or provided by the external agency
- Where services are being commissioned from a budget held by the centre manager, then a Service Level Agreement (SLA) or Partnership Agreement needs to be drawn up by the Centre Manager
- Insurance needs to be checked; if a SLA is to be used then there should be a standard clause indicating that the commissioned agency needs to have Public Liability Insurance to the sum of £10 million. If the use of a SLA is not appropriate e.g. My OutSpace providing bookable employment surgeries then the centre manager will need to check that the agency has this to cover their own services. As part of the hiring agreement, the external agency will sign to the effect that they are covered by Public Liability Insurance
- Where services are to be provided by another part of the Children and Young People's Directorate (CYPD), or the Health Service, then there is no charge for hosting their staff since they form part of the Children and Young People's Plan. Other parts of the Croydon Council may be charged, according to local discretion

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- Some staff may simply need space where they can work with families on a drop-in basis. Other staff may require access to desk space and IT access.
- Car parking, for both staff, families and visitors, must be considered; this is often an issue of great sensitivity in built-up urban areas
- Storage space for equipment must be considered; many centres do not have a great capacity for this
- It is vital that the information sharing protocol is clearly understood and more importantly, used
- A staff induction will need to be arranged, which will cover health and safety requirements, sight of the relevant policies for the centre and a clear understanding of their contents
- Any publicity will need to be approved by the centre manager prior to its display
- If the Children's Centre is to be used out of hours (evenings or weekends) a risk assessment needs to be considered on the client group. Potential lone-working for the staff deserves special attention and also arrangements for unlocking the building and disarming any alarms. In some cases, a caretaker may be employed by the centre or school
- The external agency using the centre must have a reliable emergency phone contact (which is kept updated) and be familiar with centre emergency systems and protocols

Implementation, methods

- The Children's Centre Manager and the external agency's staff will need to meet regularly to ensure the smooth running of this arrangement. This should be fortnightly for the first month (when the centre is used on a weekly basis) and hereafter monthly or at most, termly. The centre manager may wish to use discretion over this, and also involve the manager of the external agency if appropriate.
- It is the duty of the Children's Centre Manager to make a written record of each meeting which is then sent to the external agency for information
- In cases of difficulty or conflict the Children's Centre Manager reserves the right to terminate the agreement, but only with the approval of a Senior Manager, and after consultation with the relevant manager of the external agency
- If the external agency is funded through a Service Level Agreement (SLA), it may need to be refunded for monies lost. Details of this will be held in the relevant section of the SLA

Self evaluation form (SEF) and annual conversation

This will be monitored on an annual basis with the Local Authority.

Monitoring and reviewing

- It is the responsibility of the Children's Centre Manager to monitor and review the effectiveness of all policies relating to the centre

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- The Children's Centre Manager will review and update this policy as needed
- The Children's Centre Manager will update and amend this policy and its procedures in line with any emerging and relevant government legislation or Croydon Council guidance

For further information please contact:

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It is intended that by adopting this policy and keeping staff, volunteers, families and the management committee informed/trained and up-to-date with procedures, the centre can avoid the need for complaints.

However, the Children's Centre Manager is the first point of contact should any queries arise over this policy and its related procedures.

Policy endorsement

This policy is agreed and signed by the governing body of Forest Academy School