

Judith Kerr Primary School

Home-School Agreement Policy (a CfBT Schools Trust standard policy)

October 2017

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Owner	CfBT Schools Trust	Next review due	September 2018
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Policy: Home-School Agreement

Aims of this policy

This Home School Agreement Policy encapsulates our belief that parents are a child’s first and most important educators. It is designed to help achieve the highest possible standards of achievement through close communication and effective partnership with parents. At the end of this policy is the Home-School Agreement which parents are asked to read carefully and then sign the declaration.

Scope and publication

This Home-School Agreement Policy applies to all pupils and their parents at Judith Kerr Primary School.

This policy is available on the school website.. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required. Please contact the school administrator if you would like support with this.

Who was consulted?

In drawing up this policy and agreement we surveyed parents and carers to clarify their expectations of the school. In addition, we reviewed current practices in communicating with parents and pupils. Pupils were invited to comment on the extent to which the School Council provides an effective vehicle for consulting them and involving them in decision-making. Reference was made to the sections in the Ofsted report relating to engaging with parents and outcomes for pupils.

Relationship to other policies

This policy relates most closely to the Homework, Behaviour and Pupil Registration Policies. It impacts on our approach to the prospectus and our aims and values. It is also relevant to many other school policies.

Ethos of the school

The ethos of the school is to foster positive relationships between all members of the school community, including all pupils, parents and staff. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination are not tolerated. The school will act fairly in relation to pupils and parents and we expect the same of pupils and parents in relation to the school and its staff.

Communication with parents

Excellent communication with parents is essential to the ethos of the school and is encouraged through a variety of methods:

- the school prospectus and updated website
- the school’s Facebook page
- the school’s Twitter feeds

- start-of-year meetings for parents/carers to get to know the class teacher and make a note of any future dates, explain any general policies, discuss children's growing and changing needs
- parent/carer information sessions to explain principles of pedagogy and support children's learning
- assemblies: including class, year group, harvest, festivals and celebrations and end of term
- open mornings
- school reports on pupil progress and achievement
- parent/carer consultation sessions (see the guidance set out in Appendix 2)
- meetings between staff and parents
- weekly newsletters
- letters and reports
- published calendar dates
- displays and notice boards
- circulation of documents, policies and minutes of relevant meetings
- formation of a Parents/Carers' Council

Assistance will be provided for parents/carers with any disability or difficulty, including for those parents for whom English is a second language, to assist with communication with the school as required. Please contact the school office for assistance.

Consultation

Regular consultation with parents/carers is also an integral part of the school's ethos. We always endeavour to take account of the views and feedback of parents and carers.

This will include consultation on general levels of satisfaction with education provision, selected aspects of the school's work and on the impact of specific initiatives.

Methods used will include:

- surveys/questionnaires conducted by the school or commissioned by professional companies and external agents
- face-to-face interviews
- phone interviews
- School Council meetings
- focus groups or involvement of selected parent representatives
- newsletters
- email
- Facebook, Twitter or other social media; or
- text messages.

Success criteria

The success criteria for judging the effectiveness of parent/carer engagement strategies are:

- parents/carers feel welcome when they come into the school and report that they have ready access to the staff they need to meet
- parents/carers often give positive feedback and the number of complaints is low
- a growing number of parents/carers volunteer to help in school activities

- there is a high attendance at school events and there is frequent use of the school's website and social media pages
- responses from surveys are strongly supportive
- parents/carers find reports informative and helpful and feel able to support their children's progress.

Responsibilities and expectations

The school will do its best to:

- communicate and consult with parents as set out above
- regularly celebrate children's achievements
- encourage children to do their best at all times, to think of themselves and to achieve their full potential
- encourage children to take care of their surroundings and others around them
- care for the children's safety and general wellbeing
- provide a balanced curriculum and meet each child's individual needs
- be open, friendly and welcoming at all times and offer parents the chance to become involved in the life of the school
- encourage children to make healthy choices
- operate and enforce a balanced Behaviour Policy and School Rules
- provide structures to support parents/carers and involve them socially as well as educationally in the life of the school.

We require parents/guardians/carers to do their best to:

- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- ensure that the school has up to date contact telephone numbers
- ensure that their child is dressed appropriately for school in line with the School Uniform Policy
- ensure their child has the appropriate equipment for school where possible
- support the school's guidelines on good behaviour and disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy
- provide a written note or a telephone call to explain an absence
- attend open evenings or review meetings to discuss their child's progress
- tell the school about any problems at home that might affect their child's behaviour
- encourage their child with homework and ensure it is completed on time
- encourage and support their child to eat well and make healthy choices
- support their child in responding positively to the general expectations and regulations of the school.

The school expects pupils to do their best to:

- come to school regularly and on time
- be polite, friendly, kind, and helpful to everyone
- act appropriately and follow the school rules and Behaviour Policy
- show respect for the belongings of others and their own work

- work hard at school and do their homework/home-learning tasks.

Together we will:

1. support pupils' learning, to help them to achieve their best
2. assist with any special needs
3. encourage pupils to keep the school rules.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Headteacher will ensure that this policy and the agreement are reviewed at least every two years in consultation with parents, pupils, staff and Local Governors.

Appendix 1: Exemplar Home-School Agreement

Pupil's name:

Year Group:

I understand that the official end of the school day is 3.15pm and I give my permission for the school to dismiss my son/daughter 15 minutes early at 3:00pm providing his/her conduct and work have been acceptable throughout the day.

I will:

- ensure that my child attends school regularly and on time
- ensure that the school has my up to date contact telephone numbers
- ensure that my child is dressed appropriately for school in line with the school's Uniform Policy
- ensure my child has the appropriate equipment for school where possible
- support the school's guidelines on good behaviour and disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy
- provide a written note or a telephone call to explain an absence
- attend open evenings or review meetings to discuss my child's progress
- tell the school about any problems at home that might affect my child's behaviour
- encourage my child with homework/home-learning and ensure it is completed on time
- encourage and support my child to eat well and make healthy choices; and
- support my child in responding positively to the general expectations and regulations of the school.
- attend parent information sessions arranged by the school to support learning at home

The school will:

- communicate and consult with parents in line with the Home-School Agreement Policy
- regularly celebrate children's achievements
- encourage children to do their best at all times, to think of themselves and to achieve their full potential
- encourage children to take care of their surroundings and others around them
- care for the children's safety and general wellbeing
- provide a balanced curriculum and meet each child's individual needs
- be open, friendly and welcoming at all times and offer parents the chance to become involved in the life of the school
- encourage children to make healthy choices
- operate and enforce a balanced Behaviour Policy and School Rules; and
- provide structures to support parents/carers and involve them socially as well as educationally in the life of the school.

Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ Date _____

School

Appendix 2: Parent/carers consultation meetings – guidance notes

Parent/carers consultation evenings are one of the school's biggest opportunities to communicate with parents/carers. It is essential for any school to make these a success.

Preparation

Teachers will be in place well before their first appointment. Teachers will have available for consultation: pupil records, list of appointments, notes, papers, pen and diary.

Staff will have regard to their appearance and that of their surroundings. A professional appearance must be kept at all times; parents/carers need to feel that they can take the teacher's message seriously.

Beginning the interview

For some parents/carers, coming to see teachers creates anxiety. Staff must aim to put parents/carers at their ease (smile, say hello clearly and make sure of their name). Staff will introduce the child's name into the conversation as quickly as possible to assure the parents/carers that you know him or her.

Sequence of interview

Staff should strive to be honest, informative, analytical, constructive and supportive. If members of staff are going to be critical of a pupil, they should begin by mentioning one of his/her strengths. Staff opinion should be clearly supported by evidence and should suggest a constructive way forward.

The interview only lasts a few minutes, so try to shape it. For example: 'This is where x is now, this is where I think they ought to be going, so these are the steps that x, together with the school and parents/carers ought to be taking to get there.'

An effective parent/carers/school partnership is essential in supporting the child and conveying the same message to him/her. Staff should observe parents/carers closely, and maintain good eye contact, being aware of any feedback, both verbal and non-verbal.

If a parent/carers becomes aggressive or critical, staff should remain calm and professional. Refer him or her to a senior member of staff.

If a pupil is to be told of a decision at the interview, staff and parent/carers should decide clearly who is going to inform the child, and note the action in the minutes of the meeting.

Ending an interview

Staff should ensure meetings are kept in a timely fashion. It is unprofessional and inconsiderate to get very behind the schedule and to keep parents/carers waiting long after their appointment.

Generally

If staff need to make notes about an interview, this should be done before seeing the next appointment. If staff have promised future contact or actions, these should be noted in the minutes of the meeting and recorded in a diary or calendar.

Recording discussions

Each child's Pupil Record should have a Parent/Carer Interview Sheet attached and any significant remarks or points made at parents'/carers' evenings, or *any* casual parent/carers consultations, should be recorded as and when necessary.