

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS POLICY

Aims

We work together to provide high quality education in a safe and stimulating environment. We aim to produce an accurate assessment of the pupil's current learning abilities in order to work with the pupil, their family and multi-disciplinary professionals to identify a learning pathway that takes into consideration the social and emotional wellbeing of the pupil.

In working with parents and carers we aim to:

1. Develop a shared understanding of our aims, values, policies and practices.
2. Encourage parents' participation in their child's learning.
3. Create a relationship based on shared responsibility and mutual respect.

We acknowledge that parents and carers are going through a very difficult time in their lives.

- Some parents and carers are highly traumatised
- Likely to feel a loss of control
- Grief and bereavement – grieving the loss of the child they had before the accident or illness and the effect on the immediate and wider family and community
- Adjusting to their "new" child with different hopes and aspirations

This can present challenges for staff.

- Spending time with families at one of the most difficult times in their lives
- Dealing with the varying emotions of the child and family including grief, anger and frustration
- Not all parents and carers are resident so communications can be at a distance and sometimes just in more formal meeting so building relationships can be difficult
- Parents and carers need to trust teaching staff with their child and it is often one of the first times they will have left them completely
- Parents and carers often attend therapy sessions but do not attend school sessions which they can find hard to accept
- Explaining that their child is no longer at the same academic level as they were prior to their injury

How we work with parents and carers.

Initial meeting with parents and carers

- Gaining a picture of previous interests and academic abilities/challenges if appropriate
- Informing parents and carers about the day to day organisation of the school
- Talking to parents and carers about the curriculum overview for their particular class
- Providing an induction pack including school information and a newsletter providing an overview of the term ahead, the curriculum and staffing arrangements, plus an additional class letter that explains how the pupil's class operates.

(Copies of current and past newsletters are available in the office and on our website.)

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Formal meetings

- Monthly multi-disciplinary meetings
- Attendance at Discharge Planning Meetings
- Sharing reports and IEPs with parents and carers

Informal contact

- Before and after school sessions when either dropping off or collecting their child
- Arranging an after school meeting together to share any concerns
- Joining 'special' events/days where covid risk assessments allow
 - Special festival celebrations
 - Curriculum days – sports/music/art/festivals/book days

Informing Parents and carers

- School policies are available on request to parents or carers from the school office and key policies are on our website.
- In the induction pack, we make clear how much we value parent support. The importance of the relationship between school and home is explicit within our:
 - School aims and values
 - Induction pack
 - Home-school Partnership Agreement
 - Induction meeting
 - Key policies – e.g. Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Equal Opportunities
- Informing parents and carers about their child's learning
 - Many parents and carers remain on site during their child's placement and may see their teacher daily for informal updates.
 - All parents and carers are contacted at least monthly, if not on site, through emails, informal meetings on request and regular monthly review meetings.
 - Teachers arrange a time to talk to parents and carers about their child's IEP targets and go through their school report prior to its distribution.
 - At the end of each term a newsletter celebrates everyone's achievements.
- Reports
 - Initial reports are assessment reports including an individual education plan.
 - Updated education reports detail any changes that have occurred since the full initial report was written with an updated individual education plan and may also include curriculum targets.
 - Advice for an Education, Health and Care Plan. These reports are very detailed and give a clear picture of a pupil's ability, the difficulties they encounter in accessing the curriculum and the school environment, the support that has already been put in place and the strategies that may be needed when they return to school.

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- Discharge reports provide as clear a picture as possible of a pupil's ability, areas of difficulty and the support required; these reports may be replaced by the assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Responding to Concerns

- Parents and carers are encouraged to speak to teachers if they have a specific concern about their child. Parents and carers should ask to make an appointment to discuss matters with the class teacher at a mutually convenient time – often at the end of the teaching day.
- Similarly, teachers will consult parents and carers if they have any concerns about a pupil. It is always helpful, when there is a concern or query, to meet with the class teacher as soon as possible.
- We are committed to solving problems quickly and this can prevent minor issues or misunderstandings becoming major problems.
- The teacher may ask you to raise your concern with the Headteacher if it is a whole school matter or if s/he feels a parent or carer requires further information or reassurance. A Complaints Policy is available for parents and carers on the school's website.

Continuing our partnership.

- Parents and carers are asked to fill in a discharge questionnaire
- Suggestions from the questionnaires are followed up and acted on
- Parents and carers are given a permission to 'follow up' their child when they transition to another school on discharge
- Parents and carers are given copies of our records of visits to their child in their next placement