



## Policy Statements and Procedures

# PARENT PARTNERSHIP POLICY

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### Introduction

At Hewens Primary School, we understand the importance of, and value parental involvement in the life and development of the school. We value being partners with our parents in their children's education and fully recognise that parents are the most important influence in a child's life, and that the school is most effective when there is a strong partnership between parents, carers, guardians, children and staff.

We believe that education is a collaborative enterprise and we are therefore committed to establishing and maintaining an effective and purposeful working relationship between home and school. We recognise and respect that parents hold 'parental responsibility' for their child/ren, and are their children's first and most enduring educators.

When we refer to 'parents' we mean both mothers and fathers, carers and guardians; these include both natural or birth parents as well as step-parents and parents who do not live with their children, but have contact with them and play a part in their lives. 'Parents' also includes same sex parents as well as foster parents.

***'Parental responsibility' is defined as all the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property' (Children Act, 1989).***

Our main aim is to develop a close partnership with parents, which supports and encourages all our pupils to achieve their best and reach their full potential:

### Key Aims:

- To enhance and widen our children's education through the involvement of parents and the wider community.
- To embrace and promote a partnership based on mutual respect between parents, children and all those working with the school.
- To ensure that Hewens Primary is a culturally appropriate environment, that values parents, celebrates diversity and is sensitive to individual family needs and the transitional life challenges which may arise.
- To acknowledge that all parents want their children to succeed, and aim to support parents by working together to provide the education and emotional support needed to achieve this.

### Key Objectives for Developing Partnerships with Parents and Carers:

1. **To provide training and enrichment:** We aim to ensure that all parents associated with the school are aware of training and enrichment opportunities available at Hewens Primary, and within The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust.
2. **To be a welcoming and friendly environment for parents and visitors:**
  - a) Pupils work and photographs of school activities and events are displayed

throughout the school on notice boards and in classrooms.

- b) Administrative and other support staff aim to respond swiftly and efficiently to the needs of parents and all visitors.
- c) Parents are encouraged to give feedback about the reception they receive at our school; their responses are read, analysed, followed up, and acted upon and reviewed.

**3. To ensure that there is a welcoming and supportive induction for all new families:**

- a) Clear guidelines and procedures are in place for a smooth and effective induction for all new families who are new to the school.
- b) All new families are invited to a meet with the Headteacher and staff, who will welcome them to the school, and offer support where necessary.
- c) A member of the Senior Leadership Team will conduct meetings which will include a discussion on the Home School Agreement.
- d) Special assemblies and events are held to support pupils in having a smooth transition between the key stages. This includes Primary to Secondary transition.

**4. To actively involve parents in the education and progress of their child at all stages through:**

- a) Academic Tutoring Days
- b) Parent Consultations.
- c) Annual Reports.
- d) Contact is made via telephone, letters, text and email by class teachers.
- e) Meetings with Class Teachers.
- f) Parent Training Days to support Teaching and Learning for children e.g. Phonics/Reading.

**5. To provide parents with relevant 'user friendly' information about the work of the school, the curriculum and events in the school calendar:**

- a) Curriculum information will be provided in print and on the website for parents and carers. This information will include suggestions about how parents can support their child's learning.
- b) Newsletters are circulated regularly, including the production on a weekly basis of the 'School News', which will provide information of the children's activities that week, and notices of forthcoming events.
- c) Information regarding events such as academic tutoring days and other Trust events and updates are made available to parents via letters home, the website and in school newsletters.
- d) We ensure that parents are involved in the celebration of success.
- e) We will ensure that all reports regarding the school are clear and well publicised.

**6. To produce and implement parent friendly policies to help establish effective home – school links and improve pupil attendance, punctuality and positive participation in the school:**

- a) Our Home School Agreement is clearly written and translated when necessary.
- b) Our policies are all available to parents in print on request and will be placed on the website.
- c) Parents are provided with termly reports and meaningful information about their children's progress.
- d) We have effective reward and sanction procedures in place, and parents are given information about this.
- e) Parents are invited to give feedback on appropriate policies through the relevant focus groups, completion of questionnaires, parent drop-in sessions and on the website.

**7. To provide a range of 'user friendly' support services and resources for parents and pupils so that they can make informed decisions and choices and transition to other institutions:**

- a) The school is able to provide internal support services where needed by families, and has close links to external support services, i.e. family support and children's centre's.
- b) Parents are provided with information about vocational learning and other progression routes to other services and organisations.
- c) Updated leaflets and directories are displayed in prominent places around the school.

**8. To hold and actively promote enrichment opportunities or events that promote joint parent and child participation:**

- a) We will provide a programme of enrichment opportunities which encourage pupils and parents to appreciate their own and other cultural traditions.
- b) Community diversity is celebrated and reflected both in the work created in the classroom and through a range of social and enrichment activities.

**9. Supporting Separated Families:**

We aim to provide support, advice and guidance wherever possible for families who have separated/going through separation or experiencing challenges. We recognise that many of the children in our care will be members of families where parents have separated before they come to the school or who may go through changes in family circumstances while they are attending.

The school's prime responsibility is for the welfare of the individual child/ren in these circumstances:

- a) We will therefore make every effort to support children who are going through changes in their families by offering individual support. We recognise that a child's circumstances and feelings may evolve and we will maintain our support and observation of his/her well-being throughout his/her time here at school.
- b) We encourage parents to tell us at an early stage if there is a change in family

circumstances. Whenever possible, staff will be informed of such changes so that suitable support can be offered. We will, however, recognise the sensitivity of some situations and maintain the level of confidentiality requested by parents as far as possible.

- c) In all cases, we will respect any legal requirements that have been entered into by the parents or required by the courts. The nursery will not seek to make judgements about individual circumstances but will treat both parents equally unless there is a specific ruling in existence. Members of staff will never pass judgement on either parent to the child.
- d) In cases where only one parent has signed the parent contract/acceptance of a place, the other parent will not automatically be consulted or receive information relating to their son/daughter. Should the non-contracting parent seek information or access to his/her daughter, the school will always consider the expressed wishes of the contracting parent and these will be a key factor in determining our actions, subject always to the welfare and interests of the child. For the avoidance of doubt, Brookside Primary will seek written confirmation from the contracting parent of their consent to us providing information and access.
- e) Apart from specific situations as mentioned above, we will make every effort to ensure that access to both parents is maintained. Both parents will be welcome at parent/staff consultations provided both of them are signatories to the parent contract.
- f) We recognise that parents may go through difficult and stressful times and will offer support to them as far as we can. We will occasionally provide information about issues such as step-families and the effects of separation on children, as the school has access to outside agencies which can be helpful and will provide information on request. We will provide on-going training for staff in these issues so that they are aware of their legal obligations and of the pastoral issues raised.

**We therefore will ask parents to:**

- Provide us with all information relating to parental responsibilities, Court Orders and injunctions
- Update information that changes any of the above as soon as practicably possible
- Work with us to ensure continuity of care and support for your child
- Not involve staff in any family disputes, unless this directly impacts on the care we provide for the child
- Talk to the Class Teacher away from the child when this relates to family separation in order to avoid the child becoming upset. This can be arranged as a more formal meeting or as an informal chat.
- Not ask the school or staff to take sides in any dispute. We will only take the side of the child and this will require all staff to remain neutral at all times.