

The New School at West Heath

Policy on Home and School Partnership

*This policy should be read in conjunction with the following **Generic Home-School Agreement, which** is attached to this policy as an appendix. **The School Prospectus** has a Home and School page that set out the main elements of this policy in a user-friendly manner particularly written for prospective parents.*

Introduction

The work of the School is a threefold partnership between the student, his or her parents and the school. Whilst there are other important agencies, not least the placing authority, it is the day-to-day outworking of the home-school partnership which is pivotal in making a success of the student's placement at the school. We recognise that the parents¹ are the experts on their children. They have known them from the very beginning before they come to the New School and they will continue with them after they have finished with us. The School's role is to come alongside the parents and their children and for a few years with the provision of education and support.

To be successful, this requires delineation of responsibilities, clear and realistic expectations, good communication and relationships of trust. This policy is written to set out the foundation of the home-school partnership.

Aims & Objectives

The aims of the home school partnership are to ensure:

- consistency of approach between the two worlds of home and school
- regular and accurate exchange of relevant information
- a collaborative approach to solving problems and overcoming difficulties. It is particularly important to us that parents should contact us even with apparently trivial matters. We would far rather nip things in the bud before they get out of proportion.
- that as far as possible parents are provided with positive information about successes and achievements at school in order that students may be praised and rewarded

¹ The term parent is used throughout this policy although it is recognised that some of our students are living with carers or other relatives on a temporary or permanent basis.

Strategies

The table below sets out the means of communication and their purposes:

Home and School Agreement	Both parents and the school Principal sign this document to confirm the respective responsibilities each party will play in supporting our students achieve their potential
Open door visits	Parents may visit the school at any time, though they are encouraged to arrange a visit in advance in order to ensure that relevant members of staff are available to talk with them.
Tutor / key worker phone calls	Each student's tutor (and Key Worker) makes regular phone calls home to feed back achievements with the emphasis being on the positive. Sometimes it is necessary to discuss things that are not going well, but even in these cases the emphasis is on finding solutions. These should be recorded on the appropriate form. See Appendix A.
Attendance monitoring	It is expected that parents will contact the school if there is a genuine reason for non-attendance. In the event that we have not heard, a phone call is made during the first half of the school morning to establish the reason for non- attendance.
Contact books	All students who have individual support have a contact book which is taken home for parents to inspect. Parents are encouraged to write comments in these books about matters at home which may affect their son / daughter's performance at school.
Letters home	Parents receive letters informing them of their child's attendance, SATs results, requests for permission to go on visits, special events, medical inspections and a variety of other issues throughout the year.
Lesson Monitoring	The Heads of Upper and Lower school report to parents on their child's scores at the end of each term, providing a photocopy of the relevant sheet with comments.
Meetings	Parents attend annual reviews and parents are asked to come in to the school to discuss progress if there is an issue that needs to be talked through. In the case of a temporary exclusion parents attend a readmission meeting with a member of the senior management team and the student.
Parents' consultation evenings	Parents' consultation evenings are held annually and these provide an opportunity for parents to talk to individual subject teachers. These are held on a weekday evening or Saturday.
Options evenings	Options evenings can be held for parents of year 9 students in order to provide information about their choices in year 10.
Performances and special events	Parents are encouraged to attend our drama productions and concerts that are held frequently throughout the year and the annual award ceremony. These provide an opportunity to celebrate success together and keep in touch face to face.
Parent governor	A parent governor elected by a secret ballot of all current parents, sits on the board of governors. At the time of writing the role of this body in relation to trustees is being outworked. Training is being provided.

School - Home Contact Sheet

Date:

Reported by:

Date:

Reported by:

Home & School Partnership

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
Annual Reviews, Assessment Recording and Reporting, Work at Home

Appendices: Home School Agreement form

Monitoring of Policy Implementation is the responsibility of:
The Senior Leadership Team

Lead responsibility: Vice Principal - Education

Relevant Legislation: To be detailed in the next release

Annual Policy Review Required: Yes / No

Approved by: S.S. Committee

Date approved: 29/09/04

Ratified by: Trustees

Date ratified: 11/2004

Reviewed – no changes

Date:

Reviewed – with revisions

Date:

Revision No.

1.0

Appendix 1

Home School Agreement

Introduction

We know that parents are a child's first and enduring teachers. You play a crucial role in helping your children learn. Children and young people achieve more when schools and parents work together. You can help more effectively if you know what our school is trying to achieve and how you can help.

This agreement sets out the way in which we can work together, enabling your child to achieve his or her academic, social and emotional potential.

- We will aim for excellence as a signature of our work, particularly in partnership with parents for the benefit of our students.
- We will offer your child a planned curriculum carefully matched to their needs and ability. We will ensure that the work set will be well prepared and appropriate to the needs of each student. We will also ensure that your child's progress will be assessed and monitored through regular and frequent review. This will be included in your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- We will provide the best possible learning environment for your child. We will also ensure that it is safe, caring and attractive.
- We will use a range of media including email to support students in completing their homework and other home based tasks.
- We will ensure that all students and their families are treated with respect and dignity
- We will actively endeavour to promote moral behaviour and ethical values
- You will talk to us if your child is worried about attending school or if something happens to affect your child's learning
- We will contact you when your child has achieved success. We will also contact you if we are concerned about your child's attendance, punctuality or behaviour.
- We expect our students to attend school regularly and punctually
- You will work with us to try and make sure your child behaves well and support our school behaviour policy
- We will set, mark and monitor your child's home work regularly in keeping with our school policy
- We will not accept any degree of violence or aggressive conduct.
- You will make every effort to support your child's learning at home
- You will try to avoid taking your children on holiday in term-time

- We will ensure that you and your child are clear about how and when we will report on your child's progress, keeping you informed about work planned for each term.
 - You will inform us of any circumstances that may affect your child's ability to learn.
 - You will agree to pay for any damage that your child causes in school as a result of recklessness.
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Name of Student:

Signed: (Parents or Carer)

Print:

Date:

Signed: (By or for the Principal)

Print:

Date: