



## Parental Engagement Policy

Committee with oversight for this policy	FGB
Policy last reviewed by the FGB	July 2021
Policy / Document due for review	July 2022

## Parental Engagement Policy

Our school has a responsibility to treat all stakeholders equally irrespective of 1) age 2) disability 3) gender reassignment 4) marriage and civil partnership 5) pregnancy and maternity 6) race 7) religion or belief 8) sex 9) sexual orientation and 10) socio-economic status.

### Terminology

For the purposes of this policy the term 'parent' is used to indicate any adult who plays a significant role in a child's life (such a birth or adoptive parent, foster carer or other significant adult who acts in loco-parentis beyond the school setting).

The term 'family' refers to those who share responsibility for the wellbeing of the child.

### Rationale

Woodlands Academy is striving to become exemplar in developing and maintaining strong parental engagement between home and school. Research shows that at primary level schooling the *'impact of parental engagement on pupil achievement is much bigger than the impact schools have'* (GTC, Research for Teachers, Parental Involvement).

We are therefore committed to developing strong partnerships with all parents and families because we believe they have a key role to play in supporting each child to reach their full potential. Only when school and home work closely together can we achieve the best for our children.

### Aims

At Woodlands Academy we encourage and support parents and families to be involved in the life of the school and their child's development by:

- Promoting consistent attitudes towards learning and behaviour at school and at home.
- Ensuring all members of staff at the school have a positive attitude to parents and families, making them feel welcomed and valued.
- Ensuring all members of staff and parents are respectful of each other and follow our codes of conduct at all times.
- Enabling parents to support the learning in school through formal and informal communication, workshops and curriculum evenings, to help their child make the best progress possible.

### Objectives of the Policy

This policy is organised into five key themes. These explain in detail what Woodlands Academy believes is good parental partnership between home and school (ethos), what we currently have in place and how we achieve this. It also includes a development section to show areas we are currently working on to achieve the best possible opportunities for parental engagement.

## 1. Fostering Effective Family-School Partnerships

1. Fostering Effective Family-School Partnerships	
<b>Ethos</b>	
Everyone in school believes that children will achieve more when we work closely with families and communities.	
<b>What we currently do</b>	<b>How we do this</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are welcoming to parents, greet them in a friendly way and acknowledge the presence of all visitors. All school staff actively work to build relationships and engage with parents and families.</li> <li>• Our school environment is welcoming, clean, easy to navigate, and engaging for parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Staff are expected to greet parents in a welcoming fashion, and the office staff have access to in house training in this area.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>We regularly update displays and consider the décor and fabric of the school to ensure it is welcoming.</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, locked entries have a clear way for parents to gain access and a secure sign in process.</li> <li>• Parents know where to find policies and who to ask for support to understand them.</li> <li>• Members of the Senior Leadership Team are visible and available to parents at the beginning or the end of the school day.</li> <li>• Our school has regular opportunities for parents to attend celebration events, and for children to share their learning with their parents and families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Signage is clear and areas of the school with direct access to children are only accessible with an electronic fob or where access is provided by a member of staff.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Policies are all available in the policy section of the website and all members of staff are able to direct parents there or provide paper copies upon request.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>SLT do gate duty daily, and are available for parents to talk to.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>We run class assemblies, end of term productions and an annual International Evening for celebrations, alongside Stay and Play, a Science Fair and Year 6 production each year.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Areas for development:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our school holds regular community and fundraising events which bring people together- we are <i>planning to increase the number of community and fundraising events throughout the year, with the support of our PTA, who will regroup from September 2021.</i></li> </ul>	

## 2. Communicating and Consulting Effectively

### Ethos

We believe that parents and school staff should engage in regular two way communication. The school should keep the parents informed of important issues and events and make it easy for parents to communicate with teachers and SLT.

### What we currently do

- School Governors produce a regular letter update for parents.
- Our school website is easy to navigate, contains key information for parents and is updated regularly
- Our school provides parents with clear information on school policies, including simplified booklets for some of the key areas, such as safeguarding.
- Senior Leaders and teachers communicate frequently with parents using a variety of means (letters, email, newsletters, in-person, by telephone and text).
- There are clear processes for parents to voice concerns or complaints, and a prompt response is always provided.
- Clear information is provided to parents so they know how to reach teachers, senior leaders or the Headteacher directly, or request an appointment

### How we do this

- *The school governors produce a termly letter to parents.*
- *All letters and documents sent to parents are saved in the parents section of our school website, which is updated regularly by office staff.*
- *Policies are available on the school website and paper copies available at parent request. A safeguarding booklet is available in the school foyer.*
- *Letters and texts are regularly distributed as necessary, and personal communications take place as appropriate and possible to the situation.*
- *This is conducted in accordance with the Complaints Policy, which is available on the school website.*
- *Parents have access to class email addresses, which can be used to reach class teachers. Appointments with SLT can be requested through the school office or via the class teacher.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents' evenings are held twice annually with follow-up meetings as necessary at a time mutually convenient to the parent and the teacher.</li> <li>• Where parental responsibility is shared, all communications are sent to both parents.</li> <li>• Translation facilities can be arranged as necessary.</li> <li>• Our school uses Twitter and Instagram to drip-feed school news to parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Parents' evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms respectively. Should a matter require more time to discuss, follow up meetings are available.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Where shared communication has been requested, the school always sends out information to both parents.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through parent or teacher request, translators can usually be found for most of the home languages used in our community. Sometimes translation may be available through a member of the school staff.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Woodlands has Twitter (@WoodlandsW13) and Instagram (@woodlandsschoolealing) accounts which are used to share photos from events at school</i></li> </ul>
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#### **Areas for development:**

- Our school has a regular newsletter which is distributed to all parents.- *the fortnightly Woodlands Bulletin will be making a return in a digital format from September 2021.*
- A timetable of termly events is published to parents.- *when events resume from September 2021, dates for upcoming events will be provided through the Woodlands Bulletin. Key dates, such as Parents' Evening, will be available in advance through the school website.*
- Our school shares School Development Priorities with parents regularly.- *From September 2021 a poster outline of SDP policies will be available on our school website for parents to refer to.*
- Our school provides parents with pupil and school performance data and support to understand it.- *previous data is available on the school website and we will undergo parental consultation from September 2021 about how to support parents to understand such data as necessary.*

### **3. Enabling Parental Engagement in Learning**

#### **Ethos**

- Our school believes that all of our parents have the capacity to support their children's learning.

#### **What we currently do**

- All parents are given information each year on the content of the curriculum relevant to their child/ren.
- All parents are given information each year on home learning and homework expectations.
- Curriculum Newsletters go out termly with advice/tips/activities on how parents might support their children.
- Weekly celebration assembly slides, showcasing pupil work, are shared with parents.

#### **How we do this**

- *Curriculum Evening for each year group every September, with handouts for all parents. Curriculum maps are also available on the website.*
- *Curriculum Evening for each year group every September, additional information provided through parent emails and at parents' evenings. All homework and home learning now established through Google Classroom.*
- *The newsletter is published on the school website and sent as a link directly to parents' phones.*
- *Celebration assembly slides are available through the school website and through Google Classroom.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our school lets parents know how important they are to their children's learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The impact parents have on their children's learning is celebrated through assemblies and newsletters.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Areas for development:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All parents are given information each year on expectations for pupil progress and end of year assessment goals.</li> <li>All parents are given information annually on how progress will be assessed and measured.</li> <li>Our school has a calendar of showcase events for parents to attend during the school day</li> <li>All parents are given regular information on other ways they can support their children (such as regular sleep, a balanced nutritious diet, suitable time and space to do homework etc.)</li> <li>There are opportunities for parents to engage in workshops and activities which help them understand and practise the skills needed to support learning and development at home.</li> </ul>	

#### 4. Empowering Parents to Develop Their Own Skills

<b>Ethos</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our school believes that building parents' knowledge and skills is important to supporting children's achievement.</li> </ul>	
<b>What we currently do</b>	<b>How we do this</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our school has systems for ensuring all parents have the opportunity to volunteer if they want to and selection processes are fair.</li> <li>Our school has an active PTA which is accessible, actively recruiting new members and welcoming new families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>All parents and community volunteers are accepted subject to DBS checks. Any arising issues are dealt with by the volunteer co-ordinator.</i></li> <li><i>The newly formed PTA holds whole school events, including the international evening and summer fair. All parents are invited to our regular PTA coffee mornings, which will be resuming following the lifting of Covid restrictions.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Areas for development:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our school signposts parents to learning opportunities and activities in the community</li> <li>There are regular opportunities for parents to volunteer in school such as helping to improve the school environment, supporting in the classroom, accompanying classes on trips and during special in school activity workshops, and by sharing their own skills through giving talks and demonstrations and running activities.</li> </ul>	

#### 5. Supporting Successful Transitions

<b>Ethos</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We believe that transition into school is an integral part of the school supporting and encouraging parents to be positively engaged from the outset, and contributes to parents continuing to be engaged through the child's schooling.</li> </ul>	
<b>What we currently do</b>	<b>How we do this</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our school provides opportunities for parents to come into school both before and after children have been offered a place.</li> <li>Home visits or individual family meetings are carried out to all children at point of entry to the school or Nursery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Visits to the school with tours by SLT/Middle Leaders are scheduled. After places are offered, drop ins and revisits are welcomed.</i></li> <li><i>All new Nursery families are visited and those new to the school in Reception have home visits. Alternative meetings can be arranged. Where possible, home visits are also carried out for all year groups prior to admission.</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our school provides information through Induction Evenings and Workshops for parents to support their child's transition into school.</li> <li>• Our school provides opportunities for parents to share information about their child entering Nursery and Reception early in the academic year.</li> <li>• Our school provides information and support to parents to enable successful transitions between Key Stages and year groups.</li> <li>• Our school provides advice and information for parents whose children are transferring to high school, offering additional assistance and support to families who may need this.</li> <li>• Our school provides additional support for families with children entering the school outside standard admission times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Induction Evenings are run for Nursery, Reception and at the start of Year 6 and supporting materials and information for High School are shared.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Every parent is requested to renew safeguarding information annually. EYFS parents are also encouraged to share information during home visits, including information relating to safeguarding and SEN.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Induction Evenings, Handbooks, Key information by letter, alongside curriculum evenings and home visits all support this process.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Information is provided by letter, with reminders and checks for applications. The school offers support for parents who may need computer access or ICT support to make their application upon request. Appointments for this can be booked through the school office.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>School tours for in year admissions are available all year round. Support can be given when completing applications when requested.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Areas for development:</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our school provides additional support for those families entering the school who are new to the British education system</li> </ul>	