

THE QUEENSWELL FEDERATION

WORKING WITH PARENTS & CARERS POLICY

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RATIONALE

The staff, governors and parents/carers at The Queenswell Federation work together to provide a high-quality education in a safe, caring and stimulating environment. Parents and carers are children's first and lifelong teachers. They play a crucial role in helping their children learn. To ensure that children learn and achieve to their fullest potential, the School is committed to working together with parents and carers in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, trust, support and openness. We want the children to achieve high standards and to enjoy their work and play in all areas of the curriculum, developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes which will enable them to learn and to succeed throughout their lives. Children are the most important members of our school community and we encourage the development of their confidence and independence alongside care and respect for others. We welcome and value all our children, irrespective of ability, religion, belief, race, gender, gender reassignment or cultural heritage, encouraging them all to fulfil their potential academically, socially and physically. The Queenswell Federation recognises that a professional, committed team of staff and governors is essential, and we value the contributions and skills each person brings to the school. We aim to provide the necessary resources and training to support professional development and to work in a self-evaluating culture with the continuous aim of raising achievement. To achieve this, we welcome parents and carers to participate in school life and we provide information and guidance that encourages their involvement, and promotes the important link between home and school learning. We know that children learn best when there are strong links between home and school.

EQUALITIES

At The Queenswell Federation, we believe it is the right of all pupils, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, physical ability or linguistic, cultural or home background to have access to high quality learning experiences in stimulating and supporting environment where prejudice and stereotyping are challenged.

We are strongly committed to positive action to remove and challenge discrimination in all aspects of the School and its work. The importance of staff awareness regarding the dangers of preconceived expectations based on stereotypes is essential and we bear this in mind with regards to working with parents and carers.

We are therefore strongly committed to positive action and counter discrimination in all aspects of the home/school partnership:

- Use of clear and unambiguous language in all written communications
- Timing meetings to encourage and enable parents and carers to attend
- Ensuring social events arranged by Queenswell Community are inclusive to all groups of parents and carers
- Ensuring disabled access
- Labelling and notices in community languages/visual supports

- Providing parents and carers with the opportunity, where possible to place their child in a class with another child who speaks their language
- Provision of translation services for one-to-one meetings, where possible, as necessary

AIMS

- Develop a shared understanding of our school aims, values, policies and practices;
- Encourage parents'/carers' participation in their children's learning at school and at home;
- Create a relationship based on shared responsibility and mutual respect.

We will do this by: -

Informing parents/carers

- about the day-to-day organisation of the school
- about the curriculum
- about their children's learning

Encouraging participation

- in the classroom and in curriculum activities
- in developing school policies and making decisions about the life of the school
- in special events
- through the Queenswell Community (Parent Teacher Association)
- through parents' coffee mornings and other drop-ins

Responding to concerns

- meeting with parents/carers if there is any concern (expressed by parent/carer or teacher) about the child's progress or well-being in school. Addressing concerns immediately and working with parents/carers to resolve these concerns.
- making the complaints procedure clear to parents/carers

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

- To develop the policy and ensure that the policy is maintained and reviewed
- To delegate the day-to-day management of the policy to the Executive Headteacher and Head Of School

The Executive Headteacher/ Head Of School

- To develop and maintain good relationships and communications with parents and carers
- To arrange meetings at appropriate times to ensure attendance is at least 96%
- To ensure that all staff implement the policy
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and report to the Governing Body

Staff

- To participate in school events and promote partnership with parents and carers
- To offer support to parents and carers who may request it
- To support the school's open-door policy
- To support curriculum events where appropriate

INFORMING PARENTS AND CARERS

All information will be sent to separated parents who have legal parental rights or to those who may be overseas. Parents/carers are asked to inform the Head Of School so that information may be posted. The School may request proof of parental responsibility.

Information about the School will be provided to parents/carers through: -

- class notices;
- text messages (for reminders and information; following up unexplained absences; notification of all head injuries)
- accident forms (for notification of an accident in school - parents and carers will be informed about the incident and will also be given information about any necessary first aid administered to the child);
- Year-group half-termly or termly newsletters that will contain information about curriculum themes, upcoming events, educational visits and areas of learning for the half term or term;
- information and requests to parents/carers posted on classroom doors (such notices might include reminders about events in school, requests for volunteers, reminders about school equipment, posters about Queenswell Community events);
- a weekly newsletter from the school office to be sent in hard-copy format and/or email to parents and carers each Friday (spare copies to be available in the main entrance and also available on the school website);
- Home-learning Policy;
- School's website
- Home-learning folders to go home each week in KS1, and Home-learning sheet to go home each week in EYFS containing information about home-learning tasks and how parents/carers can help with this;
- the Prospectus describing the curriculum, routines, aims and organisational details of the school will be given to all parents/carers who visit the school prior to their child starting (the prospectus will also be made available on the school website).
- Meet the Staff Meeting each September when teachers will prepare a talk for the parents/carers in their classes, which will explain the following: -
 - timetable
 - curriculum subjects covered and content
 - expectations for the end of the year
 - important routines
 - home-learning
 - reading
- new-parent/carer induction meetings each Summer: the Executive Headteacher, Head Of School the SLT and relevant staff.

The Foundation Stage Leader will talk to parents/carers of the children who will start Reception and Nursery in September, providing information on aims, values, reading, homework, uniform and the curriculum in general;

The Head Of School will talk to parents/carers of the children who will start Year 3 in September, providing information on aims, values, reading, homework, uniform and the curriculum in general; the induction meeting for parents and carers of children starting in Nursery will take place in the summer

- Come and Play sessions during September that will provide an opportunity for parents and carers to come into the Nursery on an informal basis: sessions will be held both morning and afternoon so that children can become accustomed to their environment and their parent/carer will have an informal opportunity to find out information about the setting;
- Governing Body minutes to be available on request from the School Office and on the website;
- School Policies to be available on request from the School Office to any parent/carer wishing to read them and we may provide translations, and Braille or large print versions when requested;
- Induction Information (The Welcome Pack) to be given to each new parent and carer
- The Head Of School has an open door policy and will meet with any parent/carer at the beginning or end of the day without an appointment, if the Head Of School is available; If the Head Of School is not available, then appointments can be made with the School Office.
- Parents/carers wishing to meet the Executive Headteacher will need to make an appointment via the School Office

- The Head Of School or the New Starter TA will show in-year admissions children around the schools
- The Child and Family Support Worker is readily available to sign post or support parents/carers with any areas of concern regarding their child or their family.

Parents/carers will be informed about their children's learning through: -

- reading-record books in years 3 & 4
- Home-learning
- Key Stage 1 & 2 Parent/carer consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms when parents/carers will be given a ten-minute appointment to see the class teacher about their child's aptitude, attainment and progress and learning; any parent/carer not attending a pre-arranged appointment will be contacted to make another appointment;
- Reception Parent/carer consultation evenings in the Autumn term when parents/carers will be given a ten-minute appointment to see the class teacher about their child's aptitude, attainment and progress and learning; any parent/carer not attending a pre-arranged appointment will be contacted to make another appointment; Reception consultations during spring term.
- Nursery consultations during the Autumn and Spring and terms when parents/carers will be given a ten-minute appointment to discuss with the class teacher their child's development, profile and learning; parent/carers may add their own observation to Tapestry (on-line journal); any parent/carer who does not attend a pre-arranged appointment will be contacted to make another appointment.;
- Open Mornings throughout the year when children's work will be available for parents, carers and children to look at;
- Sending reports to parents/carers in July each year that will describe the attitudes, personal and social skills, progress and attainment for their child; reports will be sent out shortly before the Summer Open Evening to enable individual appointment to be made if there are any queries or concerns; teacher assessment results will be provided for Year 2 children, and Reception parents/carers will be informed about their child's end of Reception Year National Attainment in the end-of-year report; attendance and punctuality data will also be included; the Juniors will receive a mid year report in March
- recognising children's special achievements through the school's weekly newsletter;
- presenting certificates to children in assembly to demonstrate to parents and carers the special recognition given to individual effort and achievement;
- providing information to parents or carers if a child has been involved in a behaviour incident in school which will give details about the incident and how it was dealt with.
- providing support and advice for parents and carers of children identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities through formal annual reviews and informal meetings during the year, discussion of Individual Education Plans, targets, and intervention groups;
- providing home-school books for individual pupils who require specific support;
- marking, monitoring and displaying home-learning activities, and any other work accordingly (monitoring records will be shared at parent/carer consultations);

Encouraging Participation

- Parent/carer volunteers – please refer to the Volunteers Policy.
- Educational visits - for Reception classes we require a ratio of 1 adult to 5 children. For Year 1 and Year 2 trips we require a ratio of 1 adult to 5 children. For Years 3 – 6, ratios of at least 1:10 are maintained. Teachers will brief parent/carer helpers before the trip – explaining the timetable and expectations for the trip. Teachers have overall responsibility for the class throughout a trip. Parent/carer helpers' entrance and travel fees will be paid for by the School. All parents/carers must not be left alone with children, including taking children to the toilets.
- Questionnaires - each year we will ask for parents'/carers' ideas and opinions on different aspects of school policy and development. Governors and staff will analyse the responses and then plan

action which will form part of our School Improvement Plan. We will consult with parents and carers in the event of decision-making that may affect them (for example, a change to the home learning system).

- Morning drop-off - in Reception, Years 1 & 2, the teacher greets parents/ carers and messages can be passed on between 8.50 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. and the children come into classrooms on their own and start an early morning learning activity. This enables a prompt start to the morning. Those children who may be struggling will be given additional support by members of staff.
- Parents/carers will be offered an individual welcome meeting in school when their child first enters Reception or Nursery.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special school events will be organised to encourage the involvement of parents and carers: -

- Book Week (parents, carers and relatives may be invited to participate in story telling in home languages)
- Curriculum workshops/ information sessions e.g. phonics, numeracy etc.
- Harvest Festival assemblies and donations of harvest gifts, Spring Festival (parents/ carers of small choir invited)
- Year Group performances/ concerts
- The Junior School Production
- Family Sports day including a family lunchtime picnic
- Class trips
- Carol concert at All Saints' Church
- Curriculum events
- Class assemblies
- Charity fundraising e.g. Children In Need, Comic/ Sports Relief
- Cultural day/ International Evening to celebrate cultural diversity within the school

QUEENSWELL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Every parent/carer will be invited to become a member of the Queenswell Community and will be welcome to attend meetings and participate in events. There will be a mixture of fundraising and social events through the year. Events may include: -

- Winter Fair/ Fireworks Evening
- Cake sales
- Summer Fair

Meetings will be advertised in the school's weekly newsletter and the letters/ posters that the Queenswell Community send out to all parents and carers or display.

SECURITY

If an adult who is not expected and not the child's usual carer comes to collect a child from school, the teacher will check with the Head Of School and office staff before allowing him/her home. Parents/carers will be asked to inform us of any change in arrangements and, if in doubt, we will keep the child at school until a parent has confirmed the identity of the person collecting. Children will be dismissed by their teachers one at a time from the classroom or main entrance door (in the event of them attending particular clubs). The teacher will only allow children to go once the authorised adult is seen. Children under 14 years are not permitted to collect pupils from school. Children in years 5 & 6 who have written consent from their parents/carers will be allowed to come to/ go from school alone.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Teachers will dismiss children at the end of the day and will be able to pass on information when necessary, either verbally or in the format of an incident form. Sometimes teachers may need to

inform parents/carers of a fall in the playground, a particular achievement or an incident involving behaviour. Parents and carers will be encouraged to speak to teachers as soon as possible if they have a specific concern about their child and should ask to make an appointment to discuss matters with the class teacher at a mutually convenient time. This may be at the end of the teaching day or before school.

Similarly, teachers will consult parents if they have any concerns about a child. We are committed to solving problems quickly and this can prevent minor issues or misunderstandings becoming major problems. The teacher may ask the parent/carer to raise their concern with the Head Of School if it is a whole school matter or if the teacher feels that a parent requires further information or reassurance.

If the parent/carer feels that a problem has not been resolved by either the class teacher or Head Teacher, then they should write to the Executive Headteacher.

If the parent/carer is still unsatisfied then contact the Chair of Governors via the School Office marking the letter 'PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL', Please refer to the Complaints Policy for further information.

We will always listen to concerns and will do our best to answer queries or investigate incidents as thoroughly as possible. Staff are very courteous, welcoming and committed to working with parents in the best interests of the children. We ask parents to show the same courtesy in raising concerns and enjoy a relationship with parents based on this mutual understanding and respect. Rare incidents of parent aggression or rudeness towards a member of staff should be reported to the Head Of School who will clarify our 'Working with Parents' policy and expectations with the parent concerned. The school has the right to ask parents/carers to leave the premises if an incident of this nature occurs and if necessary the school can ban parents/carers from the premises. The police will be called if there is any instance of violent behaviour or recurring aggression from a parent/carer.

Related Policies

Equalities Policy

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Complaints Policy

Volunteers Policy

Threatening Behaviour & Assault Policy