

DOROTHY GOODMAN SCOOOL

HOME - SCHOOL LINKS (POLICY STATEMENT)

General Policy

Staff are encouraged to build up good relationships with parents in a variety of ways, and working with parents appropriately is a major part of the job description for all staff. Ability to communicate effectively with parents is an element of the interview process for all posts.

Communication with Parents

Communication between parents and class-based staff may happen in a variety of ways:

- a) Informal contacts, e.g. telephone conversations, talking to parents at home-time, coming across them out in the community etc.
- b) More formal contacts, e.g. Annual Reviews
- c) Visits of parents to school

Visits are welcome at any time, but if parents wish to see their child's class teacher, then they need to make an appointment – preferably before school, after school or at lunch-time, because the teacher is occupied for the duration of the school day. The school will seek to provide a creche if required.

Parents can telephone or call to see the Head Teacher at any time, and if unavailable then an appointment will be made.

- d) Weekly home-school diaries

These can become daily diaries for specific purposes at parents' request (e.g. for medical reasons or where children are not able to communicate effectively what has happened during the day). If completed daily it will normally be the pupil's keyworker who fills it in.

- e) Home visits

There is no specific time allocated for these, but they can be accommodated within the general daily routine where required.

Confidentiality

It should be remembered that at all times staff must retain a professional relationship with parents, even in instances where closer relationships may develop. Staff should avoid:

- a) Commenting to parents about other children in the class;
- b) Commenting on matters that are under discussion in school, but have not yet been decided;
- c) Commenting to parents about situations and procedures in school, e.g. class moves, changes of staff etc.;
- d) Commenting in any specific way upon pupils' work or behaviour – other than to talk about what they have done in broad terms or to mention their progress in a general sense;
- e) Commenting on members of staff;
- f) Commenting upon school policies.

If any matter arises during the conversation on which parents require further information or discussion, then they should be referred either to the class teacher or to the Head Teacher.

Formal Communication

Formal communication happens in the following ways:

1. Termly newsletter.
2. Termly Parents' Evening.
3. Annual Review.
4. Regular information letters sent home.
5. School's Web Site – up-dated on a regular basis.
6. Home-School Contracts.

Guarantees

Under normal circumstances the following guarantees will operate:

1. If a parent makes a complaint - either written or by telephone or in person - an initial response will be made the same day. A fuller investigation and response - where necessary - will be completed within 5 working days. The complaint will be noted and will be viewed by the Chair of Governors.
Complaints forms are available either from the Web Site or from the Office.

2. Minor matters, e.g. parents' queries, suggestions, comments etc., will be attended to within the course of the same working week.
3. More serious complaints will be dealt with in the time scales set out as part of the School Complaints Procedure (last reviewed January 2007).
4. Major school issues, e.g. changes to the structure of the classes, major building work etc., will form the subject of a full parents' meeting - either on a designated Parents' Evening, or at a separate meeting where necessary.
5. Prospective parents who wish to visit the school will be offered a time to visit within 5 working days, where it is practically possible to do this. Visits will be arranged to the appropriate site (i.e. either Upper or Lower), and if parents wish to visit the other site then a second appointment will be made for them.
6. Existing parents who wish to see the Headteacher about any matter will be offered a time on the same day wherever possible, or as soon after as can be arranged (and as a maximum within 5 working days).
7. Parents who wish to contact the Chair of Governors may do so via the school, and any communication will be passed on promptly.

Parental Communication

At any time parents may telephone and ask to speak to the Head Teacher, or, in the absence of the Head, the Deputy Head (either Site), or the Assistant Head (for matters relating to the Lower Site). Alternatively they may telephone, write to or E-Mail the school and ask for an appointment.

Where school staff cannot satisfy the request / complaint, then a member of the governing body may be contacted.

Communication with parents on the part of the Head and staff is, and will be seen to be, a priority, second only to the education and welfare of the pupils.

Dorothy Goodman School July 2001

Revised November 2007

Contact Details:

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