



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Parental Engagement Policy

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Parental Engagement

“Excellence and Enjoyment in Education for Everyone”

This vision embraces Parents as Partners in their child’s education.

We believe that in order to support our pupils in reaching their true potential we need to acknowledge the vital role parents have to play in this. When parents are engaged and involved, everyone benefits - students, parents, families, teachers, schools and communities – and our school is enriched as a positive place to teach, learn and grow.

At Sparken Hill Academy, pupils are supported and inspired to learn in a culture of high expectations in which parents:

- Are welcomed, respected and valued as partners by the school community in their children’s learning and development
- Have a full range of choices and opportunities to enable them to be involved and support student success
- Are engaged through on-going communication and dialogue to support a positive learning environment at home and at school
- Are supported with tools which enable them to participate in school life

Research clearly indicates that good schools become better schools when there is a strong connection with parents as part of the learning community. Parents have a primary influence on their child’s attitudes towards school, their learning, and their future success.

The work of Professor Charles Desforges tells us that at the age of seven parental influence on children’s learning is six times that of the school, and by the age of eleven it is still a third greater. Working effectively with parents and carers to help them to support their children’s learning and development is crucial, right through from reception to Year 6.

“Parent involvement in a child’s early education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child’s academic performance”

Hill and Craft, 2003.

‘Parent’ refers to any adult over the age of 18 who is caring for the child whether this be a Grandparent, Foster Carer, or any other appropriate adult.

Our Commitment

The Governors and Senior Leadership Team at Sparken Hill Academy acknowledge the benefits of recognising Parents as Partners and as such our whole school attitude and ethos reflects this. Engaging parents in contributing to and realising the vision of school leaders has led us to the offer of a unique, holistic approach to children *and* their families. We maintain a commitment to developing effective management strategies to build a sustainable approach to parent partnership across the school.

Sparken Hill Academy truly believe in the concept of offering the right support at the right time in the context of early intervention. **The Community Team** is encompassed within the school environment as a universal right for every family, alongside the right for each child to access an education.

The core offer of the Community Team includes:

- Working in cohesion with *all* members of the family to obtain a holistic view of all Strengths and Needs. Strategies are put in to place to address any specific areas of support required
- The Early Help Assessment Form process is offered to families who may benefit from additional agency input to reach goals
- Signposting and referring to other agencies and support services enabling families to move forward with the least amount of confusion
- Liaise between the families and other agencies, acting as Lead Professional when required to ensure consistency of care and clarity of approach with the child and families best interests as the focus
- Planning and delivering an assortment of Family Learning and enrichment opportunities based on parental input and feedback with the aim of increasing engagement and attainment, therefore life chances including Internationally Accredited courses such as Strengthening families and Solihull (Understanding your child) delivered on a rolling annual programme
- Availability of Community Team members throughout the school day to offer a listening and supportive ear
- Engaging Parent Champions to enhance communication and involvement of parents including the more vulnerable, less confident parents
- Supporting and promoting the role of Parent Volunteer (see Volunteer Policy in conjunction with Parental Engagement Policy)
- Gleaning parent/carer feedback on all areas of school life including Curriculum Workshops, Homework Support, Transition, Policy Consultations and Family Learning
- Evaluating, adapting and introducing new initiatives in line with feedback received and informing parents of said findings
- Safeguarding duties in line with Local Authority statutory requirements
- Supporting parents to ensure each child to attend school *every* day by offering practical advice and guidance and a clear understanding of the benefits of regular attendance on their child's attainment

Our actions

We relish the opportunity to engage parents in their child's learning whilst empowering and respecting each adult's own personal spiritual, moral, social and cultural beliefs.

In order to do this as a school we:

- Establish and sustain a positive learning culture and welcoming climate where parental input is welcomed, respected and valued
- Actively explore and utilise opportunities to further engage parents at school and at home to support student achievement
- Encourage the use of a wide range of communicating strategies, from the traditional newsletter to the use of texting, email and the school's virtual learning environment
- Review existing parent and community partnerships and seek to expand upon these partnerships to reflect the diversity of our parents and the broader community
- Monitor school climate (e.g. through surveys, focus groups) to help identify barriers to parent involvement or issues that should be addressed to foster and support a safe welcoming learning environment

Foundations for successful parental engagement

Parents' engagement matters. Parents care about their children and want to be involved. They want their children to succeed in school and are willing to help in as many ways as possible. Commitment to our pupils' well-being is the driving force behind everything we do in education. Everyone including parents, families, administrators, teachers, support workers and the local authority share this firm commitment.

A true partnership takes sustained and intentional efforts on the part of all partners with commitment and action by all at every level of the education system. While parents can find it challenging to play an active role in their children's education, it is important to meet this challenge so that pupils at Sparken Hill Academy have the support they need to be successful in school and later in life.

Both experience from practice and findings from research suggest that many parents lack knowledge, information, confidence and resources in relation to early home learning and children's development, but not interest or a desire to be involved. Therefore by identifying and breaking down barriers to engagement we shall fulfil our

vision of an inclusive service offer that meets and reflects the diverse needs of our community.

The role of the Principal

- The Principal will ensure the school ethos in relation to parental engagement is consistently carried out by *all* school staff
- The Principal will oversee all monitoring of impact in terms of increased educational outcomes as a result of parental engagement
- The Principal will oversee the delivery of the Curriculum in parent friendly, accessible formats to improve support within the home environment
- The Principal will liaise with the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body to ensure strategic decisions made are in the best interests of the child

The role of Parents/Carers

- Successful engagement with parents/carers is as a result of a two-way, positive, collaborative relationship which is clear in expectation on both sides and open to comments and consultations throughout
- Parents/carers are welcomed into school in any capacity and valued as integral partners in the educational success of their children
- Parents/carers are encouraged to feedback to the appropriate persons any comments/thoughts that may alleviate any concerns or issues they have

The role of Governors

- The Governing Body are updated and informed regularly of the strategies and undertakings of the school in relation to engaging our parents
- Members of the Governing Body will monitor the Community Team in relation to outcomes and impact

Monitoring

- Strategies and outcomes of parental engagement will monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to identify areas of strengths and needs. Gaps in provision will identified and actions taken to address these
- Impact of parental engagement on a child's attainment will be monitored and fed back to the teaching staff, Principal and Governors to reflect successful outcomes and achieved objectives

Review

- The governing body reviews this policy every two years. They may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved
- Parents will be consulted on this policy every two years to support clarity, consistency and improved outcomes for parents/carers and their children