CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND STRATEGY POLICY

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office. This policy is also publically available on the school website

In City of Rochester School, the term 'staff' is inclusive of all staff and it also applies to students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, the Trustees and Board of trustees.

Monitoring and Review: This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher. The Trustees will undertake a full annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay.

Signed:

Date Reviewed: February 2022
Date of Next Review: February 2023
Version No. 1
Policy No. 09.004

Alicja Emmett
Headteacher

Claire Cooper
Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Trustee

This policy will be reviewed no later than February 2023, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require

Contents

City of Rochester School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

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1. Rational

- At City of Rochester School we believe that when school and home work closely together we can achieve the best for our children.
- We value all parents and carers equally within our school community and strive to maximise their participation in the life of the school. By fostering excellent relationships and shared partnership between home and school, children are given a solid framework to grow, learn and maximise their full potential. Therefore, the school is fully committed to ongoing dialogue with parents and carers to improve the school's knowledge of their children and to support their family. Working within the main aim of the school which is to raise the 'Confidence, Resilience and Success' of the individual student.

2. Aim of Policy

- To provide a partnership between home and school, ensuring parents feel supported, welcomed and valued.
- To encourage parental involvement in parental meetings, parenting groups, workshops, clubs and the daily life of the school community.
- To support parents and carers as their children's first and most important educators.
- Parents/carers to feel a part of the school and recognise that they have a pivotal role in their child's education and overall developmental achievements.
- To encourage parents/carers to contribute to their child's education by sharing achievements and events at home and supporting shared strategies and approaches to learning.

3. Strategies for Success

The Parent School Engagement Policy identifies a series of key strategies designed to support parents/carers as partners, so they have the opportunity and the skills, knowledge and tools, to engage with all education partners in fulfilling the core priorities for education.

4. Fostering effective family-school partnerships
4.1. Ethos

- Everyone in school values building trusting relationships with parents/carers.
- Everyone in school believes that pupils will achieve more when the school works closely with families and communities.
- Everyone in school understands the needs of families and the school community – for example the school has worked with two local charities in the past two years to support local causes
- Staff members are welcoming to all parents/carers, and actively try to engage parents/carers who typically do not actively participate in the school community.

4.2. Environment
- The school strives to provide visitors with a clean, tidy and welcoming entrance, with an active display board and welcoming staff.

4.3. Policies
- All polices are available on the school website and reviewed regularly by the Head Teacher and Trustees.

4.4. Staff & Leaders
- Members of the Senior or Middle Leadership Team are visible and available to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Class teachers and support staff feel confident to build relationships with parents.
- There are many opportunities throughout the year in which parents are invited to the school and able to meet the staff.
- The school employs a Pupil Welfare & Partnerships Assistant Head and Pupil Wellbeing and Behaviour Support worker to support parent/carers.
- The Headteacher regularly informs the Board of Trustees of Parental Engagement initiatives and feedback via the Board Meetings.

4.5. Events
- The school has regular opportunities for parents to attend celebration events such as: music concerts and parents' evenings.
- The school has regular opportunities for pupils to share their learning with parents and carers through parent/teacher meetings.

5. Communicating and consulting effectively

5.1. Newsletters and Website
- The school has a termly newsletter which is distributed to all parents/carers and is available on the school website.
- A letter is sent home to remind parents/carers of events and meetings.
- The school website is easy to navigate and contains key information for parents and is updated regularly. Facebook is also available for accessing appropriate information.

5.2. Home School Communication
- All staff communicate frequently with parents using a variety of means (i.e. home school diary, letters, email, telephone, in-person, newsletters).
- The home/school contact books are used for engagement with parents/carers to provide two-way communication if information needs to be shared.
- The Home/School Expectations leaflet outlines what home support is expected from parents and carers.

5.3. Processes for contacting staff
- Clear information is provided to parents/carers, so they know how to reach teachers directly and know how to make an appointment with the class teacher and other professionals working at the school.
- There are clear processes for parents to voice concerns or complaints and parents receive prompt responses.

5.4. Progress & Performance
- The school's priorities are shared with parents via the School Development Plan.
- The school provides parents with pupil performance data and supports them to understand it.
- The school encourages parents to let the school know how events in the home may affect their child in school.
- Individual parents /carer meetings are held with all parents a minimum of 3 times per year with follow-ups as needed.
- Where parental responsibility is shared all communication is sent to both parents.

5.5. CPD
- The school provides staff development on building positive relationships with parents/carers.

5.6. **Parent voice**
- The school conducts an annual survey of parent and carers, the results of which are shared with all stakeholders including agreed actions.
- The school runs a monthly Parent Advisory Group (PAG) and has parent/carer representatives who attend. Feedback from group is via the Headteacher to the Board of Trustees. Key policies are taken to the PAG and to the wider parent group for consultation.
- After all workshops, clubs, clinics, and other activities feedback is gathered and considered in future planning.
- Questionnaires and feedback are used to evaluate what parents view is of the school

6. **Enabling parental engagement in learning**
   6.1. **Attitudes & Impact**
   - The school believes that all parents have the capacity to support their children's learning.
   - The school lets parents know how important they are to their children's learning.
   6.2. **Curriculum assessment and progress**
   - All parents are given information each year on the content of the curriculum. Curriculum Maps are available on the website and key information and resources are shared with parents on the Relationship and Sex Education/PSHE Programme
   - All parents are given information each year on expectations for pupil progress (end of year assessment goals).
   - All parents are given information each year on how progress will be measured or assessed.
   6.3. **Wider impacts on learning & workshops**
   - All parents are given information each year on other ways they can support their children (i.e. sufficient sleep, nutritious food, sensory diet, visual timetables, etc.).
   - There are opportunities for parents to engage in workshops and activities which help them to practice the skills needed to support learning and development at home.

7. **Empowering parents and carers to develop their own skills**
   7.1. **Sharing Practice**
   - The school offers a Parental Hub, which provides advice, guidance and resources and this is carried out via home visits, meetings in school.

8. **Outreach**
   Parent Outreach Review and expand communication and outreach strategies such as local workshops, presentations, tools and resources, to share information and strategies to support learning at home and parent engagement in schools be available to parents and carers at reasonable times.
   8.1. **Entry to school**
   - The school provides opportunities for parents to come into school both before and after children have been offered a place.
   - Home visits or individual family meetings are carried out to all children at point of entry to the school.
   - The school provides informational workshops and induction events for parents to support their child's transition into school. Additionally there are: school trial visits, home visits by the key members of staff, a six week assessment period, meeting with professionals.
   8.2. **Within school**
   - The school provides opportunities for parents to share information about their child continually within the academic year.
   - The school provides information and support to parents to enable successful transitions between
   - key stages, classes and year groups.
   8.3. **Leaving school**
   - The school provides advice and information for parents/carers whose children are transferring to another educational provision.

- Placements are discussed with parents and carers and their wishes and views are put forward to the Local Authority in the annual review documents.

9. **Measuring Impact**
   9.1. Evaluations and questionnaires are used for workshops and all activities.
   9.2. Parent feedback is obtained annually through the annual review process.

10. **Roles and Responsibility.**
    10.1. It is the responsibility of the school and entire City of Rochester School community to ensure this policy is upheld and executed.
    10.2. Specific responsibilities are held by the Head Teacher. This is making sure staff gain the correct training and development to fully understand and support parental engagement. Sending out regular/termly newsletters to give an overview of the whole school.
    10.3. Trustees regularly visit the school and have meetings with different staff to make sure the needs of the parents are in place, so the pupil benefits being supported by a strong bond between school and home. They visit families within their home environment.
    10.4. All staff are responsible for developing and maintaining strong communication links. Sharing achievements, developments as well as positive and negative behaviour. This is well documented, so everything is evidence based and shared with appropriate staff.
    10.5. Use rewards, certificates, stickers and awards for attainment, attendance and good behaviour so that children can share their success at home.
    10.6. Ensure we give sufficient notice to parents and carers of events and curriculum days in school to enable them to reorganise work/care commitments.
    10.7. Offer a tour of the school to all new parents and carers.
    10.8. Provide a school prospectus.
    10.9. Deliver a welcoming reception area with relevant information on hand they made need.

11. **Development/Action Plan – by the end of Academic Year 2021-2022**

    Volunteer opportunities
    To provide opportunities for parents/carers to volunteer in school such as:

    - Helping to improve the school environment.
    - Fundraise for the Charity
    - Parents sharing their skills, knowledge and talents by talking to other parents/carers.

    To develop a Parent Support Group / Parents Forum
    Set up a Parental Advisory Group to ensure parents can contribute towards school life

    - The school to have a parent group which is accessible to all City of Rochester families.
    - For the school to hold regular community or coffee mornings which bring people together.
    - The school to provide opportunities for families and children to learn together, workshops, parental hub, clinics on specific subjects related to ASD, curriculum (family literacy and numeracy interventions for example) and other special needs
    - Create different platforms such as Twitter and Facebook for encouraging communication.

    Parental Support
    - Therapy and Welfare team to support families in the home – with an emphasis on routines, visuals, boundaries, schedules and effective communication. Meetings can and should, where appropriate, take place outside of school taking into account parental barriers
    - Signposting to other agencies and programmes – Triple P (Positive Parenting Programme) for example
    - Joint workshops in school with parents and pupils -particularly those who are hard to reach
    - Ensure parents have a basic understanding of the curriculum