



# Parental Involvement and Consultation Policy

## September 2023

Approved by:	S&P Committee
Last Review Date:	September 2023
Next Review Date	Autumn 2025

(NB The term 'parents' refers to parents, guardians, carers etc).

We want our children to feel happy and secure in school and hope that they grow into independent and responsible adults. Our caring and dedicated team aim to create a learning environment which inspires everyone to reach their fullest potential and achieve the highest standards in all areas of school life. We believe that we can only achieve the best for each child if we all work together. We welcome everyone into our community to share in our children's education, and we hope that all our children will be able to look back on their time at Arnold Mill with fondness and pride.

**The aims of this policy are -**

- To ensure parents and teachers work together to achieve the school aims.
- To create an atmosphere of trust, support and understanding between staff and parents.
- To help parents develop a positive role in complementing the work of the staff in educating the children, and to make them aware of the developments and progression in curriculum.
- To encourage parents to take an active part in the school.
- To encourage parents to enjoy the social and private exhibitions of the talents, skills and work of their children.
- To involve parents in the homework and general class-work of their children.
- To support parents' expectations that the school is a safe, ordered and caring environment in which their child will learn, will be valued as an individual, and will be encouraged to explore and reach their full potential.
- To make the school part of the community.
- To gain parents' assistance and co-operation in achieving good discipline by their expectation of good behaviour at home.

**Communication between school and parents**

Communication with parents is mainly through personal contact and via email. We feel that personal contact is the most effective strategy. This can be achieved either in a face-to-face situation or by telephone.

### **Through personal contact we promise to -**

- Put parents at ease and welcome them into school.
- Give parents enough notice to enable them to attend meetings in school.
- Regularly evaluate and review our programme of meetings. Parents are invited to various meetings throughout the year, for example, structured conversations, multi-agency reviews, parents' evenings, curriculum meetings, transition meetings.

### **Through written contact we promise to -**

- Ensure all communication to parents is clearly laid out and attractively presented.
- Give enough notice of alterations to the school day and enough notice of events/trips etc. taking place.
- Update the school website regularly which gives important information about the ethos and operation of the school.
- Provide regular newsletters.
- Distribute questionnaires and evaluation sheets for parents to complete at certain times throughout the year. Parents' opinions and points of view are greatly appreciated and taken into account.
- Inform parents of school's expectations, for example, through the school planner.
- Inform parents of major changes to the curriculum.

### **Parental involvement in school**

We believe that children, parents and the school benefit from parental involvement in many ways. Including but not limited to:

**Children** - having visible signs of co-operation between parents/teachers, gaining wider learning experiences, getting extra assistance with tasks, having more opportunities to work in small groups.

**Parents** - have a deeper understanding of school aims and objectives, sharing skills, gaining confidence in working with children, becoming more aware of children's needs, gaining a deeper understanding of school curriculum and teaching methods.

**School** - having good communication between home and school improved, learning environment enriched, more adult time made available for children, aims and ethos of the school can be transmitted by example.

### **We can involve parents in school by -**

- Welcoming parents to school events.
- Providing opportunities for parents to become involved - after school clubs, listening to children read, supporting teachers in the classroom, etc.

### **Opportunities for parental involvement at Arnold Mill**

In classrooms -

- Art/craft activities
- Cooking/baking
- Computer work
- Practical activities
- Reading activities
- Supervising games
- Playing with/alongside children

Classroom and school support work -

- Mounting pictures/work
- Preparing walls for displays
- Library work
- Photocopying
- General setting up/tidying up

Other possible opportunities -

- Attendance at parent coffee mornings
- Christmas plays
- Educational visits
- Fundraising events
- School concerts
- Assemblies
- Extra-curricular activities
- Sharing expertise eg. musical instruments, talks on various subjects etc.

Please see your child's class teacher if you feel you could help with any of the above.

### **Supporting children at home**

At Arnold Mill we are committed to developing an effective partnership with parents in order to support and improve pupils' achievement, learning and development. We value our parents as full partners in the education process and staff actively strive to achieve positive home/school relations. There are clear lines of communication as the school provides detailed information to parents about their child's progress and work through regular correspondence - parent meetings, curriculum meetings, annual reports, etc. and by operating an 'open door' policy. With regard to homework, in accordance with the new government guidelines we believe that it is an important part of a child's education.

However, we also believe that homework is like most things in education - it is quality that counts, not quantity. We agree with many of the returned parent questionnaires that stated too much homework limits family time and opportunities for play, sport and recreation.

Regarding the homework that we do send home, we ask parents to take an active role in supporting and assisting their child:

- As far as possible provide a peaceful, suitable place for the child to complete their homework. The television/radio should be switched off.
- Try to be consistent and set aside a specified time each day when homework should be done.
- Show the child that they value their homework and support the school.
- Take an interest in the child's homework and help them with any difficulties they may have.
- Ensure written work is neatly done and correctly laid out.
- Listen to the pupil read their reading book and sign their planner.
- Assist the child to learn their times tables and spellings.
- Inform the class teacher if they feel the child is experiencing difficulty with their homework. This can be done by writing a note in the child's planner.
- Encourage the child and praise them when homework is completed satisfactorily.
- Support school with any sanctions made in relation to homework not being completed.

It is important to provide feedback to pupils and parents and this can be done verbally with the child, and also by recording comments in the relevant section of the planner. This should be a two-way process where parents should be actively encouraged to write in the planner also.

The main homework we set for children is reading and there are some guidelines for reading with your child below. Other homework is usually related to spellings and times tables and is also explained below for each key stage.

### **Reading**

We see reading as a partnership between parents, children and teachers. We rely on parents to support the school in helping their child to learn to read. This is the main 'homework' that we ask of children throughout the school. Children get a green card and star stamp for reading three times a week at home - so please remember to sign your child's diary after they have read. Just 10 minutes a day reading with your child will make a huge impact on all areas of their learning. Your child needs to read their 'book-banded' book three times a

week to get a green card, but they could be encouraged to read other reading materials in addition to this e.g. a magazine, comic or a book from home. (For more information and details of how reading is taught in school, please see 'A Guide to Reading at Arnold Mill Primary School'.)

### **Ideas for reading with your child**

#### **When your child starts to read, focus on:**

Talking about the book.  
Holding the book the right way up.  
Turning the pages individually.  
Starting at the front.  
Retelling the story from memory and pictures.  
Distinguishing between print and pictures.  
Relating personal experience to the story.

#### **Your child will then move on to early reading skills, which include:**

Following the text with their finger - not necessarily accurately at first!  
Knowing that reading starts on the left and goes to the right.  
Recognising a word as a unit of meaning.  
Answering questions about the book (eg. What do you think will happen next?)  
If your child is unsure, they can listen to the book read by you and then re-read it back.  
Sometimes a child will choose a book to 'read' which they know well and will be 'reciting' rather than reading. This doesn't matter as long as the child is enjoying the 'reading' experience.

**Once your child starts to become familiar with letters and sounds they begin to point more accurately to the text. They will start to use segmenting (breaking words up into phonic sounds) and blending (putting the sounds back together to make the word). They will build up a sight vocabulary (words they recognise on sight). At this point, focus on:**  
Working out unknown words using different strategies (eg. reading around a word and working out which word would make sense in that spot, looking for clues in the pictures, using segmenting and blending.)  
Answering questions about the book (eg. How do you think she is feeling? Why did he do that?)  
Discussing the meanings of new vocabulary.

**Once your child can read fluently, you can encourage your child:**

To focus less on reading aloud and more on understanding what they've read. At this stage, you could ask your child to read specified pages independently and then come back to you for questions.

To talk about the layout of texts (eg. newspapers have headlines, captions, columns etc.).

To discuss authors - who do they like/dislike?

To discuss what kind of books they prefer - horror, comedy, non-fiction?

### **Other homework - Foundation Stage**

At the beginning of the year your child will bring home a story book to share with you. Later once they are ready, they will bring home a reading book and as they progress with the Read! Write! Programme they will also bring home a Read! Write! Reading book. This will also contain words to practise.

### **Other homework - Key Stage 1**

In Year 1 and Year 2 your child will bring home a Read! Write! Book to read to you. They will also have at least one additional book to share with you. In addition to this they will bring home some spellings which we would like your child to spend some time looking at and practising with you. We also encourage your child to look at their class page on the website which is regularly updated with information about the topics that we are learning about.

### **Other homework - Key Stage 2**

All children are expected to read at least three times a week and to learn their times tables at home. Most children will bring spellings home to practise and will have a weekly test. The children are also encouraged to learn the spelling rules and how to apply them. Some children will be part of the Read! Write! Programme and some children will be part of the Fresh Start programme and they will have their own spellings to learn.

### **Parent courses**

From time-to-time courses are offered to parents to support with behaviour and learning. If you think you would benefit from some form of training, please feel free to email school and we will see what we can do to help.