



Chapelford Village Primary School

Meeting with Parents Policy

Learn
Achieve
Respect

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DOCUMENT STATUS

Version	Date	Action
1	January 2009	New Document adopted by Full Governing Body
1	Autumn 2012	Reviewed
2	Spring 2015	Updated and Adopted by Full Governing Body
3	Autumn 2016	Updated and Adopted by Full Governing Body
4	Spring 2019	Updated and adopted by Full Governing Body

POLICY



Policy for Meeting with Parents

The school mission statement states:

Our Mission

We are a learning family with high expectations, working together in partnership, embracing and developing individual talents and inspiring the personal growth of our family members.

Through a creative approach where enjoyment is key, we encourage everyone to learn, achieve and respect.

Our Vision

An exceptional school, recognised for inspiring and challenging individuals to achieve their dreams.

Our families are instrumental in developing a lifelong love of learning.

We will be respectful, happy and healthy citizens of the future.

We believe that:

1. All parents, staff and children should strive towards a common code of values and discipline for the school through which we establish the highest possible standards and expectations.
2. Children and adults should be constantly encouraged to demonstrate respect and tolerance for one another and to show that each individual is valued so that they gain in confidence and maturity.
3. All pupils should be educated to their full potential, having all received the same access to and identical range of educational opportunities.
4. We should continually strive to provide the best possible teaching with a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils.
5. All our resources, people, time, money and facilities must be organised and managed to achieve the most effective teaching and learning.

6. We must all have clear expectations and targets, which establish a climate of constant improvement and celebration of excellence and achievement.
7. We need to ensure that parents and our community understand and value all that we are trying to achieve. We want to work in partnership with them to help us achieve our aims and to be proud that their children come to Chapelford Village Primary School.

The Governors, staff, parent's, pupils and the local community will work together to achieve our Mission.

Parent/staff communications are an important part of our work. As a school we believe that open and frank communication is vital if we are to create meaningful and effective relationships with parents for the benefit of the pupils. To this end we have a policy of making ourselves available in order to exchange information and discuss issues of concern. Dialogue between staff and parents may take a variety of forms- a message, a brief chat or a longer meeting.

This policy seeks to formalize and guide our practices in relation to formal meetings.

Aims of this policy

To ensure

- Positive dialogue between school and parents
- To ensure clear lines of communication in resolving any concerns quickly
- That all parties involved in discussions are clear about what has been discussed
- That there is agreement about courses of action to be taken and deadlines
- That staff are protected from complaints and wrongful accusations
- To be transparent in relation to the timescales for responses to any concerns raised by parents/carers

Meetings may be requested by either a member of staff or a parent to:

- To discuss an issue of concern regarding pupil well-being or progress
- To share good news
- To discuss a specific process e.g. an IEP review
- To discuss a complaint raised by a parent

Meetings with parents are generally a positive and fruitful experience. However, this process can also bring with it problems when discussions with parents, for what ever reason, become difficult. This policy is designed to both advise and protect staff.

Guiding Principles/Practices.

- If a parent wishes to speak with a teacher for more than a brief passing of a message, then that meeting must be at a time which does not impede our interactions with pupils i.e. not at 8.45am.
- Meetings will be arranged as soon as possible at a time convenient to **both** parties.

- Meetings will be scheduled for half an hour maximum- and this should be politely made clear to parents at the time of agreeing the meeting e.g., "I can meet you from 4.00 -4.30 on Tuesday"
- Whilst we will try to accommodate parent meetings to suit working parents, those times must have reasonable consideration for the life/work balance of the staff and their commitments to their own families.
- No meeting will be held at the request of a parent without the parent giving the person they wish to meet an indication of the subject they wish to discuss so that:
 1. A decision can be taken about information required at the meeting
 2. Extra advice or information can be sought from colleagues
 3. Necessary data/ evidence can be gathered
 4. The support of a colleague can be sought for the meeting if necessary

If parents will not give a reason for a meeting then staff are within their rights to state that the Governing Body has decided that no member of staff will meet with parents without advance notice of the primary reason for the request.

- Meetings may be conducted on a one to one basis but only if the teacher is confident that the meeting will be conducted in a pleasant and polite manner
- If staff feel that the meeting may prove to be difficult then another colleague **must** be present and the parent advised that this will be the case e.g. " I think that Mrs. X would be a helpful person to have at our meeting as she is XXXXXXXXXXXX"
- Meetings should always be conducted in a quiet and private space (ask for the Quiet Room to be made available)
- Parents should always be offered a cup of tea or coffee and, if possible, a colleague will make drinks and bring them to the room
- Be professional but friendly in order to alleviate stress on both sides
- Be aware of the body language and tone of voice. It is easy to become defensive- and this can be misinterpreted
- If a meeting becomes difficult then politely suggest that it might be useful to bring a colleague into the discussion as he/she may be able to help resolve the issue
- If you are concerned at all about the meeting then arrange for a colleague to keep a watching brief on how the meeting is going
- Always tell a colleague when you are meeting with a parent
- If you think that the meeting may be excessively long then arrange for a colleague to be time keeper
- All meetings will have a written record (see appendix 1)
- A copy of the written record will be included in the teachers ECM File that week
- All concerns following a meeting are to be reported to the Head Teacher or, in her absence, the Deputy Head Teacher
- Ensure that all agreed actions are followed through
- If necessary arrange a follow up meeting or agree to send a letter outlining actions which have been taken
- Always try to end the meeting on a positive note

Stages of Meetings Between Parents and Staff: (In line with the Schools Complaint Procedure)

Stage 1 (Informal Stage) - Parent meets in line with stage 1 of the school complaints policy with the appropriate member of staff such as: the person whom the concern/complaint directly concerns (if appropriate and only if an adult) such as the class teacher or phase leader.

If the concern is not resolved at this point a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher for each area of school that the concern/complaint directly concerns. This can also include the school SENDCO if the concern/complaint is with regards to Special Educational Needs.

Stage 2 - Complaint/Concern investigated by the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors if:

- ❖ The complaint is about the Headteacher
- ❖ The Headteacher has looked into the complaint at stage one and this route has been exhausted.

Stage 3 - The complaint is heard by the Governing Body's complaint panel.

These guidelines are to ensure cordial relationships with parents are maintained but they are also important in protecting staff from complaints and false accusations and in minimizing the possibilities for misunderstandings.

Timescales of Initial Response.

Staff in school will endeavor to respond to any concerns or complaints as quickly as possible. However, the learning and teaching of the pupils will always remain a priority and staff will need to prioritise need when responding to parents. If the concern, written or verbal, is in relation to the safeguarding of pupils or staff, then this will be passed to the school's Designated Senior Lead (DSL) straight away and dealt with in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Other concerns or complaints will be prioritised by the school and the school will strive to initially respond within five working days from receipt of the concern or complaint.