SOUTHCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL

Parental Engagement Policy

Our Commitment

At Southchurch High School, we believe that parents and carers are our partners in helping every student to succeed.

We are proud to be **a community of opportunity, learning and aspiration**. We know that students achieve their best when home and school work together, and we are committed to building positive, respectful and trusting relationships with all parents and carers.

We recognise that engaging with school can sometimes feel difficult. Parents and carers may have had negative experiences of education themselves, may be busy with work or family commitments, or may be unsure about how they can support their child. We want every family to feel welcome, listened to and valued.

Our approach to parental engagement is based on a simple principle: **we want to work with families, not simply communicate with them.**

Aims

Through this policy, we aim to:

- build positive and respectful relationships between home and school;
- ensure that parents and carers feel welcome, valued and able to approach us;
- provide clear, accessible and timely information;
- support parents and carers to understand and engage with their child's learning, progress and wellbeing;
- actively remove barriers that may prevent families from engaging with school;
- provide meaningful opportunities for parents and carers to share their views and contribute to the life of the school; and
- listen to feedback and use it to help us improve.

Our Principles

Every Family is Welcome

We want all parents and carers to feel that Southchurch High School is a place where they belong.

We will treat families with courtesy and respect and recognise that every family is different. We will avoid making assumptions about a parent's ability or willingness to support their child and will work to understand any barriers they may face.

We will make particular efforts to engage families who may find it more difficult to connect with school.

Communication is Clear and Accessible

We will communicate with parents and carers in a way that is clear, timely and easy to understand.

We will use a range of methods to communicate, recognising that different families may prefer different approaches. We will make important information as straightforward and accessible as possible and will avoid unnecessary educational jargon.

We will also provide opportunities for two-way communication so that parents and carers can ask questions, raise concerns and share their views.

Parents and Carers are Partners

Parents and carers know their children well. We value the knowledge and experience they bring and recognise the important role they play in their child's education.

We will work with parents and carers to support students' learning, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and future aspirations.

Where concerns arise, we will seek to work together constructively and in the best interests of the student.

We Remove Barriers to Engagement

We understand that there can be many reasons why a parent or carer may find it difficult to engage with school.

Where possible, we will:

- offer meetings and events at different times;
- provide a welcoming and informal environment;
- ensure that parents know who they can contact for help;
- provide support with school systems and technology;
- consider individual needs and reasonable adjustments; and
- actively reach out to families rather than waiting for them to come to us.

We want parents and carers to feel confident that there is no such thing as a silly question and that asking for help is always encouraged.

How We Will Engage with Parents and Carers

Keeping Families Informed

We will provide parents and carers with regular information about their child's education and about the wider life of the school.

This may include information about:

- learning and progress;
- attendance and punctuality;
- behaviour and wellbeing;
- key dates and events;
- enrichment opportunities;
- careers and future pathways; and
- ways in which parents and carers can support their child.

Opportunities to Meet and Talk

We will provide a range of opportunities for parents and carers to meet with staff and engage with the school.

These may include:

- parents' evenings;
- celebration events;
- information evenings and workshops;
- Meet the Headteacher opportunities;
- coffee mornings and informal drop-in sessions; and
- individual meetings where additional support is needed.

We will continue to consider how these opportunities can be made welcoming and accessible to all families.

Supporting Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers may sometimes need support to help their child.

Where appropriate, we will provide information, guidance and opportunities to access support in areas such as:

- learning at home;
- attendance;
- behaviour and wellbeing;
- special educational needs and disabilities;
- careers and post-16 choices; and
- using school systems and technology.

We will also signpost families to other services and sources of support where this is appropriate.

Listening to Parents and Carers

We want parents and carers to have a genuine voice in the development of Southchurch High School.

We will seek feedback through a range of methods, including surveys, meetings, informal conversations and other opportunities for parents and carers to share their views.

We will listen carefully to feedback and, where possible, explain how it has informed our decisions and future planning.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that parental engagement is a central part of the school's approach and that the principles of this policy are reflected in the life of the school.

All Staff

All staff have a role in building positive relationships with parents and carers. Staff should communicate professionally, respectfully and in a way that supports a positive partnership between home and school.

Parents and Carers

We encourage parents and carers to take an active interest in their child's education, communicate with the school when they need support or have concerns, and work with us to help their child make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Monitoring and Review

We will regularly review our approach to parental engagement by considering:

- feedback from parents and carers;
- participation in school events and activities;
- the experiences of families who may face barriers to engagement; and
- the impact of our work on students and the wider school community.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs of our students, families and community.

Our Promise

At Southchurch High School, **students need to be seen, and families need to be heard**.

We are committed to working alongside parents and carers to ensure that every student is supported, challenged and encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Together, we will continue to build **a community of opportunity, learning and aspiration**.