

Pictor Academy

Home-School Policy

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1 Rationale

At Pictor Academy we are committed to developing a successful home-school relationship. We aim to provide a welcoming environment where parents feel comfortable to work in partnership with staff. As a school, we believe that by working together with parents we can achieve the maximum attainment, progress and standards of care for all pupils. We value the home as the child's first learning environment and use the knowledge parents have of their child to help us assess and devise joint programmes of work. The current policy has been developed following consultation with parents and staff.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline guidelines that assist in the development of clear communication between home and school and establishing good working relationships between staff and parents.

As a minimum, schools are required to provide information for new parents, an annual written report, a home-school agreement and the election of a parent governor. At Pictor, we aim to go far beyond this. We feel parents have the right to clear information regarding their child's development and achievement and information regarding the procedures and policies of the school. Pupils are more likely to achieve their full potential if parents have an understanding of their child's needs, feel involved in the development of individual educational plans and know how they can help.

We aim to support parents through providing information, sign posting to relevant services and developing a mutually supportive environment where parents can meet with each other either informally or through organised workshops.

We are committed to equal opportunities and aim to make the school and information accessible to all parents. For example, interpreters can be arranged, home visits are offered where transport and childcare are difficult.

3 Guidelines Welcoming parents as a school

We aim to make the school as welcoming as possible to parents and pupils. Displays show pupil achievement and work. A notice board in the foyer provides information on events and news. A Parent's Room has been set aside. Tea and coffee are available and parents can use this room to meet together at any time.

On arrival at school, parents and visitors are welcomed by our friendly Administrative team. We consider it a priority that parents feel welcome and at ease in school as their visits may be frequent if their child comes to school on transport.

Parents are automatically members of the Parent, Staff and Friends Association. The PSFA organise fundraising events and social evenings. For example, school discos, quiz nights and fairs. These provide an opportunity not just for fundraising but for parents to meet other parents in a relaxed setting. Parents are invited to take part in functions or become actively involved in fundraising activities.

Several elected parent representatives are on the school advisory committee and parents receive clear information regarding this.

A weekly news bulletin (the 'yellow pages') has been developed to keep parents informed as well as reducing the number of separate letters going home. Parents have access to information relating to school in the foyer and Parents' Room. We use text-2-parents to communicate key information and our school website has up to date information about school. Individual teachers use home-school books, Email and latterly interactive technology such as Class Dojo to communicate with parents.

4 Induction of New Pupils (see Prospectus and Welcome Packs)

All prospectus parents are offered a tour of the school usually by a member of the SMT. They are sent a letter by the school indicating that their child has been offered a place and arrangements are made for the class teacher to meet the parents and the child. A Profile is compiled with the parents input and updated as necessary. All families are given a Handbook, Prospectus and consent forms. This includes consent for Health staff, for trips out and application of sun cream. Transitional visits are offered and a start date. The school arranges transport via the LEA once the parents have expressed their wishes. These meetings are the parent's first contact with school and staff ensure that this is a positive experience for the child and their family.

A Home School agreement is shared with parents outlining what the school will provide and expectations of parents to ensure the best for their children while at Pictor.

5 Communicating with parents regarding their child's progress

Communication is a two way process and the staff both listen and respond to the information supplied by parents as well as sharing knowledge of their child's progress and attainment. Some of our pupils attend an assessment place as part of formal assessment. Through regular discussions information contributed by parents can be included within the professional evidence. Parents have access to information regarding the Foundation Stage Profile and Standard Assessment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. All pupils have a Record of Achievement with examples of attainment either through samples of work or photographs. Parents are kept fully informed of any action that the school takes or proposes to take regarding their child. For example, the introduction of a Behaviour Support Plan (see Code of Practice for Behaviour Support) or action taken relating to a First aid injury (see Accident & Emergency policy).

Information regarding child's progress is shared with parents through:

- Home-School Communication Books and digital communication.
- Parent meetings
- IEP and written reviews of these
- Annual Reviews
- Records of achievement

6 Home School Communication Books and digital communication

Each pupil has access to a book that goes home with him/her each day and is returned to school each morning. Many of our children arrive on transport and parents do not have the opportunity to chat with staff. The communication book gives both staff and parents the opportunity to pass information regarding child's progress, well being and activities they have enjoyed. The communication book supplies staff/parents with information/prompts to develop communication with the child. Staff aim to write in the pupil's book on at least a weekly basis and more frequently if a child has communication difficulties. Some

parents and classes prefer digital communication which also embraces conversation and pictorial exchanges. All accidents are reported to parents.(see Accident & Emergency policy). Other members of the multidisciplinary team at Pictor use the books and can be contacted via them. E.g. Physiotherapy, Speech & Language Therapy

Any confidential information is passed directly to staff/parents via phone conversations, letters in a sealed envelope or direct contact. We aim to see parents at short notice if an issue arises but need mutually arranged appointments for longer meetings.

7 Parent Meetings

Parents are offered three set meetings per year. These take the form of an annual review and a parent meeting in the autumn and Summer Terms. For some, these meetings may fall in the same term so parents may want to arrange a meeting at a different time. Where the child is taught by a team of teachers (job share), the child is allocated a key worker who will devise the IEP and usually attend the Annual Review. Parents may arrange to meet with their child's teacher by contacting the school to arrange a convenient time. These meetings are usually held in school but where transport or childcare is difficult; parents may be offered a home visit.

8 Individual Educational Programmes (IEP)

From the first Annual Review, broad aims will be devised for the year using the statement and any additional information from assessments. From these broad targets, termly targets will be set (IEP). Teaching staff devise draft targets in consultation with parents either by sending a draft IEP home or through an informal meeting with parents.

9 Annual Reviews (see Prospectus)

Parents are given an information leaflet outlining the review format and how they can represent their views. This is also outlined in the school prospectus. Although the review is a formal meeting, the atmosphere aims to be relaxed to ensure parents feel comfortable and able to contribute fully to the meeting. Their views on their child's progress are requested verbally but can be given in a written form. An interpreter can be provided where necessary.

10 Records of Achievement

A photographic annotated record is developed to celebrate pupil progress through the year. This is shared with parents during the summer parents evening.

11 Involving parents in their child's education

In addition to the above meetings, the school aims to involve parents in their child's education through:

- Joining the class for trips/activities
- Letters explaining the class topics and activities so parents are able to support learning at home/contribute relevant information
- Home learning activities

- Organised workshops for parents to develop skills and, in some sessions, for their child to join them e.g. ASD workshops, Incredible years
- Opportunities to work alongside/observe staff teaching their child e.g. Speech & Language Therapy

12 Supporting Families

The level of support parents feel they need varies throughout their child's education. We aim to support parents in meeting the needs of their child through:

- Communicating with parents and providing sufficient opportunities for meetings. If meetings are arranged, we can spend time with parents talking through any issues/ concerns and sign posting parents to appropriate staff/services.
- Providing a parent meeting room. This has been developed as an area where parents can meet informally and where they can feel confident and comfortable in school. Coffee mornings and visitors are sometimes arranged or parents are free to arrange their own.
- A Parent Support Advisor is available in school to sign post parents to agencies, hold coffee mornings and give advice to parents. She provides information on local and national services/organisations and runs a small library.
- Offering workshops/visits from professionals

13 Complaints and Concerns

The school has a policy that outlines a complaints procedure. All staff aim to resolve any concerns as they arise and consult with SMT as appropriate. We ask parents to be sensitive to the work of the school but if urgent issues arise, we will see parents at short notice- a short discussion may be enough to resolve the matter.

14 Monitoring

The Advisory Committee, head teacher and staff will regularly evaluate and review working practices of the school with regard to parents. Parents' views will be taken into account through an anonymous annual questionnaire. All agencies involved will be committed to enhancing links with parents at every opportunity in the pursuit of better partnership, greater effectiveness and higher standards for all pupils.