Home School Links Policy

Parents are their child’s first teacher and remain a vital partner in their education. Good relationships between home and school enhance a child’s learning and educational progress.

Regular, effective and honest communication between home and school improves understanding and awareness of the needs of the pupil, family and the school. Parental interest and involvement in the school benefits all involved in the education of the pupil.

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS + EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION + ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT + STRONG PARTNERSHIPS = A POSITIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE PUPIL.

THIS HOME SCHOOL LINKS POLICY AIMS TO:-

Foster positive and supportive relationships between home and school.

Promote regular, open, and honest communication between home and school.

Encourage interest and active involvement of parents in the life and work of the school.

Strengthen the partnership required between home and school to ensure a successful, productive, positive and memorable educational experience for all our pupils.

WHAT DOES OUR HOME SCHOOL LINKS POLICY LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE WITHIN SPERRINVIEW?

ACCESS TO STAFF

The school has an open policy towards parents and welcomes contact with them. Teaching staff are usually available before and after the school day and by appointment, email or phone at other mutually convenient times. All parents have been furnished with the school telephone number and the direct access extension numbers for the individual classes. Appointments with the Principal can be made by phoning, emailing or visiting the school.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION (FORMAL AND INFORMAL)

Parents have access to any information relating to their child (unless Child Safeguarding restrictions apply). Requests for such information must be made in writing to the Principal and must comply with GDPR protocol in relation to information requested.

WELCOMING AND HELPING VISITORS

The school secretary is available from 8.30am – 3.00pm each week day. In the unavoidable absence of a member of staff, a doorbell/security entrance system is in place to summon assistance, or to gain entry to the school. All visitors must report to the school office/reception and obtain a visitor’s pass before progressing with their visit. Direct access to the class or classroom staff may not be possible as it may prove disruptive to activities ongoing in the classroom.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The school website is always available on- line unless during times of web maintenance. It provides information included in the prospectus, parent information, holiday lists, statutory information, class activities, newsletters and policies.

NEWSLETTERS

Parents are provided with a class newsletter at least once a term and a school newsletter once a month. These detail forthcoming events in classes/whole school and other relevant information. Specific letters are issued giving details of visits, events and appointments according to specific need.

COMMUNICATION BOOKS

All pupils have a home/school book which is a daily communication between home and school. Teachers/Classroom assistants inform parents of daily class activities, eating and drinking habits for the day and toileting issues if required. This is particularly useful for pupils who are non-verbal. The book is a useful way for parents to inform staff of events that have happened at home, sleeping habits of the previous night, eating that morning and other information which may affect the pupil’s ability to participate fully in class activities for that day. Accommodations can be made if information is forthcoming. As class numbers continue to increase, it may not be possible for the staff to have the time to detail all aspects of the pupil’s day, so they employ a tick box method to highlight activities and perhaps make a short comment in the comment box if necessary.

POLICY

The school’s policies are on the school website. The child protection/pastoral care/internet safety policies are sent out bi-annually and parents sign and return an acknowledgement of having, received, read and understood these policies.

REPORTS

A verbal report is given at the pupil’s annual review meeting which is attended by the Principal/Vice Principal/SLT member, the class teacher, the parents and all the professionals involved in working with the child. A written report is sent out in early June detailing the child’s progress in the different curricular areas. An opportunity is given at this time for parents to request a meeting with the class teacher if they wish to discuss the report.

IEPs are written twice a year after a period of observation and assessment. These are issued to parents for approval and are signed and returned to school.

TRANSFER OF INFORMATION

Each August, pupils moving classes or changing teachers have their pertinent information shared between the staff of the previous year and the staff who will be working with the pupil in the current academic year. This sharing of information is vital to ensure as much as possible, the smooth transition between staff and classes.

PARENT WORKSHOPS

Throughout the year, parent workshops are held in school to inform parents of techniques and initiatives used with their children in school. This is to encourage the use of the same techniques at home with their child to promote a seamless continuity in techniques used at school/home. Workshops in Literacy, Numeracy, Makaton, OT, Autism and sensory programmes etc have been hosted by the school. Pre school have a series of stay and play workshops during the school year to encourage parents to come and play in school with their child, meet other parents and talk to professionals in an informal setting. In adolescent years, RSE (Relationship and Sexuality Education) information evenings are held to inform parents how the issue of puberty and sex education are taught in school

WELCOME AND INDUCTION PROGRAMME

There is a programme of welcome and induction for pupils and their families who are joining the school for the first time. New pupils are invited into school for an introduction to staff and to tour the school before the other pupils come back to school.

SCHOOL LEAVERS

Pupils leaving school at 19 have a special leaving ceremony in school. This showcases their time in school and lets families see what achievements they have had and the friendships they have made during their time in Sperrinview. Pupils also have 18th birthday celebrations in school. This consists of a party where family and friends can come into school and celebrate with their young person’s class, their entry into adulthood. After the initial party, the whole school meets up with the rest of the party to celebrate with a disco.

END OF YEAR CELEBRATION EVENTS

Each year, parents/families are invited into school to see a showcase of their child and the work they have taken part in over the past year. Presentations marking achievements are also made on this day.

CHRISTMAS SHOWS

Each of the pupils in the school will have at least one opportunity to take part in a school production of a Christmas show. Parents/family members are invited into school in December to view the performance. School productions are dependent on the main hall being available from Halloween to Christmas.

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

When possible, the school hosts a coffee morning in term 1 to raise money for cancer charities. Parents/family members and the local community are invited to attend. A Christmas craft fair also affords parents an opportunity for families to visit the school to support local crafters and raise funds for the school. Again, this is dependent on the main hall being readily available.

PARENTS IN SCHOOL

At times, it may be necessary to employ some of our parents/family members, who have the necessary qualifications, to work in our school. We endeavour to ensure that parents/family members do not work in the class in which their child is placed.

FAMILY MEMBERS IN SCHOOL

As an educational establishment, Sperrinview endorses the wishes of individuals to further their knowledge and education. To that end, if family members of pupils in our school request a work placement, we endeavour to place them in a class so that they can progress with their studies and fulfil their work placement commitments.

PUPILS NOT CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL

There are a small number of pupils who are currently enrolled in our school who, for specific reasons are unable to attend school. In these cases, we endeavour to maintain contact with the parents/pupil. A telephone call on a regular basis keeps the teacher/school up to date with the pupil’s progress at home. Health service staff, if involved, also keep staff updated about the pupil. Parents are reassured that their child will be most welcome back to school when they are able to return. When appropriate, and if the pupil is well enough, a member of the school staff may visit the pupil at home to engage in some educational activities. A phased return if appropriate, is put in place to ease return to school, particularly if the pupil has been away from school for an extended period. If a pupil is absent from school for a period of time with no legitimate or valid reason for their absence, it becomes a matter for the Education Welfare Service who will investigate and pursue actions to have the pupil returned to school.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HOME SCHOOL LINKS IN SPERRINVIEW SCHOOL?

Cecelia Broomfield and Shaunagh Duffin are responsible for home school links in school. In their absence, refer to Ruth Walker (Vice Principal) or Paula Jordan (Principal)

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis through consultation with pupils, staff, parents and external support agencies.

REVIEW

A sub-committee of the Board of Governors will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy as part of a timetabled, on-going process.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_