

# All Saints' Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Lawshall

## WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS POLICY

### Our Vision

All children leave All Saints' as confident, resilient, resourceful individuals with a lifelong love of learning and a curiosity about the world around them

### Our Values:

Inspire, Challenge, Succeed

We want our school to be a **centre of excellence** for learning- for children and adults and our wider community. We want to create a school where:

- Children are safe, happy and healthy
- Children make outstanding progress and are confident, independent, enthusiastic and determined learners
- Staff are inspirational practitioners, able and enthusiastic to learn from and develop others
- Everyone shows respect and consideration for other people

We want to grow through supporting and developing other schools and continuing to learn ourselves.

We want our school to be a **rich, exciting and fun** environment which is underpinned by these important characteristics:

### Learning:

- Creating and thinking critically: Problem solving – using and applying skills
- Confidence to take risks and to be independent
- Collaboration
- Responsibility, resilience, resourcefulness, reflection, reasoning
- Exploring, playing
- Active learning
- Tolerance and respect for others, their ideas and opinions
- Enthusiasm for learning

### Teaching:

- Tenacious-wanting the best for every child , every lesson, every day
- Engaging and inspiring
- Analytical and reflective assessment: rigorous and influences every lesson
- Challenging-underpinned by high expectations
- High quality interaction-questioning and feedback which guides next steps, praises effort
- Excellent relationships underpinned by care and respect
- Rich language and learning environment

### Policy Aims

In working with parents/carers we aim to:

1. Develop a shared understanding of our school aims, values, policies and practices.
2. Encourage parent/carer's participation in their children's learning at school and at home.

Approved: February 2016

3. Create a relationship based on shared responsibility and mutual respect.

There are many aspects to our work with parents/carers which contribute to these aims. These include:-

#### **Informing Parents and Carers**

- about the day to day organisation of the school
- about the curriculum
- about special events
- about their children's learning

#### **Encouraging participation**

- in the classroom and in curriculum activities
- in developing school policies
- in special events
- through the Parent Group

#### **Responding to concerns**

- meeting with parents/carers if there is any concern (expressed by parent/carer or teacher) about the child's progress or well-being in school
- making the complaints procedure clear to parents/carers

#### **Informing Parents/Carers**

We provide information to parents/carers about the school through:-

- Weekly newsletters from the headteacher
- Weekly updates to class pages on our website with important information and requests to parents/carers together with photographs of the children's learning from the previous week.
- The weekly learning objectives for maths and literacy are displayed for each class on the classroom door and on the class pages on the website.

#### **Homework Policy**

Our homework policy is on our school website. This explains the ongoing homework expectations for each year group.

#### **Annual Homework Booklets**

Class teachers issue a booklet to parents/carers describing main topics and activities to support the children at home in the autumn term.

#### **The Prospectus**

All parents/carers who visit the school prior to their child starting are encouraged to read our school prospectus which describes the curriculum, routines, staffing arrangements and organisational details. Parents/carers may receive a paper copy on request or it is available through our website.

#### **New Parents/Carers Induction Visit and Talk**

During the summer term prior to children starting school, the Headteacher carries out a 'home visit' to every family to discuss pastoral issues and answer any questions parents/carers may have.

In addition, each June or July, the foundation stage teacher together with the teaching assistant and headteacher talk to parents/carers of the children who will start in September, providing information on aims, values, reading, homework, uniform and the curriculum in general.

#### **School Policies**

If any parent/carer wishes to read a school policy, these are available on request from the school office or via the school website.

*Approved: February 2016*

### **Induction Information**

In the prospectus and induction pack, we make clear how much we value parent/carer support and participation. The importance of the relationship between school and home is explicit within our:-

- School aims and values
- Prospectus
- Induction pack
- Home-school partnership agreement
- Induction meeting
- Staff Handbook
- Key policies – e.g. behaviour, anti-bullying, equal opportunities

We inform parents/carers about their children's learning through:-

### **Sharing Targets**

Each term we share the targets for each child with their parents/carers so that children can be given support at home to achieve their 'next steps'.

### **Parents' Evenings**

In the autumn and spring term parents/carers are offered a ten minute appointment to see the class teacher about their child's attitude, attainment and progress. Teachers endeavour to provide the appointment within a half an hour time period which the parent/carer has selected. Any parents/carers who do not make an appointment will be contacted by the class teacher to arrange a convenient time. Any parent/carer who does not attend a pre-arranged appointment will be contacted to make another appointment. The Head Teacher is available to see parents/carers at this parents' evening.

### **Reports**

In January of each year, parents are issued with an interim report detailing their child's progress and motivation. In the summer term, each parent/carer receives a written individual report about their child which describes their attitudes, personal and social skills, progress and attainment. Attendance and punctuality data are also included. Appointments to discuss this report with the class teacher are available. All information is sent to separate parents who have legal parental rights. We ask parents to inform the Headteacher so that information may be posted.

### **Open Door**

If you have any concern at any time, do not wait until parents' evenings. Parents and carers are welcome to ask to see the teacher or Headteacher and an appointment will be made as soon as possible.

### **Encouraging Participation**

Parent group hold regular coffee mornings to plan events and discuss relevant matters. In addition, the headteacher holds a parent forum meeting each half term where issues are discussed and information shared.

### **Home-School Agreement**

This is given to all new parents/carers as their children start school. It indicates the ways that parents/carers and the school can support each other to provide the best for the child. Parents/carers keep the agreement and return a slip to the office to say that they have received it.

### **On-Going Home-School Communication**

The school website provides ongoing communication for parents/carers including diary dates, weekly learning objectives and reminders.

When children are in the reception year there is a home-school "contact board" for staff to write on.

*Approved: February 2016*

Bus children in all classes have a home/school liaison book for comments to be written in.

Children in reception and year 1 who attend Woodpeckers (after school club) may have a home school liaison book, if it is deemed appropriate.

Reading record diaries are used to communicate how each child is progressing with reading and parents/carers are also able to put notes in their own child's book bag if they have a concern or a question.

Where a child has a particular need, individual communication books are used. If your child has an additional educational need or a disability, please refer to our SEND school offer on the website or request a paper copy of this booklet.

The school ParentMail system is used to convey emergency messages e.g. regarding school closure to all parents/carers as quickly as possible via e-mail and text. There is also an emergency "telephone tree" in the eventuality of problems with the internet.

Any child who is on a pupil passport will receive a weekly mini-report from the class teacher. This will either be sent via Parentmail or as a hard copy to parents.

### **Helping in School**

Parents/carers are actively encouraged to come into school and help out either in class or with extra activities like enrichment days or gardening. When helping, parents/carers should sign in the school visitors' book and wear a "parent helper" ID to show that they are authorised to be in the school building.

### **School Trips**

We require a ratio of 1 adult to 4 children for reception class trips or 1:5- 1:6 for year 1 and year 2. Teachers will brief parent helpers before the trip – explaining the timetable and expectations for the trip. Teachers have overall responsibility for the class throughout a trip. We pay for parent/carer helpers' entrance and travel fees. Ratios of adults to children for KS2 trips are at the discretion of the senior leadership team dependent upon the trip and the cohort of children.

### **Questionnaires**

Each year we ask for parent/carer's ideas and opinions on different aspects of school policy and development. Governors and staff analyse the results of these questionnaires and actions are put in place to address any issues.

### **Special Events**

During the year we organise special school events which encourage the involvement of parents/carers:-

- Harvest celebration
- Christmas performances
- Easter concert
- Summer/leavers assembly
- Sports day
- Class trips
- Enrichment days

### **Parent Group Events**

Every parent/carer is automatically a member of the Parent Group and is welcome to attend meetings and join in events. There is a mixture of fundraising and social events through the year including:-

- Christmas fair
- Cake sales
- End of term discos
- Easter egg bingo

*Approved: February 2016*

- Summer fair

### **Security**

We ask parents/carers to inform us of any change in collection arrangements and, if unsure we will keep the child at school until a parent has confirmed the identity of the person collecting. Children are dismissed by their teacher one at a time from the classroom or main entrance door. The teacher only allows children to go once the authorised adult is seen.

### **Responding to Concerns**

Teachers dismiss children at the end of the day and so are able to pass on information when necessary. Sometimes teachers may need to inform parents of a fall in the playground, a particular achievement or an incident involving bad behaviour.

Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to teachers if they have a specific concern about their child. Parents/carers should ask to make an appointment to discuss matters with the class teacher at a mutually convenient time – often at the end of the teaching day. Similarly, teachers will consult parents/carers if they have any concerns about a child.

It is always helpful, when there is a concern or query, to meet with the class teacher as soon as possible. We are committed to solving problems quickly and this can prevent minor issues or misunderstandings becoming major problems.

The teacher may ask you to raise your concern with the Headteacher if it is a whole school matter or if she feels a parent requires further information or reassurance.

If parents/carers feel that a problem has not been resolved by either the class teacher or Headteacher, the next step is to write to the Chair of Governors, c/o the school, marking a letter 'PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL'.

We always listen to concerns and do our best to answer queries or investigate incidents as thoroughly as possible. Staff are very courteous, welcoming and committed to working with parents/carers in the best interests of the children. We ask parents/carers to show the same courtesy in raising concerns and enjoy a relationship with parents/carers based on this mutual understanding and respect.

This policy is a working document, reflecting current practice. It will be amended as our practice is committed to developing effective relationships with parents and will review this policy annually.

### **Christian Values**

As a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School the Christian values of compassion, endurance, forgiveness, friendship, humility, tolerance, trust and wisdom underpin everything we do.

*Approved: February 2016*