

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
Article 5 : Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide and advise their child so that, as they grow, they learn to apply their rights properly.



Clydebank High School
POLICIES & PROCEDURES
PP8.2 : Policy On Parental Involvement



WDC Policies & Procedures:	-----
National Priorities:	NP4
How Good Is Our School?	5.7 : Partnerships With Parents, The School Board and The Community
SMT Responsible:	Stewart Young (HT)
Policy Implemented:	August 2003
Policy Reviewed:	August 2012
Policy Due For Review:	Session 2015/16



Policy on Parental Involvement

Introduction

Clydebank High School genuinely welcomes all contact with parents. We have the strongly held belief that we can maximise our young people's potential only if there is a strong sense of partnership and cooperation between the home and the school. This theme, introduced in the School Handbook for P7 parents, is picked up and continued in the letterhead used in all communication with parents: "PARTNERSHIP FOR SUCCESS. Pupils, parents and school working together".

The School's Role

The school has a proactive role to play in the development of this partnership. We must reach out to parents by:

- 1 involving them at every opportunity
- 2 keeping them well informed
- 3 establishing regular contact, positive as well as negative
- 4 inviting them into school, for positive as well as negative reasons
- 5 responding promptly and courteously to their concerns
- 6 ensuring that all school literature is attractive as well as informative

To ensure that such partnership can develop successfully, parents must:

- 1 sense a welcoming atmosphere in the school at all times
- 2 feel that they are working on an equal footing with staff and have a meaningful contribution to make to their child's education
- 3 feel confident about expressing enquires, concerns or problems, and know that these will be dealt with promptly and efficiently
- 4 be confident that they know the appropriate staff to contact and the correct channels of communication. The school's "Service Standards" leaflet, published twice per year and available on the school's website, gives parents important reassurance in these areas. Parents are asked regularly to comment on the Service Standards and propose any amendments (APPENDIX 1). The school's complaints policy is published alongside the Service Standards (APPENDIX 2).

Parental Involvement The Details

Section 1

Parental Involvementto support pupil attainment

1 School-Home Literature

To engender a sense of pride in the school and a sense of belonging to the Clydebank High School community:

- the school regularly reviews all publications for:
 - language
 - presentation
 - accessibility
- the school Handbook is professionally printed every autumn and is issued to all P7 pupils in December and to all new pupils who come to the school.
- a series of leaflets, "Moving Up", is issued to P7 pupils throughout the year, giving information on the issues that concern primary youngsters most about moving to secondary.
- a Parents' Newsletter is issued to all pupils on a six-weekly basis. This is desk-top published in-house and contains important factual information about events as well as celebrating the successes of youngsters at Clydebank High.

All of these documents are also available on the school's web site.

To support parents who wish to be actively involved in their children's education, a summer mailing is sent out to all S1 homes in early August every year and includes:

- a copy of the school calendar for the new session (including reporting arrangements)
- a copy of the school's Uniform Policy and Prevention of Bullying Policy
- names of Pastoral Care staff and Senior Management Team
- details of who to contact, how and when
- (In addition, a year specific homework leaflet, outlining the nature and frequency of homework for each subject in that year group is issued on the first day of the new session).
- This same information is handed out to all pupils in S2-S6

Article 5 : Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide and advise their child so that, as they grow, they learn to apply their rights properly.

In addition, our school website contains up-to-date information about all key education issues e.g. Policies: Prevention of Bullying, Child Protection, Promoting Positive Behaviour, Health Education, Equality and Fairness, Uniform.

Parents are contacted automatically in potentially sensitive situations e.g. sex and relationship education

As new learning and teaching initiatives are introduced (e.g. Assessment Is For Learning) details are sent home to parents and are also posted on the school's website.

Parents are invited to attend workshops in school, to help them support their child meaningfully at home.

2 Reports/Parents' Evenings

To inform parents accurately and regularly about their child's progress and how they can become involved with their child's learning to ensure continuous improvement:

- the school regularly reviews the format of its reports
- the time gap between reports is kept to a minimum, to ensure that there is not enough of a time lapse for the pupils to go "off the rails"
- all year groups receive two reports:
 - a tracking report indicating general progress and comparing pupils' "on track" predictors
 - a full report including a detailed teacher comment and detailed grades
- an additional early concern report is issued, if necessary
- all full reports provide opportunities for parents, as well as pupils, to give feedback
- all full reports include an idea of "Next Steps" and "Strengths"

To maximise parental attendance at parents' evenings and to make these events as meaningful as possible:

- parents' evenings are sometimes end-on to the school day and sometimes in the evening.
 - parents are consulted about any proposed changes to the arrangements for these meetings
 - the layout of each event ensures maximum confidentiality
 - parents and staff are encouraged to maintain an appointment system. Parents who wish to discuss difficulties more fully are invited to come back to complete the discussion at a later date
 - specific parents (e.g. of underachieving pupils) are targeted to attend
 - a coffee bar in the foyer area is intended to make parents feel more "at home" in the school environment
 - parents are encouraged to complete a questionnaire, the main purposes of which are to find out:
 - how useful and informative the evening has been
 - if they now have a clearer idea how to support their child
- responses are followed up and acted upon

3 Parent Council

To make the Parent Council and its members an integral and obviously valued part of the school:

- the school involves the Parent Council in open discussion of basic school issues (such as discussion of new policy statements and new initiatives)
- there are regular informal meetings between the Chairperson and the Head Teacher
- a wide range of staff is invited to come and speak at Parent Council meetings
- SMT minutes are sent to Parent Council for information
- Parent Council members attend each Parents' Evening and speak to interested parents, and potential future members, about their role in the school

4 Publicity

To engender a sense of pride amongst all members of the school community and to share our youngsters' successes with parents and friends:

- a number of staff volunteers have formed a Media Group which meets regularly in the school
- sub-groups have been set up with responsibility for:
 - achievement board/activity boards
 - development of the school web-site
 - reading and creative writing groups
 - publicity in the community
- contacts with the local press ensure ongoing coverage of the good work carried out by pupils at Clydebank High School

5 Parents' Focus Groups

To involve parents who are keen to have a deeper and more involvement, Clydebank High School has a network of interested and supportive parents who help with the development and monitoring of new policies such as Homework, Learning and Teaching, Parental Involvement. Currently, Curriculum for Excellence provides the main focus for this activity.

Section 2

Parental Involvement

....to support pupils with difficulties

1 Contact Staff

- For general matters concerning a pupil's welfare, wellbeing, progress or attainment, parents contact the pupil's Pastoral Care teacher. Such enquires usually concern absence, attendance, timekeeping, health, curricular progress, homework, attitude etc.
- Where pupils have a specific learning difficulty which causes difficulties for them in the classroom situation, parents contact a member of the Support for Learning department.
- For more serious matters parents contact the member of the Senior Management Team best placed to assist. In most cases this will be the appropriate Head of House who has responsibility for all matters relating to pupils in that House. The Head Teacher is also available for very serious matters

2 Contact Parents

- Similarly, members of the Senior Management Team may wish to contact parents about matters relating to pupils. Such contacts usually concern attendance, timekeeping, behaviour and curricular progress. In the most serious cases of misbehaviour, the Head Teacher may decide that a pupil should be excluded from school for a period of time. Parents are automatically informed according to procedures laid down by West Dunbartonshire Council. No pupil is sent home before the parent has been contacted (eg by telephone or by text). When a pupil is excluded, he/she is given a letter signed by the Head Teacher. This letter informs parents of the length of the exclusion and the reason for it. The letter also contains information for parents on how to appeal against the exclusion. A meeting is arranged with a member of the Senior Management Team to discuss the situation with the parent. Before the pupil is re-admitted, parents are asked to sign a declaration of cooperation.

Section 3

Parental Involvement

....practical day-to-day guidelines

1 Contact In Person

- Parents arriving in school normally have an appointment to see a member of the Senior Management Team, Pastoral Care or Support for Learning Staff.
- The names of all visitors and the times when they are expected are noted on the whiteboard in the main school office.
- Parents are not normally given access to members of staff other than those mentioned above.
- If a parent arrives without an appointment, office staff contact the relevant member of staff mentioned above to see if they are available or arrange an alternative time.
- If a parent arrives wishing to see a pupil, contact should be made with the appropriate member of the SMT who will decide if the pupil is to be released from class.
- Parents should never be allowed to go directly to a classroom to see a pupil. If they insist on doing so the Head Teacher should be alerted at once.
- If a parent is aggressive or offensive, office staff should not engage in dialogue but contact a member of the SMT immediately.

2 Contact By Telephone

- Parents should not normally be allowed to speak directly to members of staff, other than those listed above. Office staff should offer to pass the call to a member of the SMT or the Pastoral Care team and ask for the pupil's name.
- If the telephone call concerns a pupil's involvement in extra-curricular activities, the appropriate member of staff may be contacted if he/she is not teaching. Otherwise, a message will be left for them by the office staff.
- If a parent telephones and requests that a message be passed to a pupil, this should be done only in an emergency e.g. hospital/dental appointment, house keys left, adverse circumstances at home etc.
- Class teachers should not normally telephone parents directly (although Heads of Department increasingly do). If there is a valid reason for doing so, the member of staff should consult the appropriate member of SMT.
- If a parent is abusive on the telephone, office staff should contact a member of the SMT, or, in extreme cases, put the receiver down.

3 Contact By Letter

- Letters to parents are normally dealt with by members of the SMT and Pastoral Care staff. A range of standard letters exists and these are regularly sent home to provide routine information.
- Letters to parents on curricular matters should be copied to the relevant member of the SMT and sent only after consultation with them.
- Letters to parents should be sent by Pastoral Care staff, Heads of Department or members of the SMT. Class teachers should not normally write directly to parents.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
Article 5 : Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide and advise their child so that,
as they grow, they learn to apply their rights properly.

4 Contact Electronically

The school texts parents:

- if there are immediate concerns about attendance
- to remind parents about school events such as parents' evenings, SQA exams.
- if a pupil is unexpectedly late for school

APPENDIX 1

AT YOUR SERVICE

One of the core values in our Corporate Plan is 'Putting Customers First'. This means you, the customer, are our top priority and we are committed to continuously improving the services we offer you, now and in the future. We will seek your views, listen to what you say, respond appropriately and let you know how your views have made a difference.

This leaflet explains what standards of service you can expect from West Dunbartonshire Council. If our service falls short of our standards, we will explain what we will do to put it right and how quickly.

WHEN YOU PHONE US

- We will answer your call promptly (usually within six rings). If the person you are calling is not available, we will ensure that your call is automatically transferred to someone who can take a message or you can leave a message on voicemail.
- We will give you our name and section name.
- We will give you time to clarify your enquiry
- We will deal with your enquiry right away OR let you know how and when we will deal with your enquiry.
- It would be helpful if you have pen and paper handy and make a note of who you spoke to and when.

WHEN YOU WRITE TO, FAX OR EMAIL US

- We will respond to your correspondence within 10 working days from receipt.
- If more time is required to send a full reply, we will send you an acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt of your letter. You will get a full reply within 20 working days.
- Some issues may take longer than 20 days to resolve, in which case we will keep you up to date on progress.
- If you e-mail us and we are out of the office, we will give you an alternative e-mail and phone contact.
- We will write to you in plain English answering all your points.
- We will include a name and contact number in all correspondence.

WHEN YOU MEET WITH US

- We will be welcoming and courteous.
- We will wear name badges.
- When we have arranged an appointment with you we will be on time for it. If we are unavoidably delayed, we will let you know as soon as possible and agree an alternative time.
- We will be sensitive to your individual needs.
- We will take all reasonable steps to ensure your privacy and confidentiality.
- We will divert our phones.
- We will take time to listen to you.
- Before you leave, we will check you have a clear understanding of what will happen next and when.

ACCESSIBILITY

- If you request it, we will write to you in large print, or communicate with you using computer disc or tape.
- If you request it, we will translate documents or summaries of documents into Braille and a number of community languages.
- If you require it we will provide sign language interpreters or community language interpreters.
- All our contact with you will comply with "Communicating Effectively", the Council's policy on communicating with people from ethnic minorities and with disabled people. This is available from the Policy Unit, tel. 01389 737231 and on the Council's website www.wdcweb.info

TRAINING OUR EMPLOYEES

We will provide training to our employees to ensure that they are familiar with our customer service standards.

PUTTING THINGS RIGHT

We hope you are happy with the services you have received, but if not please let us know.

- We will try to put things right as quickly as possible.
- We will investigate the issue and let you know the outcome.

Article 5 : Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide and advise their child so that, as they grow, they learn to apply their rights properly.

APPENDIX 2

In the unlikely event that you are unhappy with the level of service that we provide you might wish to make a complaint. If so, here is the process:

Step 1 Phone us or visit our school office. A member of staff will try to sort things out for you on the spot.

Step 2 If you are still not satisfied, you may complete a complaint form (available from office). If you are phoning the office, the member of staff you are speaking to will send the form to you to complete and return. You can write a letter to us if you prefer.

We will make sure that:

we treat your complaint fairly and thoroughly investigate it.

we tell you the name of the member of staff handling your complaint.

we send you a written acknowledgement within 5 working days. If possible, we will give you a full reply at this stage.

we respond to your complaint within 20 working days. If your complaint is very complex or if we need to contact other organisations it may take longer, but we will let you know.

Step 3 If you are still unhappy once you have a final reply from the school you can contact:

**Department of Educational Services
Council Offices
Garshake Road
DUMBARTON G82 3PU**

The office staff will put you in touch with the correct person.