

Author	Sheila McKenzie	Target group	All employees, consultants and volunteers
Issued	January 2019		
Approved by	Education Executive Team	Next review	January 2021

Home-School Agreement Policy

Aims

The Home-School Agreement Policy includes details about how Anthem Schools Trust (the Trust) and each of our schools work together with parents towards achieving the best outcomes for children. Whilst home-school agreements are no longer a statutory requirement for schools, this policy encapsulates our belief that parents are a child's first and most important educators. This policy is designed to help achieve the highest possible standards of achievement through close communication and effective partnership with parents. At the end of this policy is the Home-School Agreement which parents are asked to read carefully and then sign the declaration.

Scope and publication

This Home-School Agreement Policy applies to all pupils and their parents at all Anthem Schools Trust (the Trust) schools. This policy is available on each school website. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

Who was consulted?

In drawing up this policy and agreement St Mark's reviewed current practices in communicating with parents and pupils. Pupils were invited to comment on the extent to which the School Council provides an effective vehicle for consulting them and involving them in decision-making. Reference was made to the sections in the Ofsted report relating to engaging with parents and outcomes for pupils.

Relationship to other policies

This policy relates most closely to the Behaviour and Pupil Registration Policies. It impacts on our approach to the prospectus and our aims and values. It is also relevant to many other school policies.

Ethos of the school

The ethos of the school is based on the values of Love, Hope and Trust, we foster positive relationships between all members of the school community, including all pupils, parents and staff. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination are not tolerated. The school will act fairly in relation to pupils and parents and we expect the same of pupils and parents in relation to the school and its staff.

Communication with parents

Excellent communication with parents is essential to the ethos of the school and is encouraged through a variety of methods:

- the school prospectus and updated website
- the school's Facebook page
- the school's Twitter feeds

- Year 7 start-of-year meetings for parents/carers to get to know the class teacher and make a note of any future dates, explain any general policies, discuss children's growing and changing needs
- parent/carer information sessions to explain principles of pedagogy and support children's learning
- assemblies: including class, year group, harvest, festivals and celebrations and end of term
- open mornings
- school reports on pupil progress and achievement
- parent/carer consultation sessions
- meetings between staff and parents
- weekly newsletters
- letters and reports
- published calendar dates
- displays and notice boards
- circulation of documents, policies and minutes of relevant meetings
- formation of a Parents/Carers' Association
- formation of a Parents/Carers' Council
- establishing a home-school agreement.

Assistance will be provided for parents/carers with any disability or difficulty, including for those parents for whom English is a second language, to assist with communication with the school as required. Please contact [add name] for assistance.

Consultation with parents

Regular consultation with parents/carers is also an integral part of the school's ethos. We always endeavour to take account of the views and feedback of parents and carers.

This will include consultation on general levels of satisfaction with education provision, selected aspects of the school's work and on the impact of specific initiatives.

Methods used will include:

- surveys/questionnaires conducted by the school or commissioned by professional companies and external agents
- face-to-face interviews
- phone interviews
- School Council and Parents Association meetings
- focus groups or involvement of selected parent representatives
- newsletters
- email
- Facebook, Twitter or other social media; or
- text messages.

Success criteria

The success criteria for judging the effectiveness of parent/carer engagement strategies are:

- parents/carers feel welcome when they come into the school and report that they have ready access to the staff they need to meet
- parents/carers often give positive feedback and the number of complaints is low

- a growing number of parents/carers volunteer to help in school activities
- there is a high attendance at school events and there is frequent use of the school's website and social media pages
- responses from surveys are strongly supportive
- parents/carers find reports informative and helpful and feel able to support their children's progress.

Responsibilities and expectations

The school will do its best to:

- communicate and consult with parents as set out above
- regularly celebrate children's achievements
- encourage children to do their best at all times, to think of themselves and to achieve their full potential
- encourage children to take care of their surroundings and others around them
- care for the children's safety and general wellbeing
- provide a balanced curriculum and meet each child's individual needs
- be open, friendly and welcoming at all times and offer parents the chance to become involved in the life of the school
- encourage children to make healthy choices
- operate and enforce a balanced Behaviour Policy and school rules
- provide structures to support parents/carers and involve them socially as well as educationally in the life of the school.

We require parents/guardians/carers to do their best to:

- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- ensure that the school has up to date contact telephone numbers
- ensure that their child is dressed appropriately for school in line with the School Uniform Policy
- ensure their child has the appropriate equipment for school where possible
- support the school's guidelines on good behaviour and disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy
- provide a written note or a telephone call to explain an absence
- attend open evenings or review meetings to discuss their child's progress
- tell the school about any problems at home that might affect their child's behaviour
- encourage their child with homework and ensure it is completed on time
- encourage and support their child to eat well and make healthy choices
- support their child in responding positively to the general expectations and regulations of the school
- read carefully, sign and support the Home-School Agreement

The school expects pupils to do their best to:

- come to school regularly and on time
- be polite, friendly, kind, and helpful to everyone
- act appropriately and follow the school rules and Behaviour Policy
- show respect for the belongings of others and their own work
- work hard at school and do their homework.

Together we will:

1. Support pupils' learning, to help them to achieve their best.
2. Assist with any special needs.
3. Encourage pupils to keep the school rules.

Signing the Home-School Agreement

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that all parents of registered pupils sign the parental declaration to indicate that they understand and accept the contents of the Home-School Agreement. Where parents have separated, where possible, both parents will be given the opportunity to sign a copy of the agreement's parental declaration.

We may also ask any pupil to sign the Home-School Agreement if we feel that the pupil is of sufficient maturity. However, we will not:

- invite a parent or child to sign the parental declaration before the child has been admitted to the school
- make the signing of the parental declaration a condition of the child's admission to the school; or
- base a decision about admitting a child to the school on assumptions about whether his or her parents are or are not likely to sign the parental declaration
- impose a sanction on parents who do not sign, or on pupils whose parents do not sign the declaration
- impose a sanction on pupils whose parents do not abide by the agreement.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Trust and the Headteacher will ensure that this policy and the agreement are reviewed at least every two years in consultation with parents, pupils, staff and Local Governors as necessary.

Appendix 1: Exemplar Home-School Agreement

Home-School Agreement

Pupil's name:

Tutor Group:

I acknowledge I have received a copy of:

- The School prospectus
- The School Service Standards
- The School's Welcome Pack for new students and their parents/guardians

I understand that the official end of the school day is 3.00pm and I give my permission for the school to dismiss my son/daughter *15 minutes early at 2.45pm* providing his/her conduct and work have been acceptable throughout the day. *I understand that the school will not authorise holiday leave for students during their Key Stage 4 phase of education (i.e. Year 10 and Year 11).*

I will:

- ensure that my child attends school regularly and on time
- ensure that the school has my up to date contact telephone numbers
- ensure that my child is dressed appropriately for school in line with the school's Uniform Policy
- ensure my child has the appropriate equipment for school where possible
- support the school's guidelines on good behaviour and disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy
- provide a written note or a telephone call to explain an absence
- attend open evenings or review meetings to discuss my child's progress
- tell the school about any problems at home that might affect my child's behaviour
- encourage my child with homework and ensure it is completed on time
- encourage and support my child to eat well and make healthy choices; and
- support my child in responding positively to the general expectations and regulations of the school.

The school will:

- communicate and consult with parents in line with the Home-School Agreement Policy
- regularly celebrate children's achievements
- encourage children to do their best at all times, to think of themselves and to achieve their full potential
- encourage children to take care of their surroundings and others around them
- care for the children's safety and general wellbeing
- provide a balanced curriculum and meet each child's individual needs
- be open, friendly and welcoming at all times and offer parents the chance to become involved in the life of the school
- encourage children to make healthy choices
- operate and enforce a balanced Behaviour Policy and school rules; and
- provide structures to support parents/carers and involve them socially as well as educationally in the life of the school.

Signature_____ Date_____

Pupil

Signature_____ Date_____

Parent/Guardian

Signature_____ Date_____

School