



### **A Partnership - Parents and Red Gates School**

Red Gates School works with parents and carers to actively promote the 'Every Child Matters' agenda, providing an educational environment where children can be safe, secure and healthy, enjoy learning and achieve to the best of their ability, becoming as independent as possible.

The staff at Red Gates recognises the importance of developing a partnership with parents, listening to what they say and treating their contribution as intrinsically important. Mutual respect will always be advocated at Red Gates as will the recognition of equality between parents and professionals. Our practice will actively reflect the Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality, and equality of opportunity and good race relations across all areas of school activity. Promoting race equality is central to the ethos at Red Gates. The following elements are vital in this kind of partnership:

- Sharing of information and skills
- Sharing of feelings
- Sharing of the process of decision making
- Recognition of the individuality of families and the uniqueness of the child

The needs of individual families will vary along with how much they want to be involved, which will fluctuate according to family circumstances. Therefore it is necessary for the school to develop flexible working systems to facilitate the elements previously stated so that families and staff can work positively and creatively together.

### **Opportunities for working together**

#### **Parent/teacher consultation meetings**

The aim is to share information between staff and parents.

#### **Autumn term**

A Starter Programme is organised for all new parents giving them the opportunity to come into school and join their children in class and also to meet and find out about other professionals who can support them. In October parents will be offered appointments to meet with the child's class teacher. They will be invited to contribute to priorities and ideas which can be included in the term's IEP. The aim is for targets to be challenging and realistic and also to extend pupils' learning at home. This approach should enable parents and professionals to share skills and information, developing mutual respect and a positive working relationship.

#### **Spring term**

In February parents will be offered appointments again as for the autumn term. They will discuss the progress made in the Autumn term and the content of the child's IEP for the Spring term.

Parents are also invited to come into school and join their child in class to find out more about how children learn and to give ideas on how they can support learning further at home.

Parents of Year 4 & 5 pupils are invited to a coffee morning for an introduction to the transition process, when children are moving from Red Gates to their secondary placement.

A programme of family learning sessions are organised to give families an opportunity to find out how things are taught at school and apply these skills at home, e.g. developing communication skills, being active, messy play and musical activities.

### **Summer term**

In June, parents/carers will be offered appointments to meet with the class teacher to discuss the progress made against the child's IEP targets in the Spring term, and discuss the child's annual report.

A programme of parent workshops are organised to give families an opportunity to find out how things are taught at school and develop skills to support children's learning at home, e.g. Makaton signing, developing phonics, motivating Maths activities.

An open evening will be held in July, giving parents/carers an opportunity to look at activities their children have participated in to see displays of work. They will meet the class teacher and class staff team for September. Siblings are invited to join class for an afternoon at the end of the summer term.

### **Parent support group meetings**

The school organises 'Chill & Chat' sessions run by two Teaching Assistants. It's an opportunity for parents to socialise and support each other. It is also an opportunity for parents to discuss issues and to invite speakers of their choice if they wish to do so.

### **Annual review meetings**

Meetings are held with parents annually. The parents, Head or Deputy and class teacher and other relevant professionals review the Statement of Special Educational Need/Education & Health Care Plan (EHCP), discuss the child's progress and acknowledge and celebrate the child's achievements, also setting targets for the next year.

### **Home visits**

New parents will be offered a home visit and their decision will be respected. It is an opportunity for the family, teacher and member of the support team to meet each other and share information about the child.

Home visits are recognised as being extremely valuable for new pupils and parents and will take place during the child's first half term in school. Outcomes of visits inform the child's pen portrait.

### **Communication systems**

General information is available on the school's website [www.redgates.croydon.sch.uk](http://www.redgates.croydon.sch.uk)

## **Telephone**

Parents can phone at any time during the day and a message will be taken. An appropriate member of staff will return their call as soon as possible. This form of contact with parents is very valuable and therefore a reliable contact number is essential. If a parent urgently needs to speak to the class team then this will be accommodated.

## **Text**

The school uses a text messaging system Teachers2 Parents to contact parents more quickly and efficiently. This can be used to contact parents about school closures, meetings etc.

## **Home school book**

The class staff team endeavour to write the home school book daily, which contributes to building up a relationship with the parents. It is a means of communicating between the parents and the class team. Information can be shared and queries asked and answered.

Content guidelines:

The dialogue should be friendly and informative.

Parents are strongly encouraged to write, ideally daily, or at least once a week.

The teacher and teaching assistants from the class team can write in it, although the class teacher has ultimate responsibility for overseeing the writing of the home school books. Families are also encouraged to write comments in pupils' home learning feedback forms to ensure that home learning remains motivating and appropriate to pupils.

It can also be used to write to caring families, Calleydown and other respite care provision.

The School nurse, therapists and parents can also communicate with parents/carers using the book.

Individual achievements of pupils are communicated with families through special certificates, which are given out in department assemblies and sent home.

## **Letters to parents**

### **Official letters**

Letters containing medical information from the nurse about accidents and treatments. The head or deputy headteacher (DH) may also be required to send letters relating to an accident or incident which has happened during the day.

Letters inviting parents to parent/teacher meetings and annual reviews will be sent by either admin staff or the class teacher.

### **General information letters**

A termly programme of school events /meetings will be sent by the admin staff.

Letters about special events e.g. someone raising funds for the school. The letter will be written by the appropriate person and then approved by the head or deputy head prior to being sent to parents.

Letters inviting parents to contribute to educational visits will be written by the class teacher, approved by the head or deputy prior to being sent home.

Half-termly letters informing parents about curriculum activities and inviting them to be involved or contribute ideas.

Information about parent support groups will be sent by the member of staff organising the group.

Termly newsletter at the end of term.

### **Information for new parents**

New parents will be directed to the website, given a prospectus, relevant school policies and a home school agreement, which outlines how parents and the school should aim to work together.

### **Friends of Red Gates (FoRGs)**

FoRGs committee, consisting of parents, staff and friends, organises social events, to raise funds for the school. The money raised contributes to the funding of educational equipment and activities as well as Christmas presents for the children. An annual general meeting is held in October, when all parents are invited to attend and to be involved in FoRGs.

### **Parent volunteers**

Parents are invited to assist in various class activities not necessarily in their own child's class e.g. swimming, educational visits.

### **Parent governors**

The parent governors, as part of the full governing body, influence developments to improve the quality of education provided at Red Gates. They are considered as a great asset to the school.

### **Conclusion**

Through implementation of this policy the school aims to empower parents to play an active role in their child's education.

**Reviewed by staff and Governors May 2016**

**Headteacher**

**Date**

**Chair of Governors**

**Date**