

# **Putnoe Primary School**

## **Pupil and Parent Voice Policy**

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## Statement of intent

At Putnoe Primary School we recognise the importance of, and value parental involvement in the life of the school. We believe that education is a collaborative enterprise involving amongst others, parents, staff and children. We are committed to establishing and maintaining an effective and purposeful working relationship between the school and home.

Putnoe Primary School believes that pupils should be given the opportunity to influence their education provision and that pupils' parents should have an active role in their children's education. We believe it is important that pupils and parents feel their opinions are appreciated, understood and actioned upon, where necessary.

As we value the opinions of both our pupils and their parents, and we strive to continually improve our school, we are constantly seeking new ways to acquire feedback from our pupils and their parents. Involving pupils and their parents in decision-making will ensure that they have a more active role within the development of the school, which in turn, should reduce any concerns that pupils and parents have in regards to the school.

Parents/carers are the most important influence in a child's life. Any educational initiative can only be fully effective if there is partnership between parents, children and providers  
Parents want their child to succeed

Children need educational and emotional support if they are to succeed. Parents need to be able to provide this effectively

Many parents have missed the opportunity of furthering their education and training

The school is a resource for the community it serves

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'parent consultation meeting' refers to a meeting that parents are invited to attend, so that school staff may consult parents regarding potential changes, such as new uniforms being introduced.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'parents' evening' refers to a meeting where teachers will discuss with parents the academic progress of pupils.

The more engaged parents are in the education of their children the more likely their children are to succeed in the education system. School improvement and school effectiveness research consistently shows that parental engagement is one of the key factors in securing higher student achievement. DFE 2011

## 1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - DfE (2014) 'Listening to and involving children and young people'
- 1.2. This policy has due regard to the following guidance:
  - National Governance Association (2013) 'Knowing your school: Engaging parents'
  - DfE (2016) 'Best practice advice for school complaints procedures'
- 1.3. This policy is implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:
  - Complaints Procedure Policy
  - Pupil Charter of Rights
  - Behaviour Policy
  - Adult Behaviour Policy
  - Parent Code of Conduct

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The school is responsible for:
  - Being open to ideas and suggestions from both pupils and parents.
  - Responding to queries and complaints, from both pupils and parents.
  - Conducting pupil consultation meetings, so that pupils can provide the school with both positive feedback and areas for improvements.
  - Conducting parent consultation meetings, so that parents can provide the school with both positive feedback and areas for improvements.
  - Establishing positive working relationships with parents to ensure that effective communication can be maintained.
  - Accounting for the wishes and concerns of both pupils and parents prior to implementing any major, non-statutory changes to the school premises, its policies and procedures, or the school's management.
  - Keeping pupils and parents informed of any changes to any aspect of the school, via the school website and school newsletters.
  - Ensuring that pupils and their parents know that they are welcome to contact the school at any time.
  - Ensuring that parents know that contacting the school will be done via the school office, where the staff will pass on your details to the relevant person, e.g. the headteacher.
  - Ensuring that pupils have an appropriate and clear method for voicing concerns, e.g. through the school's appointed pupil committees.
  - Scheduling parents' evenings to ensure that parents have an additional opportunity to raise concerns.

- Ensuring that all staff at the school promote an open-door approach, encouraging pupils to speak up about their concerns.
- All information is freely available to parents via school website, newsletters, key policies
- Involving parents/carers in robust transition procedures.

2.2. Teachers are responsible for:

- Providing the highest standards of teaching that they are capable of.
- Creating a safe and welcoming environment in which pupils feel comfortable to share open and honest feedback.
- Ensuring pupils are satisfied with the level of teaching offered.
- Encouraging pupils to voice their concerns to the relevant staff member, e.g. the pupil's teacher.
- Listening to pupils' and parent's concerns.
- Familiarising themselves with this policy and any relevant procedures, e.g. the complaints procedure.
- Communicating concerns raised by pupils or their parents to the SLT, where appropriate.  
Responding to all complaints professionally, keeping the identity of pupils anonymous if the complaint is passed on to the SLT, where appropriate to do so.

2.3. The governing board is responsible for:

- Maintaining a strategic overview of pupils' and parents' voices.
- Reviewing outcomes of any pupil or parent surveys, ensuring actions are implemented and monitoring the impacts of these.
- Undertaking pupil voice consultations as a part of their school monitoring responsibility.
- Reviewing the complaints log, identifying any trends or repeated complaints and challenging these, implementing the appropriate action, where necessary.
- Liaising with the school leadership team (SLT) to produce effective solutions to complaints.
- Hearing all appeals as part of the complaints process, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedure Policy.
- Ensuring that a link to Ofsted's Parent View is available on the school website and encouraging parents to participate in the surveys published on the website, that concern themselves with a wide variety of topical problems.
- Monitoring Parent View for trends in feedback and questioning the SLT on the results of the survey as well as the actions implemented as a result of feedback.

2.4. Pupils are responsible for:

- Raising concerns they may have about any aspect of the school to the relevant staff member, e.g. their teacher, and communicating these concerns to their parents as well.
- Working to the best of their ability, to maximise opportunities and learning outcomes.
- Attending pupil consultation meetings, voicing their concerns and suggesting improvements.
- Electing the most appropriate candidates for joining the pupil committee.
- Participating in group discussions and class work, voicing their opinions and views.

2.5. Parents are responsible for:

- Raising concerns with the school through the appropriate format – see complaints procedures via websight.
- Attending parent consultation meetings, voicing their concerns and suggesting improvements.
- Completing parent questionnaires and surveys, voicing concerns, so that improvements can be made.
- Attending parents' evenings, so that concerns can be discussed and the appropriate resolutions can be implemented, where necessary.
- Talking to their children, ensuring that they are satisfied with the level of teaching offered at the school.

### **3. Pupil voice**

#### **Everyday teaching and learning**

- 3.1. Pupils will be encouraged to participate in class discussions.
- 3.2. Pupils will be encouraged to voice concerns to their teacher.
- 3.3. Pupils will be consulted on class activities to ensure they are comfortable with the set activities, e.g. to see if all pupils are comfortable reading aloud.
  - Pupils who are uncomfortable with a set activity will not, within reason, be asked to partake in the task unless necessary.
- 3.4. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their learning, discussing with their teachers any areas they are unsatisfied with.
- 3.5. When starting a new topic, the class will be asked if they have any questions about the subject, so that their teacher can ensure that these will be answered during lessons.
- 3.6. Opportunities for pupils to ask questions will be given during lessons, to ensure that they understand the lesson topics and objectives.
- 3.7. Wherever possible, pupils will be given the opportunity to lead their own learning, e.g. choosing their own subject for individual projects.

## **Pupil committees**

- 3.8. The school will give pupils the opportunity to volunteer to become a pupil committee member, becoming part of the pupil committee.
  - Candidates will volunteer and then be elected by their peers only.
  - Two candidates from each class will be elected.
  - The collective pupils elected will make up the full pupil committee.
- 3.9. The pupil committee members will conduct meetings, as scheduled by the teacher.
  - In these meetings the pupil committee members will elect a speaker, who will communicate the concerns of their fellow pupils.
  - Working together, the present staff and pupil committee members will establish the issues and work towards solutions.
  - The relevant plans of action will be communicated to the headteacher by the pupil taking the minutes, where appropriate. These plans will be reviewed by the headteacher for approval.
- 3.10. Pupil committee members will record all concerns about the school that are communicated to them.
- 3.11. Issues raised to pupil committee members will be kept anonymous, unless it is appropriate to inform a member of staff, e.g. in cases of safeguarding concerns, the designated safeguarding lead will be informed.

## **Pupil consultation meetings**

- 3.12. Pupil consultation meetings will be held during registration time, so that all pupils have the opportunity to voice their opinions.
- 3.13. Pupils will be consulted on the relevant, non-statutory, changes that are being considered for the school, such as uniform changes.
- 3.14. There will be an opportunity in these sessions for pupils to communicate any further areas of dissatisfaction.
  - Pupils will behave in the appropriate manner during these consultation meetings, in accordance with the school's Charter of Rights. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

## **4. Open-door approach**

- 4.1. The school will maintain an open-door approach in regards to all areas of school life.
- 4.2. Both parents and pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns, whenever necessary, using any method outlined within this policy.

- 4.3. Parents are encouraged to contact the school office from 8.50 to 4.30 on Monday - Friday to ensure their queries, concerns or complaints, can be dealt with as soon as possible.
- 4.4. While the school has a protocol for pupils to follow if they have a concern, this being informing a pupil committee member, if pupils feel further action is needed, they are encouraged to voice these concerns to their teacher.
- 4.5. While parents are encouraged to voice concerns through the school office whenever possible, parents will have access to other methods of communicating with the relevant staff, e.g. having the school email address.

## **5. Parent voice**

### **Parent councils**

- 5.1. Parents will be invited to volunteer for the school's parent council so that concerns may be raised and rectified where necessary.
- 5.2. To make good use of parent/carers' expertise and willingness to enhance their own learning and that of their child the school will actively encourage them to: attend class assemblies, attend performances, events and celebrations, become involved in school projects, participate in Family and Adult Learning events, join and support Parent Partnership and use opportunities to have discussions with members of staff.
- 5.3. The parent partnership will act as a voice for all parents of the schools' pupils, reflecting their views to the relevant staff members, such as the office staff and the teacher.
- 5.4. Together, the relevant staff members and the parent partnership will work together to establish issues and generate resolutions, where appropriate. These will be reviewed by the headteacher for approval.
- 5.5. If the headteacher rejects the parent partnerships' plans, the parent partnership will communicate this to parents, via a newsletter. If the issues are raised again, the parent council will put the plans to the headteacher again.

### **Parent questionnaires and surveys**

- 5.6. All parents will be invited to complete parent questionnaires and surveys.
  - Questionnaires and surveys will be sent out via a letter home.
  - Parents will be responsible for returning the questionnaires and surveys.
- 5.7. The purpose of the questionnaires and surveys will be to establish how satisfied parents are with the school.

### **Parents' consultations**

- 5.8. Parents will be invited to attend parents' consultations in the autumn and spring terms.

- 5.9. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss concerns with teachers at these evenings.
- 5.10. Pupils will be invited to attend as well.

### **Methods of communicating concerns**

- 5.11. Parents will be encouraged to raise concerns via submitting a complaints form to the school office or referring their concern to the parent partnership, wherever possible.
- 5.12. Parents will also be able to raise concerns at parents' information evenings, in a questionnaire or survey, or during parent consultation meetings.
- 5.13. In addition, the school will provide a contact form on the school's website which can be completed and sent to the school via the website.
- 5.14. As part of the school's aims to support all children to enjoy school life parents will receive a Code of Conduct which they will be expected to adhere to.
- 5.15. The school aims to respond to all concerns raised via any method of communication within two working days, by the school office.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

- 6.1. The headteacher is responsible for reviewing this policy annually.
- 6.2. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by all members of staff. Any concerns will be reported to the headteacher immediately.
- 6.3. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff, pupils and parents.