



The
Rise
Partnership
Trust
Love • Learn • Laugh



RPT Family Engagement Policy

October 2023

RPT's Family Engagement Policy

“Parental engagement has a significant effect throughout a child’s school years. Gains in pupil achievement stemming from parental engagement initiatives tend to be permanent”

‘Parental Engagement: How to make a real difference’ Oxford School Improvement, 2017

RPT's Vision

Parents play a vital role in education. When parents are engaged and involved, everyone benefits – students, parents, families, teachers, and communities. As a result RPT schools are enriched as positive places to **love, learn and laugh**.

Mission:

Our mission is for every child and young person to be successful in their future lives. For this to happen we must champion the unique potential of every pupil. We know that an excellent education underpinned with opportunities to love, learn and laugh is transformative, and we are committed to this motto.

We take into account pupils’ varied life experiences and needs, providing equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender / gender identity or socio-economic background, to ensure that every child really does matter.

Policy Aims:

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate how, through on-going communication and dialogue, RPT staff work together with families to support a positive environment at home, at school and in the wider community. This policy aims to present a set of consistent standards of work employed by RPT schools to:

- support parents as their child’s first and most important educators, and
- provide a partnership between home and school, ensuring that families feel supported, welcomed, valued and able to share with us any concerns or ideas they have.

Terminology:

For the purpose of this policy the term ‘parent’ is used to indicate any adult who plays a significant role in a child’s life (such as a birth or adoptive parent, foster carer or other adult who acts in loco-parentis beyond the school setting). The term ‘family’ refers to those who share responsibility for the well-being of the child.

Content:

This policy is organised into five key themes. These explain in detail the measures taken in RPT schools to create strong family partnerships and how this is achieved.

Fostering Effective Family School Partnerships

What RPT schools do:

- Value building trusting and supportive relationships with parents
- Believe that pupils will achieve more when staff work closely with families
- Encourage parents to ask for support when they need it
- Ensure members of the leadership team are available at the beginning and the end of the day to welcome and speak to parents
- Provide opportunities for all parents to engage in all aspects of school life
- Employ a member of staff dedicated to working with parents
- Have a parent representative on the Local Academy Board (LAB)
- Hold events and celebrations for parents to attend
- Provide parents with information about how to gain support from outside agencies and access relevant allowances (e.g. DLA, Blue Badge etc.)

How parents can help:

- Join pupils and staff at celebrations and events within the school
- Take full advantage of the support on offer and provide suggestions if something not currently on offer would be beneficial

Communicating and Consulting Effectively

What RPT schools do:

- Publish information with parents on the school's website, in regular newsletters, on notice boards, on social media, by text, and by sending copies of key information home
- Celebrate school life and share information about events on Twitter (consent permitting)
- Upload RPT and individual school policies to the school's website
- Hold regular Home School Conversations for parents to discuss their child's progress with their class teacher (online/in person)
- Provide class, SaLT and OT email addresses to parents and respond to emails within two working days
- Provide paperwork for Annual Reviews in line with statutory guidelines
- Ensure key staff members are invited to attend Annual Review meetings including external professionals
- Communicate with parents using a variety of means including telephone calls, texts, emails, letters and in-person
- Organise interpreters for key meetings
- Hold a ½ termly coffee morning for parents to meet and help each other
- Each pupil will receive a weekly home-school link letter on a Friday including a summary of the week, activities undertaken and any activities to be completed at home
- Support parents with meetings on request to discuss difficulties their children may be facing
- Carry out surveys and ask for feedback from parents on key initiatives and training opportunities
- Provide staff training to support them with strategies to build positive relationships with parents
- Have processes in place to deal with parental complaints promptly and effectively (*as documented in our 'Complaints Policy'*)

How parents can help:

- Read information provided by the school including letters and digital correspondence
- Read home-school link letters and provide a comment from home answering any questions asked by the teacher
- Attend meetings organised by the school and let staff know if it is not possible to attend or to reschedule for an alternative date
- Provide the school with their views in parent surveys so RPT can continue to improve the support on offer
- If you need to speak to your child's teacher please email the class email address to arrange a meeting or if urgent call the office and request to speak to them between 8.30-8.50am or after 3.30pm
- Be respectful of the teacher's time and commitment to the class as a whole
- Promptly inform the school of any events in the home or child's life, or factors such as illness that may affect their child in school
- Proactively inform the school of changes to your contact details (particularly address, phone/mobile number and email address)

Enabling Parental Engagement in Learning and Empowering Parents to Develop Their Own Skills

What RPT schools do:

- Provide parent training opportunities in ½ termly family forums, annual conferences, Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) workshops and accredited training opportunities such as Makaton
- Provide bespoke support in the form of home visits from the Family Support Practitioner and the wider team
- Organise MAST Open Days to share ideas and resources and answer questions
- Share 'Personal Intervention Plan Maps' (PIP Maps) at the start of each half term from Autumn 2 (Oct/Nov) to Summer 2 (May/Jun)
- Share 'Personal Intervention Plan Trackers (PIP Trackers) at the end of each half term from Autumn 2 (Oct/Nov) to Summer 2 (Jul)
- Provide home-learning guidance where appropriate
- Facilitate parents attending relevant professional training courses to complete placements in RPT schools
- Invite parents to share their skills with RPT pupils by leading workshops/sessions (e.g. reading, sewing, etc.)

How parents can help:

- Attend our Family Forum sessions and suggest topics for these to the Family Support Practitioner
- Communicate to the school any special talents or skills they could share

Supporting Successful Transitions

What we do when children are joining the school:

- Provide opportunities for parents to visit the school
- Visit child in their current setting as part of initial admissions or transitions process
- Organise an annual Early Years Foundation Stage meeting for new parents to learn about the school and meet staff members
- Organise transition visits (as appropriate) for the pupil to visit their new classroom and meet their new class team
- Develop bespoke Social Stories if needed
- Provide an opportunity for parents to meet their child's new class teacher (in person or remotely)
- Initial contact from the Family Support Practitioner or Inclusion Team member
- Organise a case history meeting with members of the MAST within the pupil's first year
- Provide links to 'Communication is Key' training

What we do when children are changing class:

- Provide an opportunity for parents to meet their child's new class teacher (in person or remotely)
- Organise a transition morning for the pupil to visit their new classroom and meet their new class team
- Develop bespoke Social Stories if needed
- Document and share important information about each pupil to make the transfer as smooth as possible

What we do when children are leaving the school:

- Organise transition visit(s) to the new school
- Organise an opportunity for parents to hear from local schools (secondary transition)
- Develop bespoke Social Stories if needed
- Document and share important information about each pupil to make the transfer as smooth as possible
- Support parents with secondary school applications

How parents can help:

- Attend meetings organised by the school
- Provide information that will help the school get to know the child and help them have a smooth transition

Monitoring and Evaluation

What RPT schools do:

- Record and analyse attendance at events and meetings
- Record support provided during home visits
- Seek parents' views about RPT schools and ask for feedback in annual surveys
- Seek parents' views on the quality of workshops and training opportunities
- Evaluate parental engagement during Local Academy Board (LAB) meetings
- Include priorities for parental engagement in the schools' 'School Improvement Plans', where appropriate

How parents can help:

- Respond to the annual parent survey and other surveys and questionnaires designed to gain parental views

Review Date: July 2024

