



# Parent and Carer Liaison Policy

Adopted: January 2012

Signed: .....

Reviewed: January 2013  
May 2017

To be reviewed: January 2019

## **Mission Statement**

Chatsworth High School & Community College is a caring, happy and progressive learning community in which each person is valued equally and respected unconditionally. Our school community promotes high expectations for each person and supports every member of our school community in achieving their potential as life-long learners. At Chatsworth High School every person matters.

## **Ten Core Beliefs**

1. We believe the health and safety of our students is paramount
2. We believe in the right of all people to be emotionally healthy, financially secure and learning fulfilled
3. We believe we should all belong and feel we all belong
4. We believe in continuously improving our school through honest, collaborative teamwork
5. We believe our curriculum should be relevant, purposeful, accessible and constantly evolving
6. We believe teaching and learning should be enjoyable, exciting and consistently inclusive
7. We believe teaching and learning should be founded on established best practice and an openness to innovative approaches
8. We believe in working hard and doing our best
9. We believe we should help one another in our learning and support one another in our lives
10. We believe we are providing a foundation for our students' adult lives

## **Introduction**

The Governors believe that our students' best interests are best served by parents/carers and professionals working together in partnership. They also believe that successful learning for all is underpinned by ongoing communication and collaboration between the school and our students' families. Positive lines of communication between home and school are an essential element of the work of our school. Effective communication enables pupils to receive the highest possible levels of education, care, support and guidance in school and home settings.

This policy has been developed through ongoing dialogue between members of staff and families of students, the use of parent/carer questionnaires and discussion with parents/carers at annual reviews. Valuable feedback from parents and carers has enabled us to identify the effective communication processes present within the school and the areas where home/school communication and links require development.

In mainstream primary and secondary schools, pupils are often entrusted to pass on information between school and home. Additionally, in mainstream schools, families tend to reside close to the school and may regularly engage with members of staff as a matter of course when dropping off or collecting their children. Chatsworth is different. Our pupils are complex in their many needs, the ways in which they learn and the ways in which they communicate. A high proportion travel a considerable distance from the outer reaches of the sprawling City of Salford. Our school must strive to adopt and foster additional and alternative forms of communication that:

- ensure pupils access their education to the highest degree possible
- and
- provide parents, carers and staff with the information essential for this to happen. This includes the use of IT and the deployment of staff who speak English as an additional language.

## **Objectives for Chatsworth's Parent and Carers' Liaison policy**

- To provide guidance for teachers about when and why communication between home and school takes place;
- To set out clear and concise expectations *for* parents and carers about when and why communication between home and school takes place;
- To set out clear and concise expectations *of* parents and carers about when and why communication between home and school should take place;
- To set out clear and concise expectations of parents and carers about their own role in supporting pupil learning;
- To uphold the principles and the ethos of the school's respect agenda (located in Appendix 1 of this policy document).

## **Practice**

*Parent and Carer Liaison officer at Chatsworth High School & Community College*

The role of Parent and Carer Liaison Officer at Chatsworth is undertaken by Matt Lawrenson, Assistant Head Teacher. The Parent and Carer Liaison Officer will:

- Support positive relationships between parents, carers and the school staff team;
- Support parents and carers in their communication with school;
- Support members of school staff in their liaison with parents and carers;
- Act as an initial point of contact should any communication or liaison difficulties arise.

### *Face to face consultations*

During face to face consultations student learning is discussed in detail. A number of issues may be discussed, such as areas of achievement, areas of challenge (including behaviour where relevant) and future learning.

- During the Autumn Term, all parents/carers will be given the opportunity to have a face to face meeting with their son's/daughter's pastoral tutor.
- During the Summer Term, all parents/carers will be given the opportunity to have a face to face meeting with their son's/daughter's subject teachers.
- Every student will have an Annual Review for each academic year that they attend Chatsworth High School & Community College; although these reviews take a range of forms dependent upon the various stages of an individual's school career (details of which may be located in Appendix 2 of this policy document), all reviews will take place with the full involvement of the student's family and, where appropriate, professionals responsible for the pupil's wellbeing and subsequent learning.

### *Written communication*

Every pupil at Chatsworth High School & Community College has a home-school book. The home-school book is the regular day-to-day contact for:

- Parents/carers to inform the school of immediate issues at home
- Parents/carers to inform the school of immediate matters that may affect their child's day,
- Parents/carers to inform the school of immediate matters that may affect their child's learning at school

Parents and carers are invited to use the home-school book as frequently as they see fit; regular communication is both welcomed and encouraged. As a minimum, pastoral teachers will communicate with parents and carers via these books at least twice a week. However, they may opt to communicate

more frequently than this via the home-school book or by other modes of communication.

#### *Further communication about student learning*

At the beginning of each term, parents and carers will receive a matrix from the school that will outline the broad areas of learning for each subject area (e.g. Art – 'Mondrian'). Detailed information about student learning will be discussed at face to face consultations and reported in written annual reports. Day-to-day information about specific learning, however, cannot be given by teachers and this is not the primary function or purpose of the home school books.

#### *Other modes of communication*

Pastoral and subject teachers may opt to negotiate or utilise alternative modes of communication where this is deemed appropriate. Such alternative methods of communication currently available include email and telephone.

Additionally, parents/carers are able to access whole-school messages via the school website and the school's text-messaging service. These will provide families with information about whole school events and updates in cases of adverse weather. Further to this, parents and carers will be able to locate a wealth of materials on the school's website, including, amongst many things:

- News
- Policies
- Curricular information

#### *Fostering positive relationships*

It is natural that any parent or carer will want to know who is working with their child. In response to this, it is the school's commitment that pastoral teachers will endeavour to introduce themselves to the families of their students at the

earliest available opportunity. This will occur via an informal telephone conversation, which will be initiated by the pastoral teacher, at the end of the term preceding a child's move to another pastoral group.

In cases where this has not been possible, it will be every pastoral teacher's responsibility to ensure that this occurs within a week of receiving a new pupil.

### *Communication around areas of heightened sensitivity*

In some cases, it may be decided to convene a multi-disciplinary meeting in order to fully address some of the complex needs that our students at Chatsworth may present, particularly those that pertain to challenging behaviours, changes and development in needs, and matters arising from a pupil's sexual development.

This may involve not only a student's family/carers, but also a number of practitioners from a broad range of fields and expertise including:

- Health services
- Therapists
- Social services
- Disability nurses

### *Homework*

Parents/carers may make a formal written request to the school for homework. The school will then consider the level of appropriacy of homework for each student on a case by case basis, and respond to parents within 7 working days of receiving the letter.

### *Future development*

The Governors and staff body at Chatsworth recognise the power and the efficacy of using ICT to communicate and share experiences in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Exploration of further modes of communication are ongoing as technology rapidly evolves. As ever, up-to-date recommendations and suggestions from parents, carers and other stakeholders will be warmly welcomed.

### **Conclusion**

Effective communication between school and home must underpin every aspect of our student's care and education whilst they are with us here at Chatsworth. It is the responsibility of all who are involved in each young person's life to ensure that all of our interactions between school and home:

- Clear
- Constructive
- Collaborative
- Sustained



## Appendix 1 – Chatsworth's respect Agenda

### Chatsworth High School and Community College Respect Charter

At Chatsworth we believe that all students, their parents and carers and members of the staff team form the Chatsworth community. We believe that each individual within our community is entitled to be treated respectfully and that it is the responsibility of each member of the school community to behave in a dignified and appropriate manner at all times. The following charter has been written to express the values of the Chatsworth community based on these principles.

1. All members of the Chatsworth community will be respectful in all their interactions with one another.
2. All members of the Chatsworth community will be open, honest and fair with one another at all times.
3. If conflict arises, it will be dealt with in a respectful and dignified way by all parties.
4. If conflict cannot be resolved by those parties, the issue must be referred to the Leadership Team or the Governing Body of the school.
5. The Leadership Team and Governing Body of Chatsworth High School and Community College will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour from any person towards a member of the Chatsworth community.
6. The Leadership Team and Governing Body of Chatsworth High School and Community College expect this charter to be upheld in its entirety by all members of the Chatsworth community.

## Appendix 2 – Matrix of Chatsworth's Annual Review Programme

<b>Year</b>	<b>Type of Review</b>
Year 7	Working not Working Annual Review
Year 8	Working not Working Annual Review
Year 9	Important to and For (Transition)
Year 10	Working not Working Annual Review
Year 11	Working not Working Annual Review
Year 12	Citizenship
Year 13	Important to and For (Transition)
Year 14	Leaver Review