

# Canal Way Educate Together Parental Involvement Policy

NOTE - 'Parental Involvement' where the teacher is present at all times.

## Introduction

- Our school is a community where pupils, parents, and teachers collaborate and work in partnership. Parental involvement is encouraged.
- When parents decide to send their child to our school they are entering a very important relationship. "Partnership is a working relationship that is characterised by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to negotiate" Gillian Pugh, Working Toward Partnership in the Early Years.
- In keeping with the Ethos of our patron body, Educate Together, our school is democratically run. This means that the Board of Management is democratically elected, and the involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged.
- Respect for the professional role of the teacher and the statutory responsibilities of the Principal, Patron and the Board of Management is always an important consideration.
- Parents are invited to become involved in the school in many ways and at many levels, for example: serving on school bodies, fundraising, volunteering their time in the classroom, accompanying classes on school trips, helping out at school events – the opportunities are endless.

## Benefits of Parental Involvement

- Children benefit from a greater diversity in the classroom.
- Parental skills may support and complement work already taking place.
- Parental involvement actively supports and encourages the child's learning.
- A wide range of activities are facilitated. This can be interesting and fun, and would lead to a broader and more holistic education.
- It provides 'good parent/teacher relationships and a better level of understanding between home and school' (National Parents' Council).
- It enhances communication, trust and respect between parents and teachers.
- Parents can learn about the curriculum and school life.
- Parental skills can contribute to the smooth running and development of the school.
- Parental involvement provides the opportunity of making friends.

## How to get involved

- The class teacher will notify parents of opportunities for involvement depending on what help is needed at any given time.
- Parents are encouraged to inform their teacher of willingness to participate.
- Parental Involvement is often about being able to provide a helping hand in one's spare time. It does not always have to be skill or talent based. Parents with free time who are willing to share that time in classroom support are a valuable asset to our school.

- Sometimes parental involvement is once off; parents may offer to visit the classroom to provide a talk on an aspect of the curriculum that relates to their work or life. Parents may be able to take time to accompany the class on a tour or assist with a once off activity.
- Sometimes parents have skills that can provide school support rather than specific classroom support: Availability and ideas for same can be communicated to the school through the Class Parent Representative or to the school office, however all decisions rests with the Principal on starting any new initiative.
- The school website and weekly newsletter is used as a communication tool in the school community. Sometimes requests for parental help or involvement opportunities are posted on the website or in the newsletter. Details of class or school events which parents are welcome to attend are also posted on the website.

### **Guidelines for Parental Involvement.**

- Parents come into the classroom at the invitation of the teacher by prior arrangement and for an agreed purpose. Before volunteering, parents must read
  - Parental involvement policy
  - Child Protection Policy
  - Data Protection Policy

These policies are available on the website.

- The happiness, welfare and safety of our children are our primary concerns. A child's personal history, academic achievements/abilities, behaviour/personality traits etc. are strictly confidential.
- On leaving the school volunteers should never discuss individual children or teachers in accordance with school policies and procedures.
- Failure to respect this request is considered a serious breach of policy.
- Respect for the teachers in their professional capacity is essential in agreeing on and determining suitability of content.
- Discipline of children remains the responsibility of the teacher.
- All work will be supervised by the teacher.
- All office work will be supervised by the school secretary or a member of the Board of Management.
- Volunteer helpers should be conscious of and sensitive to the needs of the entire class, not just the needs of any one child.
- The highest standard of behaviour, good manners and language are expected.
- Punctuality and consistency are crucial.
- In the interests of safety toddlers and younger children cannot be accommodated during a classroom activity for health and safety, child protection and insurance reasons.
- No fees are payable. Any expenses that you wish to reclaim must be sanctioned in advance by the teacher and must be accompanied by receipts.
- Teachers will meet with volunteers when necessary to discuss, plan and decide suitability prior to commencement of project.
- The school ethos must be upheld at all times.

- Consequently, respect for all of the partners in education, namely children, teachers and parents, must be upheld at all times.
- Mobile phones must be switched off or on silent during pupil contact time.
- No Photographs to be taken.

**Canal Way ETNS**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Due: \_\_\_\_\_