



PARENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

2024/2025

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Review Dates				

Our Vision

Our ABCs are the core vision which underpins everything we do at Doubletrees School.

Achieve - Together we aim to support every learner to reach their unique potential within our specialist environment. By having high expectations, we push our limits and expand our horizons. We are proud of what we achieve.

Belong –We develop a sense of safety and belonging; both within our school family and our wider community whilst developing our personal independence.

Communicate – Effective communication is at the heart at everything we do; enabling our learners to have a ‘voice’ and develop significant connections through positive relationships. Communication is key to preparing learners for their future lives.

Develop – We aim to develop our learner’s skills and aspirations to prepare them to access the wider world, working in partnership with a range of agencies to ensure this development is holistic, personalised and interest led.

Enjoy – Doubletrees school is an inclusive, happy, and enriching environment. It is a place we all want to be.

Parent Engagement Policy



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Rationale

At Doubletrees School, we aim to develop close relationships with parents and carers so we can work collaboratively to support the educational progress and wellbeing of our learners.

Children have two main educators in their lives, their caregivers at home, and the teaching staff in school. The impact of learning is much greater if we work together with shared aims. Through consultation, parents and carers are fully involved in co-developing and reviewing this Parent Engagement Policy and it is embedded across all aspects of teaching and learning. By fostering excellent relationships and shared partnership between home and school, our learners are given a solid framework to grow, learn and maximise their full potential.

This Policy provides a clear outline of how our school communicates with families, including the ways in which parents and carers can ensure they are fully involved in every aspect of the school community.

Objectives

- > To establish a partnership between home and school, ensuring parents feel supported, welcomed, and valued.
- > To take account of parent carers' views providing opportunities to contribute to decision making about whole-school matters.
- > To enable parents and carers to support and be involved in the decision making about their own child's learning, wellbeing, and development.
- > To maintain excellent quality, frequent communication with parents and carers.
- > To provide support for parents and carers in school, and through signposting to external specialist support services.

Parent Engagement Policy



Our Principles

Our principles cover four aspects of parental engagement: relationships, communication, support for learning and embedding a whole school approach.

Relationships	Communication	Support for learning	A Whole School Approach
<p>Welcoming Environment Doubletrees School welcomes families to engage with the school and foster the development of mutual trust and respect.</p> <p>Building Positive Relationships Parents and carers feel valued by the school. They are regularly consulted; their voices are heard, and they trust the school to handle complaints well.</p> <p>Raising & Realising Aspirations Doubletrees School broadens horizons by showing parents and carers possibilities for their child's journey through learning, work and areas of their life that provide meaning and fulfilment.</p>	<p>Systems of communication Doubletrees School use a wide variety of communication systems to provide regular, excellent quality communication about the work of the school.</p> <p>Communicating learner progress and information Parents and carers are kept well informed about their child's achievement, wellbeing, behaviour, and development.</p> <p>Communicating with new parents and carers Doubletrees school understand the need for effective communication systems from the initial contact with prospective parents and carers.</p>	<p>Learning At Home We provide support for learning at home as well as quality feedback on the learner's progress.</p> <p>Family Engagement Sessions We invite parents and carers into school regularly to be involved in their child's learning experiences and engage with their child's education.</p> <p>Lifelong learning We promote lifelong learning through providing opportunities for parents and carers to build on their own knowledge, skills and understanding of key concepts within subject disciplines and how children learn.</p>	<p>Consultations We consult with parents, carers and staff on a regular basis and use their views to inform decision-making about whole school matters.</p> <p>A Differentiated Approach We offer a differentiated approach to parent carer engagement through offering universal, targeted and specialist support.</p> <p>Community Matters Parents and carers are involved in the wider school community from the date of their child's enrolment.</p>

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Achieving Our Principles

Relationships

Welcoming Environment

- > The school building and environment is welcoming, safe, and appropriate for learning and engagement.
- > We invite parents and carers to establish a relationship with the school prior to their child starting. Parents carers can have a tour of the school with the Family Engagement Lead. The school offers a clear admissions process in which school information and information about family support is provided, followed by a welcome meeting and a transitions programme which is tailored for each family.
- > The Family Engagement Lead provides help for parents and carers who need assistance completing forms or requests for transport and supports families with any transport issues.
- > The school understand that every child and family is unique and provide a safe space that is non-judgemental and respectful, and actively listens to what parents and carers have to say, including concerns and anxieties.

Building Positive Relationships

- > Parents and carers are regularly consulted through questionnaires, phone calls and feedback forms.
- > A Doubletrees Parent Carer Forum is established in which parents and carers can join a Teams meeting to share their views of a range of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) related topics.
- > Teaching staff engage with parents and carers through home/school diaries, telephone and in person on a regular basis to build positive relationships.
- > Transition days are planned carefully and tailored to suit each learner, with two initial short sessions in school in which the parent carers can come into the classroom with their child.
- > Family engagement sessions are planned every half term, with one being soon in the Autumn term so that a strong relationship can be established between the school and new parents and carers.

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Raising & Realising Aspirations

- > Doubletrees School holds bi-annual 'Your Child's Future' events which involves real-life interactions with employers, training providers, Colleges, and support services.
- > The class teachers make links between aspirations and outcomes for the learners in reports that are sent out and within the Evidence for Learning app.
- > Tailored support is offered to our learners and their families in relation to raising and realising aspirations and outcomes.
- > Doubletrees School recognises that not all learners will be able to go into employment or education in the future, and therefore offer planned and progressive activities and experiences.

Communication

Systems of communication

The school communicates with parents and carers in the following ways:

- > Verbal communication
- > Letters home
- > Home / School diaries
- > SMS messages
- > Emails
- > Newsletters
- > School Website
- > School information boards
- > Wellbeing blog
- > School Facebook account
- > School twitter account
- > Family engagement sessions
- > Coffee mornings
- > Parent carer forums
- > Family learning sessions / workshops
- > Online learning platforms – EFL

For general enquiries, parents should phone the school office on 01726 812757 which is open Monday to Friday, 8am until 4pm.

For non-urgent enquiries, parents can email enquiries@doubletrees.org.uk.

Parents can email Michelle Sandham, Family Engagement Lead at msandham@doubletrees.org.uk if they need any support.

Parents can visit the school office regarding any enquiries they may have.

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Communicating learner progress and information

- > The school use 'Evidence for Learning' to evidence the learning that is carried out in the classroom and monitor progress. This can be accessed by parents and carers, and they can contribute to the evidence from home.
- > Parents and carers are invited to end of term events where they can meet the child's teacher and discuss their progress.
- > Parents and carers are provided with a written report at the end of the school year outlining their child's progress and attendance. There is an opportunity to arrange a meeting with the class teacher to discuss concerns.
- > EHCP reviews are held annually with the EHCP co-ordinator, and there is provision for emergency reviews if this is needed.
- > One to one meetings can be scheduled with the class teacher, the SENCo, the Headteacher or any other member of staff if needed to discuss areas of concern.
- > Class teachers are available to discuss learner's progress and any concerns with the parents and carers before the start and at the end of each school day.
- > Home / school diaries are used daily to share information between the class and the parents and carers.
- > Learner's progress may be celebrated on the school's social media channels and the website / newsletter, where consent has been provided to do so.

Communicating with new parents and carers

- > Prospective parents are welcomed into the school and the Family Engagement Lead offers school tours.
- > Prospective parents are given a school prospectus upon request from the school reception.
- > New parents are sent a welcome pack along with the admissions form through email (or post if requested).
- > A follow up phone call is carried out by the Family Engagement Lead to introduce themselves and check if they have any questions.
- > New parents are sent a School Information Pack and invitation to a welcome meeting to discuss transition arrangements.
- > Two initial sessions are arranged in school where parents and carers are invited to come into school to be involved in their child's learning.
- > Transitions into school are tailored to suit individual learners and adapted to meet their requirements.
- > School staff work in partnership with parents with regards to transitions to next settings.
- > Doubletrees School will signpost and prepare learners for their transition to their next placement include explaining the transition to the learners and supporting them in understanding the change.

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- > Parents will arrange visits, start times and transportation.

Support for Learning

Learning At Home

- > Doubletrees School aims to support parents and carers in every way possible to help them with the educational development and wellbeing of their child.
- > The school runs various themed coffee mornings, family learning sessions and workshops to support parents and carers with learning at home. These can cover areas such as communication, Makaton, mental health, sensory needs etc.
- > The school has a Parent Wellbeing Hub on the website which contains links to external support for mental health and wellbeing.
- > The school has a wellbeing blog which offers information, advice, guidance, and support in a range of areas to promote wellbeing and encourage learning at home.

Family Engagement Sessions

- > Family engagement sessions are run every half term in each pathway – Engagement, Access, and Discovery.
- > Family engagement sessions will be planned with the Pathway Leads and Family Engagement Lead at the start of each half term and support with preparation including invitations and resources will be provided by the Family Engagement Lead.
- > The family engagement sessions involve the parents and carers coming into school and sharing learning experiences with their child.
- > The sessions are advertised in the newsletter, on the school website and on social media and all parents and carers are invited.
- > Written letters of invitation with reply slips will also be sent home with the learners.
- > Feedback forms will be completed, and feedback will be given to the teams.
- > Where possible, slideshows from the sessions are uploaded to the website to engage with parents who could not attend.

Lifelong Learning

- > Doubletrees School is working with Cornwall Council Adult Education to offer creative engagement courses in school to develop communication skills and sensory learning for parents and carers in school. An example of the courses offered include coding courses and 'keeping up with children in numeracy and literacy' which will be delivered online to enable us to reach parents and carers who are unable to come into school.
- > To school sends a newsletter biweekly which has a family engagement section. In this, information about training through external services is regularly promoted.
- > Doubletrees School regularly promotes other services and organisations offering learning support through email, the school website, and social media accounts.
- > Parents and carers are provided with details of external organisations which can offer support.

A Whole School Approach

A whole-school approach to parent carer engagement is embedded within the ethos and vision of Doubletrees School.

Consultations

- > The school regularly consult with parents and carers in a range of areas in relation to family engagement. This is done through questionnaires, telephone conversations, meetings, and feedback forms from events in school.
- > The school has a Parent Carer Forum which involves a half-termly Teams meeting to discuss SEND related topics and share views / gain feedback.
- > Through regular consultations, Doubletrees School develops an understanding of the needs of parents and carers which informs our Parent Carer Action Plan and allows us to adapt to changing needs.

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A Differentiated Approach

- > Parent carer engagement is championed in every aspect of school life.
- > All pathways welcome parents and carers into school half-termly to become involved in a family engagement session.
- > Staff leading the pathways are trained accordingly and are aware of potential barriers to parental engagement.
- > A Parent Carer Action Plan is in place which contains key actions relating to family engagement from the School Improvement Plan.
- > The Parent Carer Action Plan is monitored monthly by the Family Engagement Lead and is reviewed every half term and shared with the Senior Leadership Team.

Community Matters

We aim to develop relationships with families, so they can work with us in their child's education, providing the best possible outcomes for their child.

Multi-agency arrangements are an essential component of Doubletrees' comprehensive strategy for parental engagement. It enables the school to share information with partners, including the police, social services, and the voluntary sector, and draw on external expertise from agencies specialising in mental health, nursing, and community activities.

The school develops partnerships with external support services around each learner and works with them and the family to ensure their needs are met. The Family Engagement Lead will attend multi-agency meetings, team around the family meetings and any other meetings to represent the school and support the family.

For parents and carers who are not receiving support through external agencies, Doubletrees School offers the opportunity for them to complete a 'Family Support Plan' with the Family Engagement Lead which provides an integrated approach to identify any support needs and can be used to develop links to provide tailored support around the family.

Addressing Barriers to Parental Engagement

At Doubletrees School we have a clear process and evaluation in place to understand the barriers to parental engagement. Through the evaluation process, we ascertain the individual experiences of the parents and carers, build on the positives, and address any negative experiences.

In our July 2024 consultation, parents and carers expressed a key barrier to parental involvement in school is the distance from their home to the school, along with work commitments during the day. We have therefore implemented the following:

- > A Doubletrees Parent Carer Forum is established in which parents and carers can join a Teams meeting online to share their views of a range of SEND related topics. This will be held half-termly at a time that is suitable for everyone.
- > The school creates a Presentation for each family engagement event in school and provided access to this online along with any resources and share the link to these in the bi-weekly newsletters and through social media.

Within the consultation, there was a request for further support for mental health and wellbeing.

- > A Parent Wellbeing Hub has been created on the school website. This Hub provides a range of mental health and wellbeing support, including links to external services and organisations.
- > Doubletrees School have established a 'Wellbeing blog' which is updated regularly. This contains information, advice, guidance, and support on a range of mental health and wellbeing topics, along with other support tailored to specific needs. This will promote wellbeing throughout the school community and will be easily accessible for all parents / carers as well as staff.
- > A Mental Health Awareness Coffee Morning has been arranged with the support of Pentreath (Mental Health Charity) and will take place once a term. Information from the coffee morning will be provided on the website following the event.

Monitoring & Review

The impact of this Policy is measured through regular consultations with parents and carers. We also monitor other indicators on an ongoing basis such as:

- > Attendance rates at family engagement sessions and coffee mornings through recording attendance sheets and feedback.
- > Attendance within the Parent Carer Forum through keeping an up-to-date spreadsheet of attendees.
- > Attendance at any courses offered through the school through feedback forms which are shared with the class teams.
- > The response rate to surveys of parents and carers.
- > An evaluation of where the outcome of parent carer consultation has influenced school decision making through 'you said we did' posts and acknowledgement of changes and reasoning behind these changes.

The Parent Carer Action Plan is updated monthly including all the above indicators and sent to SLT Termly for review.

The Policy is monitored and reviewed Termly, alongside the Parent Carer Action Plan, and is amended as required.