

 Kingsmead	POLICY TITLE:	Partnership with Parents/ Carers
Kingsmead Academy T/A Kingsmead School		
Committee/Person Responsible for Policy:	Headteacher Student Support & Pastoral	
Date Approved by Governing Body:	July 2013	
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Next Review Due:	Spring 2016	

The aims of Kingsmead School clearly state that they should be achieved in partnership with parents/carers and this reflects the importance that the school places on working closely with students, parents and carers.

We recognise that active parental/carers involvement in their children's education and school will enhance:

- The overall quality of education their children receive
- The level of achievement their children can attain
- Parents/carers relationships with their children
- Parents/carers understanding of schools

Parental/carers involvement can be both passive and active and should involve:

- Being welcomed into the school and knowing how to access key members of staff
- Receiving high quality information about their children's progress and the development of the school
- Having the opportunity to be involved in the development of new policies and practices
- Having the opportunity to give feedback about the quality of education
- Contributing actively to activities in the school and the PTA (parents/ carers association) especially through the parental help register
- Actively supporting their children with their learning and especially homework and reading
- Supporting the praise, sanctions and rules of the school
- Encouraging their children to be involved in the wide range of opportunities that are available

- Being good learning role models
- Supporting their children's self-esteem and progress towards adulthood
- Sharing parenting skills and ideas
- Signing and reinforcing the Home/School Agreement

Access:

Parents/carers are welcome at Kingsmead

We recognise that secondary schools can be daunting places for parents/carers. However, it is our wish to be an open and accessible school community where parents/carers feel valued, welcomed and involved.

The Tutor

Normally, the parents/carers first point of call to discuss successes, issues or concerns, is the personal tutor. The tutor normally stays with the tutor group for five years and parents/carers should be able, over a period of time, to build a close and trusting relationship with this person. Initial contact is through the student planner, email, phone message or letter.

The Year Head

If parents/carers have more serious concerns or problems, they can contact the Year Head. Initial contact should be by phone message, email or letter.

Senior Staff

Occasionally, parents/carers will want to talk to the Head or another member of the Senior Staff. They are always willing to see parents/carers but are less likely to know students as well as the tutor or Year Head and therefore may not be able to answer questions immediately. Initial contact should be by phone message, email or letter.

Subject Staff

It may be necessary from time to time to speak to one of the child's subject teachers outside of scheduled parent meetings. Teachers are happy to do this if parents/carers have a particular worry. Initial contact should be by letter.

Student Planners

Student planners are a useful way of contacting a student's tutor. Parents/carers can write a message in the student planner and ask their son/daughter to bring it to the tutor's attention. Likewise the tutor and subject teachers may write in the student planner to bring something to parents/carers attention. Student planners should be signed once per week by parents/carers. This will be checked periodically by tutors.

Telephoning/Texting

Telephoning school during the daytime can be frustrating for parents/carers because they can rarely speak immediately to the person they want to because they are either teaching, running an activity or in a meeting. Parents/carers should leave a message for the teacher to ring back giving home and work numbers if appropriate. Staff will endeavour to get back to all callers within 24 hours but sometimes teachers will not receive messages until the end of the day and may be fully committed the next day too. The school will try to contact parents by text if this is appropriate.

Writing Letters or Email

Writing can be the most effective way for parents/carers to communicate a concern and will allow the member of staff to investigate something before getting back to them. Parents/carers should indicate whether they want to be telephoned or written to.

Visiting

It is always preferable to have an appointment before parents/carers visit a member of staff at school because it is unlikely that the required member of staff will be available at that time. Teachers will often be able to be flexible to see parents/carers at a time of day that suits. All visitors must report to reception immediately upon entering the school grounds.

Home Visits

Year Heads and/or Senior Staff are available to make home visits if parents/carers are unable to get into school.

Special Educational Needs

Students requiring extra learning support will need parents/carers and teachers to work in even closer partnership than is normal. We expect our learning support team to be regularly meeting parents/carers to discuss individual education plans and strategies to boost their success.

New and Prospective Parents/Carers

All prospective and new parents/carers and their children are welcome to visit the school and speak to the Head or Deputy Headteacher.

- **Catchment Area and Admissions**
 - The school accepts children up to the Planned Admission Number (PAN). Most placements are from within the catchment area, although there are occasionally a few spaces for students from outside the catchment area.
- **Open Evening/Open Days/School Visits**
 - The parents/carers of students choosing a school for transfer from Years 6 to 7 are able to attend the school Open Evening, visit the school during Open Days or at other times. The Inclusion Co-ordinator visits all feeder primary schools to talk to prospective students.
- **Prospectus and Other Information**
 - The Prospectus is available from reception on request and on the School Web Site, www.kingsmead-school.com as are other documents such as the OFSTED summary.
- **Induction**
 - Kingsmead has a high quality induction programme enabling transferring students and their parents/carers to visit the school prior to starting.

- **Existing parents/carers: Individual Progress**

- **Student Reports and Assessment Information.**

- Interim reports are issued each term with one full report each year at different times for each year group. Parents/carers should familiarise themselves with the grades, marks and comments that students are gaining in their every day classwork and homework. National Curriculum levels of achievement, working at and target grades for GCSE and vocational qualifications will be used in reports to parents.

- **Letters home**

- Parents/carers can expect to receive letters home from time to time if a student has worked to a particularly outstanding level or is causing some concern.

- **Parent Evenings**

Parents will be invited to attend Parents Evenings as follows.

- Year 7 Autumn Term (Tutor)
 Summer Term (Subject Teachers)
- Year 8 Autumn Term (Tutor)
 Spring Term (Subject Teachers)
 Spring Term (Options Evening)
- Year 9 Autumn Term (Tutor)
 Spring Term (Subject Teachers)
- Year 10 Autumn Term (Subject Teachers)
- Year 11 Spring Term (Subject Teachers)

- **General Information**

- **School Policies**

- Copies of written school policies are available on request from reception and on the school web site.

- **Newsletters**

- Newsletters are issued at the end of each school term (6 term year) to all families and cover a wide range of information items and school events.

- **Press Coverage**

- The school regularly puts items in the local press to keep parents/carers and members of the community informed about important developments.

- **Trips and Visits**

- Parents'/carers' information evenings are normally held for major trips abroad but for other trips information will be by letter. We expect impeccable behaviour from all students and reserve the right not to

allow any student to attend if we have concerns regarding their behaviour. An example of this would be bad behaviour at a disco or prolonged bad behaviour in lessons which could result in losing the privilege of going on a school trip or visit for a fixed period of time.

- **Open Days**
 - Open Days are held for Year 6 parents.
- **OFSTED**
 - The latest report is available in reception and on the school web site.
- **Website**
 - Most of the above information and further information is held on the School Website, www.kingsmead-school.com
- **Policy Formation**
 - **Parent Governors**
 - Parent Governors are fully involved in monitoring the performance of the school and approving all aspects of school policy.
 - **School PTA**
 - The School PTA is often consulted on a range of issues to gauge parental response.
 - **Working Parties**
 - From time to time parents/carers (normally from the School Society) are invited to sit on policy formation working parties.
 - **Questionnaires**
 - Parent's/carers views are occasionally sought on various aspects of school practice that are under review.
- **Feedback**
 - **Biennial Parent/Carers Questionnaire**
 - The Governors undertake a major biennial survey of parents'/carers' views about the school.
 - **Communicating Satisfactions and Concerns**
 - Parents/carers are encouraged to communicate their satisfactions and concerns about any aspect of school life.
 - **Complaints Procedure**
 - If a parent/carer wishes to make a formal complaint, this should be done via a member of the senior staff. If the matter is not resolved, it will be dealt with personally by the Headteacher and, ultimately, by the Governors.
- **Active Involvement**

Please note that parents/carers actively involved in working with students in whatever capacity must have clearance from the Disclosure & Barring Service.

- **Parent Governors**
 - Parents/carers are encouraged to take up vacancies on the Governing Body.
- **School PTA**
 - The School PTA provides an opportunity for parents/carers to become very actively involved in supporting the school through fund- raising and supporting a wide range of school events.
- **Parental Help Register**
 - All parents/carers are encouraged to sign up for the parental help register database to offer their skills, time, contact and resources in support of the school. This is administered by the Finance Officer.
- **Supporting Events**
 - The school and School PTA hold a number of functions throughout the year including fund raising, social and educational events. Parents/carers are encouraged to support these events.
- **Specialist Skills**
 - Parents/carers with specialist skills that may be useful to further the education of young people are encouraged to support and run events and activities. Examples include supporting outdoor expeditions, being business mentors, etc.
- **Supporting Learning**
 - Parental support of and interest in their child's learning does make a difference. We recognise that parents/carers have a critical role as co-educators, helping children develop lively enquiring minds, valuing education and actively supporting them in their school work. Parents/carers should continue to do these things throughout the secondary school.
 - **Equipment**
 - Parents/carers should try to ensure their children have the correct equipment for school ensuring items are properly named and looked after.
 - **Homework**
 - Parents/carers should encourage students to do homework daily and to get in a routine. Parents/carers should ensure that there is somewhere quiet to do homework and that time is spent productively. Even when formal homework is not set, parents/carers should encourage students to review and revisit work done previously (see Homework Policy) or use the Learning Gateway from home to access resources used in class or class server for assignments the teacher may have set.

- **Student Planner**

- If filled in correctly by the student, student planners, which we ask parents to sign every week, will give a good picture of the formal homework demands being put on the student. Some homework will have a longer timescale and may not be reflected in a particular week's entry.

- **Reading**

Reading skills underpin achievement in most subjects. The ability to read well is therefore of paramount importance. Parents/carers should:

- listen to their children read on a regular basis and help them develop their reading skills;
- encourage reading of all types (books, newspapers, magazines, computer screen); be good role models in reading (be seen to be reading, discussing good books, having family reading time).

- **Organisational Skills and Time Management**

- Parents/carers should help their children to develop organisational and time management skills. Preparing for the next day, planning homework time, having the right equipment, keeping a diary of future events, preparing for exams are very important skills. Parents/carers will need to judge with the help of teachers how much input to make and when.

- **Working Environment**

- Try to ensure children have a quiet place to work and at a table. Homework cannot be done effectively on the settee, on the bed, in front of the TV, with loud music blaring or with constant interruptions from siblings. Working effectively with friends can be useful on some occasions, but friends can also be a barrier to work. The effective use of time is very important. Make sure you know the two hours in the bedroom is spent doing homework and not spent daydreaming, reading magazines, listening to music or on the 'phone to friends.

- **Computers**

- The ability to be able to use computers effectively is quite clearly a very important skill. Students will learn computer skills at school but this learning will be greatly enhanced by the opportunity to reinforce and apply those skills through homework. We are conscious this raises very many issues. We will make every effort to ensure school computers are available at lunchtimes and after school for this purpose but a computer at home will mean students have greater flexibility in their study.

- **Books at home**

- It is important for homes to have basic reference books such as a dictionary, thesaurus, world atlas and a basic encyclopaedia. All of these are also available on computer programs. Beyond this, parents/carers should help and encourage their children to use libraries. While the school will endeavour to provide adequate textbooks, students will often want to research beyond what they are

given. The school library and local libraries will be very helpful in this respect.

- **Study/Homework Sessions at School**

- The school provides opportunities for students to have the facility to stay on beyond the end of the school day to do homework and use the LRC and computer facilities. The Learning Support Centre also runs a homework club at lunchtimes. Parents/carers can encourage their children to take up these opportunities. Each Easter there is also an opportunity for Year 11 students to take part in a revision programme in readiness for their GCSE and vocational exams in May and June.

- **Commenting on Student Reports**

- We ask parents/carers to look closely at the reports issued on their children, to discuss them in detail and to help their children in conjunction with the school to set clear targets for further improvement.

- **Reinforcing Praise and Sanctions**

Supporting learning is a fine balance between active support and encouragement and being seen as an interfering parent. Our advice to parents/carers and students is that if they can work together the eventual outcome will be much better. Some under-performing students have parents/carers who are disinterested, who struggle to find ways to actively support their children or whose relationship with their children make it difficult to become involved.

- **Praise and Rewards**

- The school believes in praise and reward for good work, attitude and effort. Parents/carers are asked to add their praise to ours and to support the annual Celebration of Achievement Evening. Further information about rewards can be found in the Rewards Policy.

- **School Code of Conduct and Rules**

- The school has a clear code of conduct and rules which we ask parents/carers to be aware of and support. Copies can be found in the homework planner. This particularly applies to appearance and uniform.

- **Sanctions and Discipline**

- From time to time we need to take sanctions against students for inappropriate behaviour. We aim to apply these fairly and consistently and ask that parents/carers give us their full support. Students can now be given an after school detention by law without parental permission but we would aim always to get parent/carers support for this.

- **School Uniform and Appearance**

- We expect students to take pride in their appearance and to adhere to the rules regarding uniform, jewellery and appearance (especially make-up and hair style) as laid down in the school prospectus and student planner. Parents support with these rules is important if unnecessary conflict is to be avoided.

- **Taking up Opportunities**

Education is more than just about passing exams and we are proud of our focus on the development of personal skills and qualities and developing a wide range of skills.

- **The House System**

- The House system is designed to encourage participation in a wide range of sporting and non-sporting activities. Parents/carers should find out which Houses their children are in and encourage participation in House activities.

- **Clubs and Activities**

- The school runs a wide range of clubs and activities - parents/carers should encourage their children to take part.

- **Trips and Visits**

- Kingsmead organises a wide choice of trips and visits. These include exchanges and study visits abroad, residential experiences in the UK, curriculum focus residential trips, outdoor pursuits, subject related trips such as field trips, theatre, cinema and art trips. We are committed to ensuring that students should be able to access these opportunities regardless of their family's financial means. Parents/carers should encourage their children to experience a range of foreign, residential and day trip opportunities. All students undertake a period of work experience in Year 10 which we expect parents/carers to support.

- **Curriculum Enrichment Week**

- In the first week of July the school organises a curriculum enrichment experience in which all students are taken off normal timetable to undertake a variety of learning opportunities in areas outside of normal subjects.

- **Travel Abroad**

- As a school we are committed to developing our student's international understanding and their preparation as global citizens. Foreign languages are an important part of this and it is our hope that the majority of our students will take part in the study visit in Year 7 during International Week and at least one foreign exchange programme further up the school.

- **Learning Role Models**

- **Parents/carers value of education and learning**

- Parents/carers who are positive about school, learning and education will influence their children's motivation and commitment in a very positive way.

- **Parents/carers view of school**

- As adults our experience of school may not have been that positive but it is essential that our baggage is not passed onto our children. We need to encourage our children to have a positive view of school and learning.

- **Your own learning**
 - Parents provide role models for their children in all kinds of ways. Your children seeing your continued commitments to formal and informal learning - for its own sake, as well as work or career related, will have a positive impact on them. From time to time such learning opportunities are available from Kingsmead School, for example foreign language learning.
- **Self-Esteem and Adulthood**
 - **Feeling positive**
 - Young people often need encouragement to feel positive about themselves and their performance. Regular praise and positive, constructive feedback about work and other aspects of their school life helps to raise their self-esteem and increase motivation.
 - **Different skills**
 - Adolescent and adult social skills are taught in school but more significantly are acquired in the course of everyday life by copying role models. Young people need help in selecting the best role models. All students are expected to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and in more general ways as they progress through the school.
 - **Childhood**
 - Society and the media put young people under great pressure to be grown up. We believe that adults should help young people to continue to enjoy their childhood without too much pressure to grow up quickly but at the same time helping them to gradually prepare for and adapt to growing up.
 - **Making Friends**
 - The forging and maintenance of friendships is often hard for the young but the rewards are great. Young people need advice and guidance from parents/carers and teachers on the skills of being a good friend and on coping with changing friendships.
 - **All my friends do**
 - Young people are skilled in the art of arguing their case and parents/carers need to exercise good judgement in order to strike the right balance in the struggle for independence. Parents/carers often have to refuse to enter into the argument that, 'everybody else does, so why shouldn't I?' and to stick to their core values being able to explain the basis for their decisions.
 - **Communication**
 - It is vital that young people know how to communicate and have the opportunity to do so with their peers and with adults. Talking early in pairs and groups is a valuable activity and should be encouraged. Sharing views and opinions plays a valuable role in the move into adulthood.

- **Age and the law**
 - Problems in the home and outside often arise as the result of ignorance of the law. Adults and young people alike need to be informed. The school's pastoral programme does much to provide this information.

- **Drugs, Sex and Alcohol**
 - Work in conjunction with parents/carers to help provide very clear guidance on these important issues. All three subjects are dealt with by trained staff in school and they will be happy to help.