



# Parental Engagement Policy

<b>Date effective</b>	March 2024
<b>Review Cycle</b>	2 Yearly
<b>Review Date</b>	March 2026
<b>Date of Approval by Governors</b>	March 2024
<b>Committee approved by</b>	Growing in Grace Christian Primary Local Governing Body
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Date	Notes

## Parent Engagement and Partnership

Parents play a vital role in education. When parents are engaged and involved, everyone benefits - students, parents, families, teachers, schools and communities – and our school is enriched as a positive place to teach, learn and grow.

## Vision

Parent engagement has a positive impact on student achievement. At Growing in Grace Christian Primary students are supported and inspired to learn in a culture of high expectations in which parents:

- Are welcomed, respected and valued as partners by the school community in their children's learning and development
- Have a full range of choices and opportunities to enable them to be involved and support student success
- Are engaged through on-going communication and dialogue to support a positive learning environment at home and at school
- Are supported with tools which enable them to participate in school life

## What We Know about Parent Engagement

Parents play a vital role in the development and education of their children. Parents and families have the primary responsibility for the development of their children's character, with the support of their school and community.

Research clearly indicates that good schools become better schools when there is a strong connection with parents as part of the learning community. Parents have a primary influence on their child's attitudes towards school, their learning, and their future success.

*"Parent programs and interventions work best when the strategies respect the needs of families. When school staff engage in caring and trusting relationships with parents that recognize parents as partners in the educational development of children, these relationships enhance parents' desire to be involved and influence how they participate in their children's educational development."*

**Henderson & Mapp, 2002**

## Fulfilling the Vision of Parent Engagement

The Parent Engagement Policy recognises that parent involvement is multi-dimensional and that parents have a role to play in fulfilling each of our core priorities for educational excellence.

## Strategies for Success

The Parent Engagement Policy identifies a series of key strategies designed to support parents as partners so that parents have the opportunity - and the skills, knowledge and tools- to engage with all education partners in fulfilling our core priorities for education.

### Strategy 1: School Climate

Foster and sustain a positive, welcoming school climate in which all parent perspectives are encouraged, valued and heard.

## **Strategy 2: Eliminating Barriers**

Identify and remove barriers to parent engagement that may prevent some parents from fully participating in their children's learning and to reflect the diversity of our students and communities.

## **Strategy 3: Tools and Supports for Parents**

Helping parents support student learning at home and at school.

## **Strategy 4: Parent Outreach**

Review and expand communication and outreach strategies such as local workshops, presentations, tools and resources, to share information and strategies to support learning at home and parent engagement in schools

## **Foundations for Parent Engagement**

Parents' engagement matters. Parents care about their children and want to be involved: they want their children to succeed in school and are willing to help in as many ways as possible. Commitment to our students' well-being is the driving force behind everything we do in education. Everyone - parents, families, administrators, teachers, support workers and the local authority - shares this firm commitment.

A true partnership takes sustained and intentional efforts on the part of all partners with commitment and action by all at every level of the education system. While parents can find it challenging to play an active role in their children's education, it is important to meet this challenge so that students at Growing in Grace Christian Primary School have the support they need to be successful in school and later in life.

The Parent Engagement policy seeks to identify and break down barriers to parent involvement and proactively reach out to parents. With work schedules, outside commitments and individual preference- it helps parents to have choices on how they want to be involved. Strategies need to be flexible recognizing the diversity of our parents and their contributions.

## **Successful Parental Engagement**

### **Leadership, ethos and resources**

- A dedicated staff member will be appointed to liaise with parents and school
- Creating a culture that values parental engagement
- Establishing clear boundaries and expectations for parents
- Having appropriate policies in place, such as a complaints policy
- Providing a forum that supports consultation and shared decision-making
- Monitoring the training available for staff on engaging with parents
- Prioritising parents through link governors or standing agenda items

### **Effective two way communication**

- Being accessible and finding ways to hear from a diverse range of parents
- Gauging parents' views, ideas and how best to communicate
- Actively establishing different channels of communication that work for all
- Improving communications in both directions

## **Supporting Learning at Home**

- Coordinating learning activities at home that work with their experiences at school
- Helping parents build their confidence and skills and empower them to take an active lead at home
- Helping parents understand what their child learns and the impact they can have on their child's learning
- Working with parents to produce resources and materials together.
- Providing curriculum rationale and real-life challenges, so parents see the relevance

## **Involvement in School Life**

- Making use of parent's skills and interest and ways to make a meaningful contribution
- Ensuring volunteering activities are varied, inclusive and reflect community diversity
- Allowing parents to inform policies, improvement plans and decisions that affect them
- Encouraging parent support groups

## **Community Engagement**

- Building a strong relationship with the local community and openly value what it can offer
- Offering a range of activities, clubs and support to pupils, parents and families.
- Connecting with community groups and leaders to increase your reach.
- Utilising the school as a community hub by hiring out buildings, if appropriate, facilities, staff and expertise

## **School Actions**

- To establish and sustain a positive learning culture and welcoming climate where parental input is welcomed, respected and valued
- To implement strategies to identify and remove discriminatory barriers that limit engagement by students, parents and our diverse communities
- To actively explore and utilise opportunities to further engage parents at school and at home to support student achievement
- To review existing parent and community partnerships and seek to expand upon these partnerships to reflect the diversity of our parents and the broader community
- To inform students and parents about learning expectations and the student's academic progress and make efforts to assist parents who do not understand English
- To actively encourage and support School Councils and parents to share their ideas for improving student achievement to help inform school improvement plans
- To support opportunities for parents and students to develop or strengthen skills and knowledge (e.g. workshops, various resources such as tips sheets, translation of materials) to support a positive learning environment
- To work towards representation of diverse parent groups on all school committees including school councils
- To monitor school climate (e.g. through surveys, focus groups) to help identify barriers to parent involvement or issues that should be addressed to foster and support a safe welcoming learning environment
- To review and establish self- assessment processes to determine the effectiveness of their parent engagement strategies
- To report progress to the governing body.