

## **John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School**

### **Thinking Family policy**

#### **Introduction**

John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School has great links with families and the local community. All parents and carers are equally valued as part of our school community. Children's learning is improved when we work in partnership with their parents or carers, and their wider family. We therefore believe in close cooperation with all families, and in regular consultation between the home and the school.

#### **Aims**

Our aims through family involvement are:

- to enhance the learning experiences of all children;
- to encourage parents and carers to be involved in the children's learning;
- to provide a partnership between home and school, seeking to ensure that families feel welcome and valued;
- to ensure that maximum use is made of all these adults' skills to enrich learning opportunities.

#### **Involvement in the life of the school**

##### **Nursery**

Strong relationships are formed right from the start when families are offered a home school visit by the Nursery Team. This gives everyone a chance to get to know each other and find out what is important to the child and their family. A welcome book and a photograph album explains what happens in the nursery. Every day in the Nursery, families are invited to come in and share an activity with their child or they may choose to take the activity idea to do at home. A Learning Story book records special moments at school and at home. Once a term the school invites parents to a special family day to join in all the fun at Nursery. During the summer term, new families are invited to a welcome evening where they can find out about the Reception Class, meet the teachers, teaching assistants and kitchen staff. A tour of the school is also offered.

##### **Reception**

When the children join the main school, families are very welcome to attend the initial session, but we then encourage the children to be independent and come into school on their own. The reception teacher informs families what the children have been learning each day on a large white board. The children in Reception and Nursery classes invite parents/carers to share their learning stories once a term.

### **Reception, Year one and two**

The following opportunities for families are provided throughout the year:

(These are for Reception, Year 1 & 2)

#### Autumn Term

- Meet the teacher and helpful hints information sheet
- Termly curriculum Information Sheet
- Individual parent consultations
- Harvest Assembly
- Christmas shoe box appeal - packing up morning
- Family Learning Day - e.g. Christmas decorations
- Parent Lunch - 4 times a term
- Christmas Play

#### Spring Term

- Individual parent consultations and annual report
- Termly curriculum Information Sheet
- Easter Hat Parade & Easter egg hunt
- Family Learning Day - e.g. Misfit Books/ Making games
- Parent Lunch - 4 times a term

#### Summer Term

- Information meeting about Key Stage 1 SATs for Y2 families
- Termly curriculum Information Sheet
- Strawberry Tea (in aid of breast cancer)
- Family Learning Day - e.g. Outdoor Learning/ adventurous sports
- Parent Lunch - 4 times a term
- Sports Day
- Open evening - celebration of children's work
- Y2 Leaver's assembly

The school website and VLE is very informative and is updated weekly with what the children are learning as well as activities to support learning at home.

In addition Friends of John of Gaunt (FoJoG) events are organised throughout the year and everyone is very welcome to attend e.g. school disco.

### **Involvement in children's learning**

Parents and carers can talk with teachers before and after school on an informal basis on most days. Appointments to see a teacher or the headteacher can be made through the school office, and can be set up for as soon as required in most instances.

Every term, there is an opportunity for parents to have a formal discussion with their child(ren)'s teacher. Teachers value these opportunities to celebrate successes, review learning targets and listen to parental views.

An annual report on each child's academic and personal development is given to parents once a year (Nursery in the Summer Term, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 in the Spring Term)

Curriculum workshops will be organised to assist parents and carers in supporting their child(ren)'s learning e.g. Maths or VLE workshops

Policy documents, schemes of work and National Curriculum guidance are available for parents and carers to view.

Curriculum letters are sent to each family at the start of each term, detailing the aspects of learning each child will undertake, and how families might support that learning.

Foundation Stage and National Curriculum assessments as well as records of progress and achievement are also readily available, as appropriate, to each child.

### **Types of help at school**

Parents and carers are very welcome to come and help at school; this may be organising weekly library sessions, helping in the Nursery, looking after the school grounds or one off projects.

There are four Parent governors who represent the views of parents at John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School.

The Friends of John of Gaunt School is open to all families at John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School. This group of parents works voluntarily to raise money for the school and provide help for activities such as Christmas parties, pancake races, Easter egg hunts etc.

### **Organisational arrangements**

It is necessary to organise a personal background check with the CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) on any person who will be working regularly with children in school, prior to that person's involvement.

All helpers are asked to sign in and sign out of school when visiting, for security reasons.

All helpers working with children in class are asked to check the purpose and details of the activity, before commencement, by talking with the teacher.

All helpers are asked to inform the school, in advance if possible, should they be unable to attend school at a prearranged time.

All helpers will be reminded of the confidential nature of their work in school.

\*See Helpful Hints for parents sheet

### **Consultation**

The school will make every effort to consult parents and carers, both formally and informally, about their views on school life, children's learning and new initiatives.

The school values regular feedback, and will make every effort to act on parents' and carers' views, wherever possible.

Teachers (including the headteacher) can be approached informally before and after school, and will always take careful account of any information forwarded to them.

Periodically the school will seek parental views more formally, through an annual survey, or a questionnaire on a particular theme.

The governing body publishes its Annual Report to Parents each Summer term.

Also, if desired by a sufficient numbers of families, the governing body will hold an annual meeting at which issues of interest and concern can be raised by parents and carers. After an Ofsted inspection parents and carers will receive a summary of the findings.

**Monitoring and review**

The headteacher will monitor the implementation of this policy, and will submit periodic evaluation reports on its effectiveness to the governing body.

This policy will be reviewed in four years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed:

Date: March 2012