RATIONALE:
During a child’s school years, the home and school occupy the greatest part of their time — and carry the greatest influence on their development into adulthood. The more harmony there is between home and school, the greater will be the chances of achievement and fulfillment. The contribution that parents have traditionally made in schools is highly valued. Children, parents, teachers and the school community generally stand to reap major benefits from even stronger ties.

The best possible outcomes from all children’s education are very much enhanced by a strong partnership between parents, teachers and students.

GUIDELINES:
The Department of School Education, and this school, encourages participation because:

• Parents have a unique knowledge and understanding of their own children, being their first and most influential educators
• Parents have the right, through their responsibility to and for their children, to be informed about their children’s learning and to participate in reaching decisions which affect them
• Parents have talents, interests, energies and skills, which enrich the life and program of the school.

IN INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION:

Involvement . . . refers to the contribution which parents make to the life and business of a school without necessarily being part of the decision-making process. Involvement may range from assisting with special classes to listening to children reading.

Participation . . . refers to parents sharing in the making of decisions about school aims, policies and programs with staff and students. Participation may be through membership of the P & C, sub-committees, or in preparing submissions on issues of special interest.

At Wollongong West Public School we are committed both to increasing parents’ involvement and the ensuring that parents can participate in school decision-making if they wish to do so. The nature and level of each parent’s involvement and participation remains a matter of individual choice.

In encouraging the involvement and participation of parents in our school the following guidelines will be observed:

• Any involvement and participation recognize the framework of relevant legislation and NSW Department of School Education administrative guidelines.
• Any involvement and participation must not conflict with the specific professional responsibilities for which principals and teachers are accountable.

RESPONSIBILITIES:
All of us: each and every parent, the school principal, teachers and P & C members, have a role to play in encouraging and supporting parent & community participation in our school.

Responsibilities of the Principal
The Principal will:

• consult with parents and plan to promote parent involvement and participation
Parents and Schools Policy

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• endeavour to foster the interest, knowledge and skills of parents who have not previously been involved
• ensure that information is made available to parents, establishing new channels where necessary
• monitor and evaluate parent participation practices
• include, wherever possible and relevant, parents in staff development and school development activities
• address, investigate and provide feedback on, the concerns of parents when expressed directly to the Principal

Responsibilities of Teachers
Teachers will continue to work with parents to:
• help parents feel welcome in the classroom, for example, through activities including class parents’ meetings
• build good relationships with parents and children
• ensure that parents have all relevant information about their children’s education
• seek the views of all parents on matters relating to their children’s education
• promote the idea of their parents’ participation among children
• create a welcoming environment for all members of the school community

Responsibilities of Parents
Parents have a responsibility to:
• cooperate with school staff, other parents and students in the interest of their child’s education
• show an active interest in their child’s schooling
• express their opinion in relation to school matters
• communicate concerns in a manner which allows for positive action to be taken
• support the implementation of school policies
• assist the school in establishing a set of shared values and expectations

Responsibilities of Children
Children have a responsibility to:
• develop an understanding of the school’s Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
• cooperate with each other and with school staff to create a happy and safe learning environment
• take every opportunity to learn as much and as well as possible though always trying to do their personal best

Communicating Concerns
There will be times where parents wish to query something or make a complaint concerning something
which, has occurred at school. So that we have the best possible chance of arriving at a solution, which is best for all parties concerned, it helps if parents can give us a clear view of:

- what is seen to be the problem
- what action or outcome is desired

In many cases, the class teacher may be the appropriate person to approach. All teachers are willing to set times where they can meet with parents to discuss concerns. Parents should either contact the teacher to arrange a time, or arrange this through the office.

In other cases, parents may wish to discuss their concerns with the Principal. It is essential that the Principal be approached regarding concerns, as little can be done to address concerns, which are not communicated directly. It must be understood that it is not always possible for the action, which is requested to be followed or for the desired outcome to be attained. It is hoped, though, that if concerns are communicated at the time they are felt, then everybody can do their best to get as close as possible to a fair and workable solution.

“Working together to make a good school better”

Related documents

Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations – 2001
Prohibited Employment Declaration Form
Parent Helper Agreement