



## PARENTAL ACCESS TO STAFF AT CARNALRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



### SCHOOL POLICY

In recognising that the education of our children is a partnership between the home and school, we have an open door policy. The Board of Governors, Principal and teaching staff seek to allow parents/guardians a clear right of access at all reasonable times to their child's teacher and the Principal. The Principal, as the day-to-day manager of the school, will seek to ensure that all such contacts are conducted in a manner which will promote the educational interests of the pupil and allow for the safety of all the children and staff.

As parental attitudes to school and the teacher can directly influence the child, it is important that all exchanges between school and home be informed by a mutual respect for each others knowledge and concern for the pupil's welfare. Pupils have much to gain from the shared interest of parents/guardians and teachers. Each has an in-depth knowledge of the child in different settings and contexts and the sharing of this information in a positive way should help the pupil to feel valued and to achieve his/her full potential. It is important that pupils feel secure in the working relationship between home and school.

The means of expressing this working relationship are diverse but parents/guardians will appreciate that some guidelines are necessary as each teacher has responsibility for a large group of children. All exchanges between parents/guardians and staff should be conducted in a respectable and tolerant manner and parents/guardians are asked to adhere to the school's guidelines when seeking contact with their child's teacher.

The Board of Governors endorses the school's arrangements for effective parent/teacher communication as set out below.

#### **The contact between parent/guardian and teacher will take the form of:**

- a) Meetings to discuss the pupil's academic progress
- b) Casual or informal exchanges of information made for routine housekeeping purposes e.g. dental appointments, illness, lost property, etc.
- c) More sensitive, wider issues involving school policies that are causing concern. In such circumstances an appointment should be made and the issues clarified in advance to enable the parent/guardian and the teacher to make appropriate preparation.

#### **Parents should always:**

- a) Seek approval from the Principal/office before approaching a class or individual teacher
- b) Try to avoid detaining a teacher who has responsibility for a class (written notes are very acceptable)
- c) Avoid confrontation which could be interpreted as harassment
- d) Use the bi-annual progress interview meetings with teachers to address all related matters.

On the advice of the Education Authority the school has put in place arrangements for addressing the most serious situations where the approach of a parent/guardian might amount to harassment of staff in the workplace. Thankfully such situations are rare in the school system and we trust unlikely to ever occur in the context of this school.

However, in extreme circumstances, parents may be barred from school premises. Police assistance will be called upon if deemed necessary.

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff would like to thank parents/guardians for their co-operation and support in this matter and look forward to working together to further strengthen the home/school partnership.