

Parent Consultation Forum Policy

Reviewed February 2023



The Stour Academy Trust

Aims and Objectives

The Stour Academy Trust recognises the value of parent forums as a means of having a sustained dialogue with a committed and informed group of parents on a range of issues that impact on their day to day life with the school which affect them and their children.

The school's parent forum automatically includes every parent/carer with a child enrolled at the school.

Parent forums are a way for schools to encourage more parents to get involved in school life. They are informal groups, led by the Head Teacher and Parent Support Advisor where parents can be consulted, give their views and raise issues. In doing so, work closely with the management team to support the improvement of the school.

As a member of the parent forum, you have an important role in working closely with the school by being asked your opinion by the Leadership on issues relating to day-to-day matters, such as:

- Parking
- Homework
- After school activities
- Breakfast Club
- After School Club
- Reading
- Term dates
- Break times
- School uniform
- Communication
- Special events
- Pupil admission number
- Parent evenings
- Curriculum events/workshops for parents
- Communication
- Parent View
- School trips
- Residential trips
- Sex education
- Charity Events
- Non-Uniform Days
- Healthy schools
- Surveys
- Safety and security
- School's Christian Vision*
- Christian Values*
- Christian Festivals*
- School based policies (that most impact parents)

*Schools with a Christian Character

To ensure that the Parent Consultation Forum does not operate in a vacuum it is important that there is a channel of communication with the Board of Directors. The Head Teacher has a key role in representing the views of the parent consultation forum in other settings; SLT meetings, staff meetings, etc., It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Directors to ensure that the views are shared with the Board where views may impact on strategic decisions.

Membership

To ensure a good cross section of parental views it is recommended that the membership of the parent consultation forum is comprised of at least one parent from each class in the school. Headteachers will also ask a range of questions to all parents via Microsoft Forms to gain a wider picture.

Initially, Head Teachers may choose to approach individual parents and ask them to become members of the forum. If the number of volunteers exceeds the number of places, members will be elected for a period of 12 months. At the end of this term members may put themselves forward for re-selection/re-election if they so wish. In smaller schools, for example, village schools of approximately four classes, this may consist of a maximum of three representatives from each year group.

The forum is accountable to the Board of Directors. The Board may remove or appoint new members where circumstances permit.

Meetings

Meetings should be held at least once a term (six meetings over the year) and chaired by the Head Teacher and accompanied by the Parent Support Advisor. Although this is an informal group and serves as a consultative body, meetings are to be minuted and these minutes should be made available to all parents and carers of children at the school and placed on the school's website. The Head Teacher may decide to invite a member of staff, pupils or any other individuals to the meeting, according to the agenda, to assist it in carrying out its function.

All parents are encouraged to share their feedback on the pre-meeting questionnaire if they are unable to attend a meeting



Agenda

The Parent Support Advisor will support the Head Teacher in drawing up the agenda. The Head Teacher is responsible for running the meetings; ensuring that the agenda is adhered to; giving everyone the opportunity to have their say; making sure that the meeting keeps to time; agreeing action points at the end of the meeting and who will carry them out. As this is an informal group, the group will not appoint roles such as vice chair, secretary, etc.

Rules

All members need to be clear on the role of the parent consultation forum and that meetings cover general issues and not about individual members of staff or individual children. The Trust has set procedures in place for parents wishing to make complaints or raise concerns about individuals. It is crucial that such concerns are not raised in meetings.

It is important that every member has the opportunity to have their say, that everyone is listened to respectfully and that people are not interrupted.

All meetings should start and finish on time, keep to the agenda and aim to be constructive. Items that are not on the agenda, i.e., A.O.B., should be placed on the agenda for the following meeting.

Next review: March 2025

