

WILLIAMSTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

Authorisation

The policy was re - adopted at Williamstown Primary School Council meeting on 15.06.2004

Review date

This policy shall be reviewed in 2005 or updated before if required.

This policy covers any adult family member including parents, guardians and other carers (hereafter called Participants), who have a primary responsibility for a child or children at the school and wish to participate in children's education.

Rationale:

By working in partnership with families in education, Williamstown Primary School will enhance the education of students. Encouraging the participation of parents and families in all aspects of school life has positive educational outcomes for children. Families as helpers may contribute in many ways, both inside and outside the classroom. They add significantly to the human resource available to the school, and need to be encouraged, supported, recognised and managed effectively by the School community. All forms of participation should be considered valuable and meaningful. By working in partnership, teachers and parents can continue to enhance participation.

Aims:

- To ensure procedures and practices are in place to facilitate the participation of all families in a friendly, comfortable school environment
- To maximise the number and variety of families who contribute to the school
- To provide Participants with the necessary support and recognition they need
- To ensure parents who are not able to participate in school activities have access to parent education programs aimed at increasing awareness and a better understanding by parents of how children learn and enable them to contribute more effectively to their children's education
- To recognised the vital role parents play at home in their children's education
- To provide a review procedure to ensure that participation is encouraged and achieved
- To provide a procedure to address issues and concerns in relation to Parent Participation

Implementation:

Guidelines have been categorised under three major headings, recognising that Communication, Education and Involvement are all equally vital components of a successful Parent Participation Policy.

1. COMMUNICATION

- Parents will be regularly provided with Newsletters and notices that detail educational objectives, school issues and activities and focus attention on school accomplishments and needs.
- Family participation will be sought formally through the newsletter, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity.
- The school will always endeavour to make Participants feel welcome. The school will acknowledge the contribution of Participants informally and by way of formal "thank you" functions on an annual basis.
- Open lines of communication will be established to ensure all parties feel they are informed and have the right to raise concerns and issues, make suggestions, offer constructive criticism and provide positive feedback.
- The school will seek to provide a variety of opportunities for participation, particularly in the classroom and will make special effort to encourage participation of parents, grandparents and other guardians.
- Names and contact details of School Councillors and Parent Club Executive would be available to parents so they are aware of appropriate contact people and the official procedures for raising concerns or issues.

- The Parent Participation Interest Form will be distributed in the first month of the school year. The classroom teachers will collect the forms and with the help of Classroom Parent Representatives, co-ordinate parents participation in the classroom. Information gathered which is relevant to the larger school will then be fed back to the Principal, School Council or Parents club as appropriate.

2. EDUCATION

- Participants wishing to be involved in the classroom will be provided with support and appropriate training such as Classroom Helpers' course. Police checks and character references may be required.
- Special effort will be made to address barriers to participation in Parent Education Programs including the provision of childcare, out of hours opportunities etc.
- Where possible childcare will be provided to assist parents attending these sessions.

3. INVOLVEMENT

- Families are actively encouraged to participate in a variety of the school activities, both inside and outside the classroom
- Participants will not be required to carry out tasks with which they are uncomfortable
- In accordance with the School Visitors policy, all Participants will be required to register at the administration office daily and wear a visitors badge whilst in the school. Participants will be invited to use the staff room and facilities.
- Any adult involved in a school activity as a Participant especially in a class room is required to carry out tasks under direction of the teacher in a manner consistent with school policies and expectations, including punctuality, reliability and the maintenance of a professional, co-operative and confidential working environment.
- Teachers may use their discretion regarding the level of involvement that individual Participants may have and at what time would best suit their class and in which subject area.
- A school climate that encourages growth and change should be developed and maintained with parents regularly invited to join School Council, Parents Club and other working parties so they can confidently participate in decision making processes.
- Specific forms of family participation could include, for example, involvement in Parents Club, School Council, up keep of grounds and facilities, fundraising, class room helping, off campus experiences, and assisting with Special Programs.
- Participants undertaking school work on behalf of and with the approval of, the School Council or Principal and in accordance with school policies are indemnified as to their personal liability in similar terms to teachers.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school policy review cycle

The views, insights and perceptions of parents will be regularly sought via surveys, public meetings and will be acknowledged, analysed and acted upon when appropriate.

Formal parent participant and satisfaction monitoring and evaluation will be implemented through the Parent Opinion Survey and Parent Evaluation Proforma designated by DEET.