UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

RELEASING THE IMAGINATION: CELEBRATING THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

Contents

Welcome	3
Vision and Values	4
Curriculum	5
Leadership Team	6
How do I know how well my child is doing?	7
Communication	8
Drop-off and Collection	9
Raising Concerns	10
Safeguarding and Child Protection	11
Attendance	12
Parent Volunteering	13
Helping your child at home	14
Special Educational Needs	15
After School Clubs	16
Sports Clubs and Competitions	17
Pupil Premium	18
Green Shoots	19
Caring for our Team	20

Welcome

Welcome to our school. We hope you enjoy reading about our work.

This parent booklet intends to provide information as a strategy to communicate better with our parent/ carer community. We hope it is useful and gives you confidence that we are passionately committed to every child and to our school community.

There are three key features of our University Training School: the first is to be a **brilliant primary school**, inclusive, ambitious for all and innovative in practice. The second is to work with the Faculty of Education, and others, in **Initial Teacher Education**. We support new teachers into the profession through placements that we offer in our school. The third, is to be **research-informed and research-generating**. The school opened in September 2015 and is a three-forms of entry primary school educating over 650 children.

Educating children is a partnership between families and school educators (and others), working towards a common goal to release the enormous possibilities inherent in every child. How exciting to be on this journey with you!

Kind wishes,

Mr Glenn Young and the UCPS Team

Vision and Values

Our mission is aligned with the University's purpose:

The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

Our school is founded on three principles: inclusion, ambition and innovation. We believe in the power of collaboration, through strong relationships and clear communication. We believe in every child's capacity to learn. We believe that children are powerful and need a kind, caring approach within clear boundaries and high expectations. We challenge and support children in equal measure to be independent and confident learners. In our school we focus not only on the knowledge and skills for our children to achieve highly but also to develop in them the values of our school:

Empathy

Respect

Trust

Courage

Gratitude

We strive to be a brilliant primary school, drawing from both academic research and teachers' and learning coaches' wisdom. As the first school of its kind for primary education, we expand from the recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review (2010), to reach high standards within the school and to build networks of educational possibilities locally, Nationally and Internationally. In all we do, we are guided by Professor Maxine Greene's 'social imagination' to 'release the imagination and celebrate the art of the possible'.

Curriculum

Our school is committed to exemplary teaching and learning. It aims to be bold, free thinking and rigorous; underpinned by a commitment to the values of excellence, equity and learner empowerment. We aim to be:

• **Ambitious**: everyone is encouraged and enabled to achieve and attain highly

• **Innovative**: the learning community benefits from belonging to a research and teacher education community both within the school itself and as part of wider University and school partnerships

• **Inclusive**: everyone is welcome and everyone included

At the core of our curriculum design is our intention to develop compassionate citizens.

We define compassionate citizenship as:

people who have strong values, the knowledge, skills and propensity to think of others and act to improve the society in which they live (their local community) and to which they belong (the global community).

• We aim to develop a community of compassionate active globally minded people.

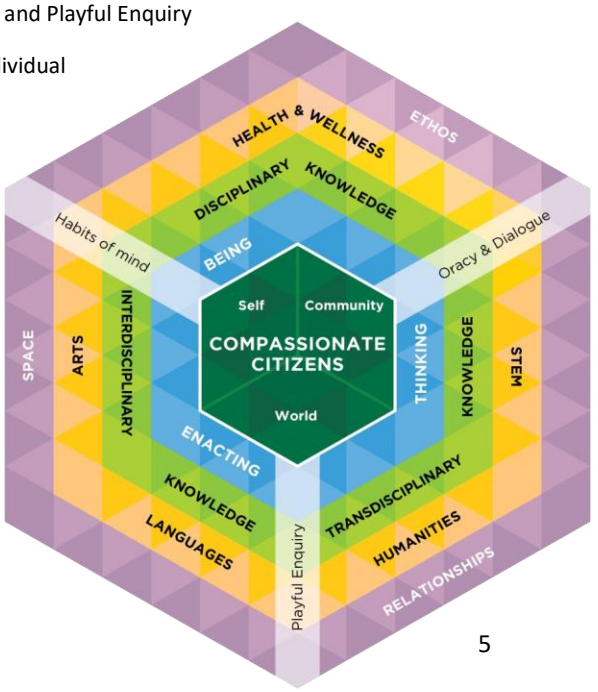
• The values of empathy, respect, trust, courage and gratitude are embedded through learning experiences with the purpose of explicitly and implicitly enacting these and giving them meaning

• Three pedagogical pillars guide our practice: Oracy and Dialogue, Habits of Mind and Playful Enquiry

• Both domain-specific knowledge and skills, and positive dispositions towards individual subject areas are fostered through coherently planned learning sequences

• Positive relationships are fostered through the engagement with our vision and values forming an enabling space through which teachers and learners can develop the knowledge, concepts and skills to be and grow to become compassionate and active global citizens

• Diversities are enabled and celebrated.



Leadership Team

Executive Leadership Team

Mr Glenn Young
Executive Headteacher | Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Catherine Badesha
Associate Headteacher | Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Aimee Durning MBE
Director of Inclusion | Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Amy White
Director of Business

Senior Leadership Team

Mr Robert Drane
Phase Leader for Upper Key Stage 2

Mrs Ellen Ridings
Phase Leader for Lower Key Stage 2

Ms Harriet Lang
Phase Leader for Key Stage 1

Ms Charlotte Bray
Phase Leader for Early Years

Ms Alison Machin
Behaviour and Pastoral Lead
Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Kat Bates
SENDCO
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Lucy Bullen-Smith
SENDCO

How do I know how well my child is doing?

We believe that learning happens best when there is an effective partnership between child, school and parents. We communicate with you to let you know how your child is doing in the following ways:

Learning Conversations

These are the term we use for Parents Evenings. These are held in Autumn 2 and Summer 1 and are online.

Reports

We go above and beyond reporting to you in comparison to the national expectation of one report a year. We write a report to you in Spring and Summer term. We report national assessment information in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 and the Year 1 Phonics and Year 4 Multiplication Check results to you in the Summer report.

Family Fridays

We have six Family Fridays a year. These are an opportunity to come into class, see your children's books and talk informally with the class teacher.

Phone calls

Class teachers call parents in the first part of the Autumn term to verbally report on how children have settled in school. Teachers will phone parents during the year should any particular issues come up that need a conversation. We will communicate with you if we have any worries, whether academic, social or emotional. No news is good news!

Communication

ParentMail

Parentmail is the online communication system that we use to communicate with you. Through signing up to Parent Mail, you will receive email notifications with:

- Bi-weekly emails to you on a Monday and a Friday
- Fortnightly newsletters
- Surveys

On the ParentMail Portal, you are also able to:

- Pay for lunches, trips and donations
- Complete online permission slips
- Access all previous school emails

Website

The Parent Information section of the school website also provides lots of useful information in for parents. The Learning section has within it a page for each year group with details about the curriculum and what children are currently learning, including:

- Year group weekly blogs
- Curriculum information
- School Events Calendar
- Parent Workshop Videos

Twitter / X

The school has a Twitter account that is used to celebrate school learning and special events. You can follow this account at twitter.com/UniCamPrimSch

Emails

The main email address for contacting the school is enquiries@universityprimaryschool.org.uk. All emails to teachers or senior leaders or the admin team must come via this address.

Drop-off and Collection

Morning

School starts at 8:30am. The school gates open at 8:25am and close at 8:35am. Any children who are late must be registered at the front office.

Afternoon

School finishes at 3:15pm. The school gates open at 3:10am and close at 3:25pm. We kindly ask that all families leave the school site promptly to allow wraparound care and clubs to operate safely.

Dogs

Please note that dogs are not permitted on the school site.

Cycles

There are parking spaces for bicycles across the school site. Please do not cycle on the school grounds because there are a lot of little people walking around.

Driving

There are no car parking spaces on the school site. Please park responsibly and safely.

Access to school buildings

For reasons of safeguarding, general access to the building for parents is restricted. Please only enter the school via the front entrance if you have an appointment or enquiry at the office.

Raising Concerns

We strive to be a place in which children can learn happily and enthusiastically and where educators and administrators are empowered to be the best they can be. Schools are highly complex organisations and do not function like businesses because they deal with diverse members, from the young 650 children to the 1300+ parents as well as the wider education community.

As with any human community, we will make mistakes. There will be times when you disagree with our approach. You will have your own opinions. However, we are a deeply reflective community and constantly review our work. This was acknowledged as a strength by Her Majesty's Inspector in our Ofsted.

We want to know if you have a concern and we try to resolve matters before they become an informal or formal complaint. It is in both our interests to resolve quickly because we will spend considerable time in investigating and responding to concerns and complaints. We ask therefore that you raise concerns responsibly and in a timely way. We have a number of policies to guide the process. See the school's Complaints Policy for further information.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding is of paramount importance at UCPS and underpins all that we do. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the wellbeing of others.

We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. All our staff are trained to identify and report any concerns they have to the designated safeguarding officers. This training is updated annually. Should you have any concerns about any child please contact a Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Mrs Catherine Badesha, Mrs Aimee Durning MBE, Ms Alison Machin

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Mrs Kat Bates, Mr Glenn Young

Safeguarding and PREVENT Link Governor

Dr Kirsty Allen (who can be contacted via the school office on 01223 792440)

Parents/carers should know that the law requires all school staff to pass on information which gives rise to a concern about a child's welfare, including risk from neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse. The school should make parents/carers aware that records of welfare concerns may be kept about their child. They should be informed that school staff will seek, in general, to discuss any concerns with them including referrals to other agencies. However, in situations where the child is suspected to be at risk of harm, the law says that schools may take advice from other agencies without informing parents/carers.
Please see our school website for more details about our approach to safeguarding as well as signposting for family support. http://universityprimaryschool.org.uk/about-our-school/safeguarding/

Attendance

It is a legal requirement that children of compulsory school age receive full time education. Regular and punctual school attendance is an essential foundation to achieving positive outcomes for children. Regular attendance is key to:

• Maximising educational opportunities: Government research indicates that children with the highest attainment at the end of KS2 and KS4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with lower attainment. Evidence suggests that seventeen (17) missed school days a year equates to one GCSE grade drop in attainment.

• Effective safeguarding: School attendance is a protective factor for children. Irregular or poor attendance may place children at risk of harm. An association has been established between absence and some forms of criminality.

We take the issue of attendance very seriously. We want every child in our school to fulfil their potential and thrive. Our community is aspirational: we are ambitious for all our children and give the same level of attention to attendance as to other matters concerning their wellbeing and achievement. This is a whole school-community endeavour.

At the University of Cambridge Primary School, we strive to secure 100% attendance and expect a minimum attendance of 96%. The vast majority of our children achieve this. We understand that absence is sometimes unavoidable, especially due to illness, which usually comes in a block of time over a continuous period. Children should not, however, have more than one or two broken weeks in an academic year. Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern and will be investigated.

The school can only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances and requests for term time leave must be made at least four weeks in advance, where practicable. Requests can be made via the following form: Application for Leave of Absence for a School Pupil in Term Time Each case will be considered on its individual merits. Government guidelines are clear that it is for the school to determine whether an absence is authorised or not and the duration of any such leave. Periods of unauthorised term time leave may be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice Fine or other legal enforcement measures.

Following guidance from the Department for Education, the school determines unauthorised absences as those where:

• No letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parents;
• The reason for the absence does not fall into one of the categories of authorised absence above;
• An application for term-time leave has not been made or is refused.

Parent Volunteering

Without your support in volunteering your time, many of the additional opportunities we have in our school would not be possible.

Our process is robust in order to follow safer recruitment guidelines. Any parent/carer who would like to volunteer their time must make a formal application with references to the Headteacher. On the application form you will be asked to indicate your skill set. We then review applications and see how your skills might be matched to the needs of the children in our school. We will then write to you to let you know if we need your volunteering support at this time.

After you have been formally invited to volunteer, you will need to complete:

- A successful DBS check
- Safeguarding Training
- An induction process

For school trips, it is not always necessary to complete this process if we need support on trips. However, if you are on our volunteer database because you have completed our process, you will be invited first to attend a trip. Please note that if you attend a trip, you will not be in the same group as your child.

Helping your child at home

There are several ways that we recommend parents to support their child to extend their learning at home:

Reading

Supporting children to develop the skill and will to read is one of the most important predictors of children's success in school and carries with it significant personal, social and emotional benefits to their development. See your child's year group page for further guidance in relation to your child's age and stage.

Weekly Blog

The weekly year group blog has a summary of what children have been learning in the week and has links to resources such as maths practice sheets. These can be used at home to help children consolidate their learning.

Online Resources

Children have logins to the maths fluency practice apps Numbots for Early Years and Key Stage 1, and Times Tables Rock Stars for children in Years 2-6. We recommend short but regular practice using these apps. Your child's year group page also has links to other online learning resources you may find useful.

Additional Support

Your child's class teacher may recommend for your child to engage in additional home learning, which may include using a specific textbook that they will either give to you or pass on the details of. Please support your child to complete any such home learning set.

Parent Workshops

Our team have recorded a variety of parent workshops on helping your child at home in subjects such as phonics, maths and reading. Please see the Helping Your Child at Home page in the Parent Information section of the website.

Special Educational Needs

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that class teachers are responsible for the progress and development of the all children in their class; this includes children who have a Personalised Independence Plan (PIP) or an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). The role of our Learning Coaches is to supplement the Class Teacher's work rather than replace them. The expectation is that first and foremost, all children will experience high quality classroom teaching.

Historically, children with special educational needs were allocated one to one Teaching Assistants. This research informed approach may have a negative impact on the child's attainment and more importantly, can create a barrier between the class teacher, curriculum and most importantly their peers. At UCPS, there is a culture of shared responsibility. Children will work with several adults. This avoids the child becoming dependent on one adult.

If you would like to discuss any concerns in relation to your child's progress and attainment, we ask that you contact their class teacher as a first point of call. Mrs Bullen-Smith (Yrs 2-6) and Mrs Bates (EYFS & Y1) are our **S**pecial **E**ducational **N**eeds and **D**isability **C**oordinator (SENDCO), along with the class teacher has oversight of the school's Special Educational Needs provision and will liaise with parents/carers regarding statutory meetings and to keep in touch.

After School Clubs

We run a number of clubs across the year. In the past these have included:

- Chinese Mandarin
- Spanish
- French
- Hockey
- Maths
- Science
- Netball
- Football
- Rounders
- Rugby
- Running
- Drama
- Table tennis
- Cricket
- Board Games

Teachers and Learning Coaches volunteer to do these after school. All clubs will cost £5 a session unless there is a specific reason for a change in the price (e.g. involving a trip). Clubs are released on ParentMail and are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Please note that children will be dismissed from the world map main gates. We ask that parents do not enter the dining room so that we can ensure the school site safe at all times of the day.

Sports Clubs and Competitions

There are a variety of opportunities for children to compete in sporting competitions throughout the year.

Children that are selected to take part in these events are done so on the basis of having attended an after-school club that has prepared them for competitive events. Regular club attendance ensures that children have the opportunity to practise the skills required when competing against other schools. Secondly, children who demonstrate the essential levels of sportsmanship needed in order to represent the school will be selected. Finally, adults will make a professional decision regarding whether competition will be beneficial for the child involved. Equality of provision does not mean that all children will have exactly the same chances; some children need additional opportunities—our approach is about being equitable.

The type of competition will also play a part in this – sometimes there are certain requirements with regards to inclusion. For example, children with SEND may only be allowed to participate, or we may require a certain number of boys or girls for a particular competition. The details of our main competitions – and their requirements - can be found on the South Cambs Sports Partnership website: http://www.scssp.co.uk.

Pupil Premium

We are ambitious for all children and strive to provide an inclusive and innovative education for everyone. Children who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant can expect the following:

- Academic Intervention support
- First choice of extra-curricular Clubs (No Fee)
- Support with residential trips

The school has a research informed Pupil Premium Strategy that can ensures all children in our school
are supported to achieve highly despite their starting points or backgrounds. This strategy builds on our
Teaching and Learning Policy which documents in detail robust and whole-school research informed curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

The foundation of our approach is high quality first teaching as an entitlement for all children, which has the greatest impact on closing the attainment gap. Alongside this, we use carefully designed interventions and targeted support to help children who need further additional support to achieve to their fullest potential. Our intention for all children, non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged, is that their attainment will be sustained and improved during their time with us. We recognise that on average, children
from low economic circumstances or without resources do less well than their peers.

Special consideration is made also for those vulnerable children who find themselves with a social worker and/or as a young carer. For this reason, children entitled to Pupil Premium will always be at the forefront and a key focus of our work.

The Pupil Premium Grant is not a personal budget for individual pupils, and schools are not required to spend all of their allocated grant on eligible pupils. (See:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ pupil-premium/pupil-premium)

Green Shoots

We are very grateful for all donations to our school enrichment fund called Green Shoots, which help us to realise the exciting ambitions that we have for our children's education. Previous donations have helped us to develop our playground and Forest School, equip the music programme, fill our library and add to our learning resources. Future projects include the ongoing development of our forest school and the arts and drama programmes.

The Green Shoots Fund is a steady, reliable source of financial support made possible by regular, automatic monthly donations from parents, carers and friends of UCPS. It has been created in response to the many parents who have approached FOCUS and asked how to support the school on a more consistent basis.

The Green Shoots Fund is organised by FOCUS, although donations to the Fund go directly to UCPS to benefit our teachers and children. All questions about the initiative should be directed to FOCUS at focusucps@gmail.com. Please see the Green Shoots page on the Parent section of the website for more information.

Caring for our Team

It is increasingly difficult to attract educators and there is a national shortage of teachers. We are committed to providing an enriching, engaging and supportive working environment for teachers, learning coaches and administrators.

We need your support to make our school a positive place to work. You can help in a number of ways.

• Trust that we care deeply about your children and do whatever we can to find ways through for them

• Trust that if there is a concern about progress based on our professional judgements, we will contact you

• Trust that when mistakes are made, we will reflect, adjust and work hard to improve: for us this is the sign of an outstanding school

• Be mindful that teachers work does not finish at 3:15pm and often have meetings, so we ask that pre-arranged parent meetings are timely and efficient.

• The leadership team are required to manage the team's workload and demands on their limited time

• When something is going well, please let the team know

Our values are important to us and we try to model to our community the importance of being kind, respectful and showing gratitude. As part of our valued community, the way you engage with us significantly impacts on our well-being.

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