

Partnership with Parents

Penwortham Primary School

Penwortham is the second biggest school in the London Borough of Wandsworth. There are over 650 pupils on roll; 26 pupils with EHCPs, 83 children on the SEND register and 180 EAL pupils. Penwortham operates over 3 sites – all are easily accessible for children with disabilities (e.g. Ramps, lift). Each floor has an accessible toilet. One classroom is fitted with a professional soundfield system that is beneficial for children with hearing impairment. The learning environment is highly inclusive, the children are provided with a large range of resources such as: visuals, sensory aids, SEND and EAL materials, IT technology etc.

We are very proud winners of the 2020 SEND awards in two categories: Most inclusive practice across the school and Partnership with parents.

Penwortham's efforts to be an Inclusive School have been recognised widely and the school has been awarded with the following marks:

- Maintained IQM Centre of Excellence – status extended for 2022/2023
- Right Respecting School – Gold Award
- The National Quality Mark for Coaching in Education – Silver
- Nurture School Mark
- Coaching School Mark

Evidence of going above and beyond

All staff at Penwortham Primary School continuously strive to provide the best education, support and care for all pupils and their families.

Penwortham Primary School offers many opportunities to involve parents in every aspect of the school life. We understand and appreciate that parents, at times, can struggle and therefore we provide a large range of tools to swiftly and effectively support them. The support includes:

- Regular themed coffee mornings (SEND and EAL)
- Range of targeted workshops for parents of children with SEND
- Range of WE ARE curriculum family workshops.
- Community workshops.

- SEND Newsletter and the Globe.
- “Open door” policy.
- Counselling for parents through Place2Be charity.
- Prompt referrals and access to professionals such as: speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, education psychologist, CAMHS specialists, paediatrician, ASD and ADHD specialists.
- Welfare and mental support during pandemic and lockdown.
- Targeted home visit from the SENCo and the behaviour mentor.
- Packs for parents with resources such as: visual timetable, now and next boards, behaviour cards, zones of regulations.
- Signposting parents to appropriate services and professionals.

Innovation

We are extremely proud that we have established a mutually supportive and respectful relationship with all our parents where trust and respect is at the heart of all we do. We aim to keep parents informed and involved in a positive way, through working in partnership together in order to help every pupil achieve their full potential socially, emotionally and academically.

Child focused and parent friendly environment

We are a welcoming and friendly school for parents/carers and visitors. Our office staff aim to respond swiftly and efficiently to the needs of all callers and visitors. We make the school a safe and vibrant environment. Notice boards in the school reception and notice boards in the playgrounds provide relevant information for parents and the community.

Communication with Parents – SEND Newsletter and the Globe

Penwortham recognises that effective communication with parents builds understanding and trust. Communication with parents is an important component of children’s learning experience. In order to keep the communication fluid we have “an open door policy” and staff are very easily accessible for parents through: face to face appointments, telephone calls and emails. We publish SEND newsletters and the Globe magazine. Both give information of dates, events, what is happening or

going to happen in school, celebration of achievements and general information. The regularly updated website communicates the key information about school life.

Email distribution of letters and newsletters provides prompt information for our parents. Each morning, SLT members of staff are available on the school gates to meet and greet the children and provide parents the opportunity to informally share any information.

In the remarkably challenging year of 2020 caused by the pandemic, Penwortham Primary School was recognised as an inclusive school and won the SEND Awards in two categories one of them being most inclusive practice across the school and partnership with parents “The judges were impressed with the school’s commitment to working in partnership with parents. There were clear signs that they are thinking about co-production with parents, as opposed to broadcasting to parents’ ‘ SEND Awards 2020. We continuously improve our practice and expand our offer in order to provide parents with the best support possible.

In February 2020 following a very thorough assessment, Penwortham was awarded the IQM centre of excellence. The reviewed report of 2020/21 highlighted that we: “continued working effectively with parents/carers to support pupils’ learning and personal development needs. A strength of the school, the school held virtual coffee mornings to ensure the relationship with families was ongoing during the closures and restrictions. In addition to ensuring the families had a network of support they also organised training opportunities for parents and staff, including ELKAN qualifications. Working with families within the community is an area of strength for the school. I met with a range of parents including those who were new to their SEN Journey. All parents spoke highly of the school and the Inclusion Team, especially the support and communication from the Inclusion Team.

The parents felt they were supported in all areas of their child’s needs including referrals and meeting professionals. The parents were confident in the advice they have been given around their child’s needs and praised the SENCO, for her attention to detail and personalised support for the families and children. Her open-door approach ensures that parents get support when they need it”. In the latest 2021/22 IQM review assessment the assessor commented that “Despite the pandemic, it was important for the school to continue to offer parents coffee mornings albeit virtually, to maintain the strong relationship with the families and continue to empower their parent community.

Themed coffee mornings

Our termly SEND and EAL coffee mornings are a wonderful opportunity for parents to get together, learn, share ideas and challenges over a cup of tea or coffee. These are organised once a term and they focus on a specific area. During the pandemic we offered parents as much support around well-being and resilience as possible. In the Autumn term we invited our Education Psychologist to talk about resilience and in the Spring term we focused on the importance of wellbeing.

In the recent IQM CoE review assessment the assessor highlighted that: “Coffee mornings are continuing for targeted vulnerable groups (EAL, SEN PP) and the parents are encouraged to lead on one to share experiences and resources. The SENCO provides exceptional support for parents through prompt referrals to external professionals when needed, Early Help, Place for Parents counselling and home visits for the most vulnerable families. Good communication is ensured, and parents and families are encouraged to be involved in developing school policies and this is a priority on the school’s strategic plan.

Parents told me that they felt extremely supported by the school and felt that staff members went over and above to make sure the whole family were getting the right support in the areas they needed, be that housing or accessing organisations. One parent told me that when they were researching schools for their sons the word “care” came up time and time again when others were discussing Penwortham. “I can’t think of anything else the school could do to support us, they do it all.” The school wants to build on this to truly empower the parent community.”

Neurodiverse and WE ARE (Wellbeing Equality Aspiration Relevance Environment) family curriculum Workshops

We believe that it is crucial to provide parents with as much targeted support as possible in order to help them to understand their children’s needs better and be fully informed about all formal processes. This year we organised the following workshops: Secondary transfer, Speech and language development and in the summer term we plan to deliver a session about ADHD. We are running a series of workshops which will focus on a variety of SEN conditions/diagnoses from A-Z. The aim of these sessions is to help parents and carers to better understand a specific SEN condition; unpick the terminology; discuss the identification and referral processes and to share best practice, useful strategies and resources. Our family workshops are an opportunity to share our WE ARE curriculum with parents and to give them first hand experience of the knowledge, skills and activities their child/ren will experience as they move through the school during their learning journey. The relationship between school and parents is key in ensuring that children reach their full potential and we hope that by inviting parents and carers into school to share

thrice child's learning journey they'll be better informed to guide and support their children as they learn.

Support for EAL families

Penwortham respond to world crisis situations: Pandemic and War in Ukraine Support during pandemic

During this incredibly challenging time we have managed to support the children and their families by: arranging transport, food drops, food banks and food vouchers for the most vulnerable families; twice weekly SENCo/staff check ins and resource sharing- social stories for most anxious and vulnerable families; Signposting families to external services including: Autism Advisory Service, EPs and SALT.

We continued with Coffee mornings for parents. We also supported many families with accessing additional benefits they are entitled to for example Disability Living Allowance. Every EHCP child was provided with additional resources such as: visuals, sand timers, and a personalised time table. "Also, just to say the countdown sheets you gave us were SO helpful so thank you. My daughter had a great morning today (I know it's only the first day back but it was a really great start to the week)." Y4 parent.

"Thank you so much for the pack. We have been using it at home. It's brilliant! Yesterday my son realised that if you add 2 odd numbers you get an even number. Thanks to the hands-on maths resources you sent." Y2 parent

We made sure that our EHCP provision has been delivered and our most vulnerable children have access to all additional interventions they needed and deserved. Our IQM assessor commented "An area that Penwortham has to be recognised for this year, is the seamless transition to online support during the first and second closures. All targets from the action plan were met successfully which is a credit to the school and inclusion team to ensure the children's needs. The support and interventions that have been planned and sent home have ensured that all children, who were unable to get into school, were provided with resources including sensory items and technology ensured no child has been left behind during the pandemic". Parents of SEN children sent us some encouraging messages:

"I would like to commend yourself for the support, the Teachers/TA's especially Yr 2 teachers who have done an amazing job on home learning from Jan and back office for the clear, thorough communication that has been consistent throughout this pandemic. You have all done such a marvellous job which helps minimise the worry for a parent such as myself. Please pass on my well wishes and look after yourselves." Year 2 parent.

Support for families fleeing from war in Ukraine

The conflict and ongoing violence in Ukraine has caused many families to leave their homes in search of shelter and safety. Penwortham Primary school is ready to welcome refugee families. We have prepared welcome packs for parents and children. Our multilingual staff is ready to step in and help with interpretation/translation. The EAL Lead will be organising coffee mornings for those families.

Parental Feedback

We welcome comments and feedback from parents, carers or visitors about any aspect of the work we do at school. Equally we welcome any suggestions that will help us to further develop our partnership with parents.

The school will regularly seek parental views on a range of topics affecting pupils' education through surveys and verbal discussion. Feedback is valued, and responses are seriously considered and actioned where appropriate and in pupils' best interests.

Evidence of Sustainment over two years

We are very proud that our families feel valued and supported in our school, especially during this extremely difficult time. Despite all challenges we have managed to sustain outstanding communication with parents and offer them top quality support.

Our continued efforts to provide the best possible support for our parents were AGAIN recognised in the final review IQM report.

Partnership with parents – our impact in figures:

- 100% of the parents who attended our WE ARE Curriculum family workshops said they were now more likely to take part in or instigate activities with their children that are specific to the curriculum areas they attended a workshop for.
- 90% of parents think that SEN support plans work well.
- 66,7% of parents are extremely happy and 33,3% are happy with the provision for their children ,
- 100% parents of SEN children are happy with communication with the SENCo
- 95 % of EHCP outcomes have been met or partly met.

