Educate U

Open Door Policy

Approved by: Susan Evans Director of Education	**Date:** 01/04/21
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Next review date: 14/03/27	

Open Door Policy

Purpose

The purpose of our Open-Door Policy is to encourage open communication, feedback, and discussion. We highly value the input that parents and carers make to the school, recognising that collaboration between home and school is in the best interests of our children.

If parents or carers have any worries or concerns about their child's education, it is far better that they come into school and discuss them promptly – in the first instance with the class teacher or Parent Connection Lead, then with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and finally with the Headteacher if needed. Following this staged approach allows issues to be resolved quickly, with clarity and understanding for all involved.

Staff will listen to concerns and work with parents to find solutions. All parties are expected to act reasonably and fairly, keeping the wellbeing of the children central to every discussion.

General Rules for Maintaining the Open-Door Policy

To ensure safety and fairness for everyone, we ask parents and visitors to co-operate with the following:

- All visitors must report to the school office upon arrival.
- Parents and carers visiting outside of normal drop-off and pick-up times must sign in at the main office, wear a red visitor badge, and state the purpose of their visit. They will either be escorted to their point of contact or their contact will come to reception to meet them. Visitors must not move around the site unaccompanied.
- On leaving, visitors should sign out and return their badge at reception.
- Class teachers are usually available for brief discussions at the end of the school day during handover. If a teacher is unavailable, an alternative time will be arranged.

- Matters requiring longer discussion than 10 minutes should be scheduled via the school office at a mutually convenient time, with the purpose of the meeting clearly stated.
- Staff may take phone calls when available. If unavailable, parents should leave a contact number for a call back.
- The school site is secured during the school day, with controlled access to protect pupils.
- Parents should never raise their voices at staff, particularly in front of children. Aggressive or threatening behaviour is unacceptable.
- Anyone violating the Open-Door Policy may be asked to leave and future meetings will require a prior appointment.

Planned Visitors Other Than Parents and Carers

- Any visitor must be approved by the Headteacher or SLT before attending, with a clear explanation of the purpose, relevance, and timing of their visit.
- Visitors must bring formal identification (including photo ID) and DBS details if applicable.
- Staff hosting visitors must inform the office in advance so that details can be logged in the school diary.
- Visitors are given a safeguarding leaflet and must sign in, wear a red lanyard, and be accompanied unless all relevant safeguarding checks (DBS or employer verification) are complete.

Unknown or Uninvited Visitors

- Any visitor not wearing a red badge will be politely challenged, asked for identification, and escorted to reception if appropriate.
- If the visitor refuses to comply, they will be asked to leave immediately, and a member of the SLT will be informed.
- If the visitor becomes aggressive or threatening, the SLT will escalate the matter and contact the police if necessary.
- All incidents involving unauthorised or aggressive visitors are logged and reviewed for safeguarding purposes.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the Open-Door Policy, ensuring compliance and approving all planned visits.
- The SLT monitor visitor access, handle escalations, and ensure safeguarding procedures are followed.
- Class teachers and Parent Connection Leads support parents in the first instance, managing day-to-day communication in a reasonable, professional manner.
- All staff are responsible for challenging unknown visitors politely, reporting concerns, and following safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding Integration

Educate U's Open-Door Policy is fully integrated with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies. All visitors are treated in line with safeguarding expectations:

- Visitors are supervised at all times unless full checks are complete.
- Pupils are never left unsupervised with visitors.
- Any safeguarding concerns identified during visits are reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Procedures cover emergency situations, including lockdowns or threats from uninvited individuals.

Data Protection and Record-Keeping

- Visitor information, DBS checks, and sign-in/out logs are securely stored and retained in line with GDPR regulations.
- Records of incidents involving visitors are maintained confidentially and reviewed by the Headteacher and SLT as required.

Policy Communication

- The Open-Door Policy is shared with all parents, carers, staff, and visitors, including in induction packs, staff training, and on the school website.
- Updates are communicated promptly to all stakeholders.

Review

- This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Proprietors, or sooner if required by changes in safeguarding legislation, school procedures, or emerging risks.