



## PALS (Parents As Links to Schol)

### Intent

Long Lane is a warm and friendly school that prides itself on open communication, input from stakeholders and strives to join our community as equal partners in the learning journey for our pupils. It is important to us that parents are fully informed of the choices the school make about their child's learning and the reasons for decisions made, keeping children at the heart of everything we do.

We strive to find the best ways in which to communicate with parents and carers and to share as much information with stakeholders as possible in order that they can understand better how their child learns and how they are taught and looked after in school.

We endeavor to seek views from pupils, parents and staff in order to provide the best experiences for children, whilst also understanding family dynamics and pressures of parent and staff workload.

### Implementation

We ensure that we are able to carry out the above intent by enabling the following;

- Regular questionnaires and views sought from pupils, parents and staff related to decisions made about the school at an operational level
- School Council and pupil voice
- Communication about the learning happening in school and celebrations of events in Newsletters and on the school website
- Clear rules and guidelines with adaptations to ensure inclusion for all (Equity v Equality)
- Learning Ambassadors (any children) have regular opportunities to speak with leaders and staff within the school about their learning
- Leadership roles – This allows children to show initiative and learn valuable leadership skills in seeing through projects
- PALS – Liaison for parent representatives to meet with leaders to support two-way communication with parents
- Parent Learning Tours – supporting parents to see learning in action
- Parent Learning workshops and events – this is broken down into showcase, collaboration and CPD (learning in action)
- PALS meetings will happen once per short term – both parties will bring questions and items to the agenda, the core team will decide how information is delivered to stakeholders

### Impact

At Long Lane we always make sure that children are at the heart of every decision we make. We will endeavor to gather information from all stakeholders to ensure that this strategy is working.

### How will we structure PALS?

- Meetings will be half termly (or more often if issues are raised)
- An agenda will be circulated prior to the meeting for all parties to add to
- Minutes will be circulated after the meeting (these will be confidential)
- PALS representatives will gather voice from parents to bring to the meeting – issues to be discussed



**Confidentiality** – All discussions will remain confidential in PALS meetings and conversations. The school leaders will decide (with input from PALS representatives) how best to deliver communication to parents and other stakeholders. Conversations and discussions will remain about general school operational issues and not about any individuals or groups of children or families.

**The right message, at the right time, in the right way** – The group will reflect on how messages and communications are given to all stakeholders and care will be taken to ensure messages are clear, relevant and sensitive to those receiving them. How will we gather views respectfully?

**How will we communicate decisions made whilst still maintaining confidentiality?** - The school will deliver any messages or communication arising and appropriate from PALS meetings. This information will be confidential and must not be shared outside the formal communication channels operated by the school unless directed to do so as a shared understanding.

**How can parents feel confident in this role and support each other?** - All meetings will operate with an understanding of respect for differences of opinion and respect of the diverse nature of stakeholders. The school holds the bigger picture for this and will act accordingly. Parents are welcome to raise issues through the agenda and through email or to class reps and reps will communicate these via the agenda to be discussed. Members of PALS can ask school staff or leaders for support in delivering messages or communication if asked to.

**What is likely to come up?** - any issues arising operational aspects of the school day, communications or surrounding areas of the school. We will listen and discuss all appropriate issues; school leaders will be open to change where appropriate. Leaders of the school will reserve the right to make final decisions with PALS and parent/child voice considered and will give reasons for final decisions or changes.

- Parking and issues around maintenance or health and safety
- Planning of events
- Communication to parents (newsletters, comms, website)
- Clubs or extra-curricular events
- Homework
- Sports

**Reasonable timeframes for answers and actions** – PALS and stakeholders can expect reasonable time frames for decisions and outcomes as part of these meetings. Some actions will be taken on by different members of the group. Depending on the level of planning and change the timeframes will be different, but these will be discussed in meetings. It is important that PALS and other stakeholders understand that, in order to get decisions right, ensure they land sensitively and with reasonable time to make effective change, there may be a need to delay. Explanations for this will be given.

**Respectful challenge** – Where the school plan to listen and discuss most issues raised at PALS meetings, it is likely that there are some decisions or changes that won't suit all parties or stakeholders. The school pledges that all decisions will be made without discrimination or judgement and with equity for all at the heart. Leaders will always explain reasons for decisions and expect challenge to be respectful and beneficial for all stakeholders.

Please remember that, as a school, we have responsibility for all the children, families and staff in our care and with this in mind, need to make decisions that are best for all stakeholders (with children at the heart of this). Decisions will also have a focus on staff workload and well being.

**Operational Change** – In this group, we will discuss and input into change at an operational level. This means issues that arise within the operating of the school on a day-to-day basis. Any strategic decisions remain the responsibility of the governors and headteacher and will not be discussed as part of this group. There will be confidential information that SLT will not be able to share with parents.

***We hope you are happy to join our team of positive and solution focused stakeholders in this journey to support our children in the best way we can.***