PARENTS & SCHOOLS – A PARTNERSHIP

SCHOOL YEAR 2019-2020
INTRODUCTION

Every child in Sigtuna Municipality should enjoy going to school and have the opportunity to develop to the full according to their circumstances and abilities. Both local schools and parents/guardians are responsible for creating an environment that supports students’ development and learning. While at school, your child will gain knowledge, learn how to solve problems and handle conflicts and develop their abilities and cooperation skills. Children need the willing help and support of adults to be able to do this successfully.

Sigtuna Municipality’s schools want to build a trusting, cooperative relationship with each child’s parent(s)/guardian(s) in which we see one another as partners working to promote a child’s best interests. For this partnership to succeed, both the school and parents/guardians need to clearly understand their responsibilities as well as the methods and nature of their cooperation from the beginning. We have published this document to help achieve this goal. The document applies at all schools within Sigtuna Municipality. In it, we clearly explain what parents/guardians and schools can expect and require of one another.

Goals for the partnership between parents & schools

- Both parents/guardians and schools should give students the best possible support in their learning and development.
- Parents/guardians and schools should have the same view of the school’s goals and aim.

Everybody connected with a school should feel secure and at home during the school day, including staff. By clearly telling school staff what we expect of them, we help them focus on their task, organise and plan for increased learning and do the very best they can for your child.
Sweden’s Education Act and national curricula (education plans) clearly explain a school’s responsibilities. Principals must supervise and organise the work done at schools. They are also responsible for making decisions about how a school is organised, how its resources are used and how it will achieve its goals. School teachers are responsible for the students’ education. School teachers plan lessons, teach and follow up on the children’s education as well as set grades and give evaluations. All students in Sweden must attend the first ten years of school. The local municipal government, education provider and parents/guardians are responsible for making sure that children receive this compulsory education education.

COOPERATION BETWEEN PARENTS & SCHOOLS

What you can expect from your child’s school & leisure-time centre

• We will treat everybody connected with the school with consideration, kindness and respect, both within and outside of the school and on social media.
• We will plan the education we provide based on the school’s policy documents and our teachers’ recommendations.
• We will work together with you, our students’ families/guardians, to promote their best interests.
• We will work to create both a safe, and pleasant environment for your child. We will try to prevent and deal with suspected offensive treatment and discrimination. We will also help our students to handle conflicts and other problems.
• We will help our students take responsibility for and influence their own learning based on their level of maturity.
• We will evaluate and develop our school and education on an on-going basis for the good of our students and of the school.
• If we are concerned that your child will not achieve their learning goals, as their parent/guardian, we will inform you of this and of the help the school plans to give them.
• We will update the school’s rules each year and will give students the chance to help make these rules. We will work actively to make sure that these rules are followed by everyone at the school.
• If we suspect that a student is being abused, we must file a report with Sigtuna Municipality’s Social Services Department.
• We will keep you up to date with what is happening at your child’s school through the school’s communications channels. Also, naturally, if something happens that affects your child individually, as their parent/guardian, we will contact you.
• We will listen to your views and feedback on the way your child’s school is run via dialogue, forums and the annual parent/guardian survey.

What we expect of you as a parent

• You will treat everybody connected with the school with consideration, kindness and respect, both within and outside the school and on social media.
• You will respect and support the school’s aim, rules and regulations and values and will cooperate with the school to promote the students’ best interests.
• By having a positive attitude towards school and education in general, you will show them that school is important.
• You will make sure to read the information we provide about the learning goals your child should reach and will support them in taking personal responsibility for their schoolwork. You will also read the other information from the school and will do your best to come to parent-school meetings.
• Your child’s school is a workplace for both its students and staff. For this reason, please respect both staff working hours and students’ learning time.
• You must follow the school’s rules and also encourage others to follow them, as will students and the school’s staff.
• You will help your child to come to school 1) on time and with the right equipment for the school day, 2) dressed in clothes that suit the weather and 3) prepared for learning by being well-rested and having eaten breakfast.
• If your child is sick, you must tell the school in the morning that they will stay home that day. Keep your child at home until they are healthy again.
• If your child needs to be away from school other than during school holidays, you must fill out an application form and have it approved by the school before they can take time off.
• You should contact the school if you have any questions about your child or the school’s activities. As far as possible, you should join in evaluating the school’s activities, e.g. by answering the annual survey.
PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION & COOPERATION

Our cooperation with school children’s parents/guardians includes providing information and holding discussions using different communications channels. These channels help schools and parents/guardians to cooperate in promoting students’ best interests.

Principal’s newsletter
Your school principal will send out information to all parents/guardians each month. This will keep you up to date with news, school events and the yearly schedule and provide you with information about any changes.

Weekly information
As parents/guardians, your child’s school will send you information each week. Please take the time to read this information. It will tell you what your child will be doing this week at school. It will also include information about important dates, for example.

Skolportalen
You can access information about an individual student’s absence, schedule and progress at school via Skolportalen.

Tempus
From the autumn of 2019, the parents/guardians of children who go to leisure-time centres will be able to enter their child’s attendance times in our new app, Tempus. You can also enter this information online. Tempus gives parents/guardians easy access to information about times when their child’s leisure-time centre will be closed, for example.

School forum
Every school must have a forum where staff can consult with students’ parents/guardians. This forum must include parents/guardians, teachers and school administrators. The school forum will meet at least once a term to discuss operational and organisational matters, the school’s systematic quality-assurance work and its efforts to promote equal treatment. The forum is meant to give the school the opportunity to hear parents’/guardians’ opinions before making decisions, for example. The forum does not make any decisions itself, however. Also, it is not meant as a place for discussing specific matters related to staff, classes, or students. The school is responsible for preparing agendas for these meetings and for taking notes.

Parent-school information meetings
Schools will invite parents/guardians to come to information meetings twice a year. These meetings may be held together with school exhibitions or other parent/guardian gatherings, or separately.

Parent-teacher meetings regarding child development
As their parents/guardians, your child’s school will invite you to a parent-teacher meeting regarding your child’s development once per term. The teacher will talk to you about your child’s learning and development and which learning goals they are trying to achieve. You will also discuss the different ways that parents/guardians and the school can support students in achieving these goals.

Special meetings about your child
If there is anything that you or your child’s teachers wish to discuss more deeply, you can arrange
a special meeting. Special meetings and other forms of contact must take place during the staff’s normal working hours.

Visiting your child’s school

Visits by parents/guardians to their child’s school are generally positive experiences for everyone involved. We therefore welcome parents/guardians to come and experience a day in the life of our school students. Please make sure to check with your child’s class teacher that it is okay to visit well in advance. That way, you can find a suitable day when there are no tests or other assessments planned. It will also give the teacher time to prepare sensitive students for a visit by a stranger. The teacher also needs to be able to tell the school principal about your visit in advance, since the school must know who is in the building. There may be students or staff at your child’s school who have protected identities. For their safety, as an adult visiting the school, it is important that you respect the school’s responsibility to keep their identities secret and do not film or photograph students or staff.

Contact via telephone

If you would like to speak to a member of the school’s staff via phone, please send them an e-mail about this. They will then call you when they have the opportunity. Contact via phone must take place during the staff’s working hours.

Concerns & feedback

As a parent/guardian, if you have any questions or are concerned about your child’s situation at school, you should first contact their class teacher/mentor, since they know your child best. If your questions are about a particular school subject, you can contact your child’s teacher in that subject directly. If you are still concerned even after speaking to the staff, please contact the school principal. If you still have concerns after speaking to the principal, or if you are not satisfied with the way the matter has been handled, you can contact your local Child & Youth Services office (Barn- och Ungdomsförvaltning) via Sigtuna Municipality’s website. Follow the link to Synpunkt Sigtuna.

As a parent/guardian, you can also contact Sigtuna Municipality’s Child and School Student Representative (Barn- och Elevombudsman (BEO)). The BEO handles issues concerning special support, offensive treatment, school environments where students feel insecure/unsafe, and equal treatment. The BEO’s work is always based on children’s and students’ rights and is strongly focused on protecting their interests. As a parent/guardian, if you are not satisfied with the communication between you and your child’s school, the BEO can help make sure that everyone’s voice is heard. You can also contact the BEO anonymously with questions about offensive treatment and discrimination at preschools and schools.

Feedback & response times

You can expect to receive a reply to any e-mail you send to a teacher or school principal within three business days, unless the person whom you contacted is sick or away from work. If you would like to contact the staff at Sigtuna Municipality’s Child & Youth Services office (Barn- och Ungdomsförvaltning), use the Synpunkt Sigtuna function on the Municipality’s website. You will receive a reply within five business days.
SCHOOL RULES

Both the students and all members of a school's staff must work together to create a good work environment. Sweden's Education Act says that students and staff must also come to an agreement as to what rules will apply at their school. If everyone is to follow these rules, it is important that all those involved with the school, both students and adults, know about them and the consequences should they break them.

Each school has its own set of school rules. The school's students, staff and parents/guardians update these rules when the school's action plan against discrimination and offensive treatment is updated each year. As a parent/guardian, you will be asked to read through your school's rules together with your child at the beginning of each school term and to agree to follow them. The idea is that this will give you an opportunity to discuss the school's rules with your child. Your signature shows that you agree to follow these rules.

Discipline in schools
A school's principal and staff must promote a secure school environment that helps students learn. They may take action against any student who disturbs others. The principal or teachers may take immediate, temporary action to keep the school environment secure and peaceful, or to deal with a student’s bad behaviour. The disciplinary measures mentioned in Sweden's Education Act are:
- confiscating objects,
- removing a student from the learning environment,
- detention,
- moving a student to another group or area within the school,
- and short-term suspension.

Each school has a document explaining how it deals with people who break the school's rules.

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING A SECURE ENVIRONMENT THAT HELPS STUDENTS LEARN

Sigtuna Municipality’s guidelines apply at all local schools and are more important than any school rules. Ordinary Swedish laws also apply at schools. Schools may need to file a police report if someone connected with the school breaks a law.

Discrimination & offensive treatment
School staff will act to deal with any discrimination or offensive treatment in schools. Each case will be followed up on and handled.

Computers/Tablets
We have a set of standard computer rules that our students agree to follow when they receive a computer/iPad from their school.

Absence from school without permission
If your child is away from school without permission, as their parent/guardian, we will tell you about it via text message that same day.

Ban on drugs
Drugs are banned at our schools. This includes all kinds of tobacco, alcohol and narcotics as well as medicines not prescribed by a doctor. As their parent/guardian, the school will contact you if it is suspected or confirmed that your child has been in contact with any kind of drug. Each case will be followed up on and handled.
Disturbing objects
By law, school staff have the right to take away from students any objects that disturb learning or that are dangerous. Dangerous objects will be given to the police. Objects that are not dangerous will be given back to the student at the end of the school day.

Damage to school property
Damage to school property may be reported to the police. As a parent/guardian, you should know that a school can ask a student to pay for any property they damage. If a student breaks something or takes something from another student, it is the student who caused the damage who must pay for it.

No visits without permission
No one may enter a school during school hours or when the leisure-time centre is open without permission. If we see a person on the school’s property who has no good reason for being there, we will tell them to leave.

QUALITY REVIEWS

Sigtuna Municipality’s schools all follow the same systematic quality-assurance procedure. All our schools continuously evaluate and develop their work according to the same process. We check that our schools are secure environments that help students learn and that students feel good there in the following ways:

Surveys
Each school year we use two surveys to assess how secure our school environments are and how well they support our students’ learning. These are:

- **A secure environment that promotes learning & well-being in schools**
  We ask students how secure they think their school environment is, how well it helps them learn and how they feel at school in general via a survey in the late autumn. All compulsory-school pupils take this survey. The survey shows any areas for improvement and locations where students feel unsafe, for example.

- **Student & parent survey**
  Each spring, we ask students enrolled in certain grades and their parents/guardians to make separate evaluations of the quality of their school. This survey includes questions about participation, communication and cooperation. The results are analysed by each school individually and also by Sigtuna Municipality. Schools then design measures and activities to help improve their work based on the survey responses. For this reason, it is important that as many parents/guardians as possible take the survey.

Plan against discrimination & offensive treatment
Sigtuna’s schools update their plans against discrimination and offensive treatment every year. Our schools’ efforts in this area help stop offensive treatment, discrimination and harassment in schools. Each school’s plan includes a situation analysis that reviews all the data related to the school’s work to promote a secure learning environment. The plan against discrimination and offensive treatment also includes activities and measures that form part of the school’s work plans and Sigtuna Municipality’s operating plans. School staff work to develop these plans together with their students.

Providing feedback to parents
At the parent-school information meeting held each autumn, parents/guardians will receive information about 1) your school’s efforts to promote a secure learning environment and 2) the results of your school’s surveys. Your school’s results will be published on its website at the end of the autumn term each year.
Sigtuna Municipality wants to offer your child preschools and schools that they really enjoy going to and where staff feel appreciated and enjoy their work. We can make this a reality by communicating and cooperating. Together, we can create the best possible learning environment for children, students and staff at Sigtuna Municipality’s preschools and schools.