



Communications Policy

2024

Infant School

Date Reviewed		Next Review Date	
Signature of Chair of	Name: Emma Healy Signature:		
Signature of Head Teachers	Names: Jane Neal and Fiona Arnold Signatures:		
This Policy was approved by the Full Governing Body on the _ 02_ / _ 10_ / _ 24_			

All our policies are written to reflect, support and develop our ethos statement

“A community that cares about excellence, wonder and learning for life”

We provide a safe and exciting space where:

There is community

-  There is a strong, friendly and respectful spirit within the immediate and extended communities, supporting learning and progress of and for all pupils
-  There is a sense of belonging

There is care

-  Everyone focusses on valuing and developing the whole child, nurturing a happy and kind atmosphere where asking for help and listening is what we expect of each other
-  We understand our actions and nurture respect for each other and the environment

There is excellence

-  There is a strong sense of ambition and high academic achievement along with excellent personal progress built around quality first teaching and research informed learning,
-  There is enrichment and high expectations beyond the curriculum

There is wonder

-  Every experience is more memorable than the last
-  Learning powers are nurtured and grow and grow
-  The implementation of the curriculum is rich, vibrant and creative

There is learning for life

-  There is an unstinting dedication to diversity and equality
-  There is motivation for the preservation of our environment and a thirst to become a conscientious contributor to making the world a better place
-  Pupils leave us with a thirst for knowledge and love of learning, autonomous and self-motivated, ready for their next stage and beyond

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Introduction and Aims

We believe good communication is clear, professional, timely and appropriate. It should be useful and relevant to all parties. We believe that open communication between the schools and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

-  Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
-  Builds trust and confidence between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs
-  Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parent/carers

Communication Principles

-  Listen to understand
-  Be proactive in sharing information
-  Let the school team know first
-  Use clear and concise messages
-  Take a planned approach
-  Accept feedback and build relationships with parents/ carers

To promote clear and open communication we aim to:

-  Explain how the school communicates with parents/carers
-  Set clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
-  Help parents/carers reach the member of staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

-  ICT And Internet Acceptable Use
-  Staff Code of Conduct
-  Complaints
-  Home-School Agreement
-  Governors' Code Of Conduct

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

-  Freedom of Information Act 2000
-  Education Act 2002
-  The Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003
-  UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
-  Data Protection Act 2018

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

-  Data Protection Policy
-  Online Safety Policy
-  Freedom of Information Policy
-  Data Protection Policy
-  Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan
-  Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
-  Confidentiality Policy
-  Complaints Procedures Policy
-  Staff Handbook/Key Information for Staff

Roles and Responsibilities

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- 🌳 Ensuring that communications with parents/carers are effective, timely and appropriate
- 🌳 Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- 🌳 Regularly reviewing this policy

School Business Manager

The School Business Manager is responsible for ensuring

- 🌳 ParentPay is managed and complies to the Legal Framework
- 🌳 parent /carers have secure access to ParentPay
- 🌳 the effectiveness of the office team

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- 🌳 Fulfilling wider professional responsibilities in the teacher standards, explicitly: communicating effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being
- 🌳 Responding to communication from parents/ carers in line with this policy, the Acceptable Use Policy, and Staff Handbook
- 🌳 Working with other members of staff to make sure parents/ carers get timely information, if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves
- 🌳 Communicating with parents/carers and pupils via social networking sites, blogs or social media pages set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning
- 🌳 Responding to communication during their working hours which is generally 8am until 5.30pm, but which are outside the teaching hours of 9am until 3.30pm. In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- 🌳 Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- 🌳 Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- 🌳 Using the correct channels of communication
- 🌳 Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- 🌳 Checking all communications from the school

How We Communicate with Parents and Carers

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. In the first instance, you should contact the member of staff who is responsible for your child in the following order:

1. Class teacher
2. Inclusion Lead/Deputy Head Teacher (as appropriate)
3. Head Teacher

Your first point of contact in the school is always your child's class teacher. Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff. For all other queries, the school office will direct you to the appropriate member of staff, to deal with your query and arrange any appointments for you.

Contact Details

The schools hold emergency contact details for all pupils on the School Information Management System (SIMs) and families are contacted on an annual basis to ensure that these are up to date. This information is gathered on entry into Nursery and/or Reception. Families are expected to inform the schools immediately in the event that contact information needs to be revised. Depending on the nature of the communication, the school will use the most practicable means of contacting families.

The sections below explain how we keep parents/carers up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school. Parents/carers should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Individual Communication

The majority of communication will be face to face at the beginning and end of the day, where this is not possible, please contact the class teacher to arrange an 'in person' meeting.

School Website

Key information about the school is posted on our website. Many parental queries can be dealt with by checking the school website. A number of forms are available including:

-  Half termly year group learning information (topic webs)
-  Curriculum information
-  School times and term dates
-  Important events and announcements
-  Important policies and procedures
-  Information about before and after-school provision
-  The schools' newsletters which are also sent out via parent pay fortnightly

Online System - ParentPay

As well as a cashless online payments system, we are able to use ParentPay to email and text parents/carers to keep them informed about the following things:

-  Upcoming school events or late notice changes to those events
-  Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
-  School surveys or consultations
-  Class activities or teacher requests
-  Short-notice changes to the school day
-  Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

Phone Calls

The school office will phone home if:

-  a child is absent without explanation
-  a child is unwell or hurt
-  a key piece of equipment is needed

Written Reports

Parents/carers will receive written reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

-  Weekly learning leaflet on the curriculum activities the children have undertaken during the week
-  End-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum and how well they are progressing
-  Annual attendance report

Meetings

-  Nursery and Reception Welcome Meeting, before your child starts
-  Infant curriculum meetings
-  Parents/carers' conference evenings. During these meetings, parents/ carers can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of strength or concern.
-  The school may also contact parents and carers to arrange meetings between parents and carers' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.
-  Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

How Parents and Carers can communicate with the school

Parents/carers should use the list in Appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

Individual Communication

Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff and would advise parents and carers not to arrive at the school with the expectation that they can be seen without an appointment as this is unlikely to be possible.

If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, the office staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.

We aim to be able to facilitate requests for immediate meetings, unfortunately this is not always possible due to teachers' commitments. When an immediate meeting is not possible, we will endeavour to respond within one working day to arrange a time to meet.

Email

Parents/carers can email the school office or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues. Please see appendix 1. Emails can be used to share logistical information with teachers or to start a dialogue about an academic or pastoral issue. Emails should be kept brief and longer discussions should happen face to face or by phone. We will attempt to resolve issues face to face if the number of emails becomes overburdensome.

Teachers have limited time during their teaching day to check emails and therefore requests which require immediate or quick action should not be sent via email. For example, emailing your child's teacher to inform them you will be collecting them for an appointment or to change pick-up arrangements is not appropriate due to the possibility that the message will not be read in time. It is important that families telephone the school office with this information.

We aim to respond to all emails within two working days. We have a number of staff who work on a part time basis so it may take longer for them to respond on their working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents and carers need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Phone Calls

It is difficult to contact teaching staff during the day by phone. Non-class based staff e.g. Inclusion Lead, Head Teacher, Deputy Headteacher can be contacted by phone via the school office. If the member of staff is not available, leave a message with the office and they will respond as soon as they are able to.

If the issue is urgent, parents/ carers should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

-  Family emergencies
-  Safeguarding or welfare issues

Meetings

If parents and carers would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff they should email the relevant member of staff or call the office. We will always try to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request, depending on staff working patterns i.e. staff who work part time. Arranging a mutually convenient appointment allows the school time to organise cover to make staff available to speak to the families and to gather any necessary information prior to the meeting. Teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day, for quick discussions and exchanges of information. Meetings should be booked for longer discussions. Parents and carers can book appointments to discuss:

-  Any concerns they have about their child's learning
-  Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing
-  Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

School holds parents/carers' conference evenings. During these meetings, parents/ carers can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of strength or concern.

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English. Parents and carers who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

-  School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
-  Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our Complaints Policy which can be found on the school website.

Inappropriate Communication

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be considered unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Social Network Sites:

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Head Teachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents and carers or pupils and we ask that all parents and carers, carers and visitors 'think before you post.' The Department for Education/Government and the Governing Body considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable. Any concerns you may have about the school or your child/children must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Headteacher or by following the complaints procedures where they will be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

Libellous or Defamatory Posts:

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/children found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this. We will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately.



Cyber Bullying:

We take very seriously the use of cyber bullying by one child or a parent or carer to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of bullying. The school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse on social networking and other sites.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

-  Identifying or posting images/videos of children other than your own
-  Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parents and carers
-  Bringing the school in disrepute
-  Posting defamatory or libellous comments
-  Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
-  Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
-  Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
-  Breaching school security procedures
-  Covert Recording – Unless explicitly agreed in writing, the school does not consent to parents or carers making audio or video recordings of any member of staff, governor or school volunteer, including during in person meetings, remote/virtual meetings or telephone conversations. Making covert recordings is regarded as a breach of the relationship of mutual trust and confidence between the home and the school. If a parent or carer is found to be recording a discussion without mutual consent, all staff have the right to terminate the meeting or telephone call on discovery. A parent or carer that records a member of staff, governor or school volunteer without consent may be issued with a restricted communication plan. If a person has been found to have recorded any audio or video footage on the school site without consent of any individual, this may result in the parent or carer being immediately banned from the school's premises and the involvement of external agencies.

Monitoring and Review

The Head Teachers will monitor the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every two years. The policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1: Who Should I Contact?

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Urgent communication	Phone the school office at 0207 228 6811
Class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher or face to face to make a time to meet or call, ideally at the END of the day at pick up
Payments	via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk – for the attention of Eamon Carron
School trips	via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk – for the attention of Eamon Carron
Clothing/lost and found	Class teacher face to face – before or after school or via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, email the school office at office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk If you want to request approval for term-time absence, download the appropriate form from the school website at https://www.honeywellschools.org/forms/
Bullying and behaviour	The class teacher in the first instance as they know your child best and then if there is a continuing concern: A member of the Senior Leadership Team
School events/the school calendar	website first at https://www.honeywellinfantschool.co.uk/ and then via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk –
Special Educational Needs	infant.inclusion@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk
The Balham “Schools Out” before and after-school club	https://www.balhamcommunitycentre.com/schools-out-club-honeywell Email Morris Tolaram at honeywell@balhamcommunitycentre.com
Clubs provide by the school	via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk – for the attention of Eamon Carron
Hiring the school premises	via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk – for the attention of School Business Manager
The PTFA	chair@honeywellptfa.org.uk
The Governing Body	office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk
Catering/meals	via the school office office@honeywell.wandsworth.sch.uk – for the attention of Laura Glover