



Communication Policy for Pupils, Parents and Staff

Introduction

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message but also how that message is communicated. Good communication promotes partnership.

Aim

To ensure that Wanborough Primary School is a thriving and successful organisation, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Objectives

All communications at Wanborough Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional.
- Use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all.
- Be actioned within a reasonable time.
- Use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience.
- Take account of relevant school policies and procedures.
- Be compatible with our core values.

Responsibilities

This section details the responsibilities of the different groups within the school.

Senior leadership team (SLT)

- To ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner and via appropriate channels, where practicable face to face.
- To ensure that staff have the relevant information available to communicate with colleagues effectively.
- To maintain open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comment from all staff.
- To lead by example, promoting a healthy work, life balance, through communicating to staff at appropriate times.
- To keep governors informed of developments and concerns.

All staff

- To communicate regularly with each other, preferably face to face or email, to ensure information is available and understood within the context of the classroom and working environment.
- To ensure they are informed and have access to information in order to be as effective as possible in their role and to support their work within the school.
- To use open channels of two-way communication to keep the leadership team and colleagues informed.
- To check the weekly Friday update e-mail and Wednesday staff briefing notes.
- To ensure that emails are checked at least once a working day and responded to if necessary. Any communication which is important and needs to be actioned within 24 hours will be communicated in person.

Governors

- To ensure the use of trusted online spaces when communicating between governors or with the school.

Internal methods of communication for staff

- All staff undertake an induction providing them with important information about organisation and procedures within the school.
- An integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff both formal and informal: e.g. teachers' meetings, teaching assistant meetings, office meetings, and whole staff meetings.
- Teams and e-mail are quick, effective ways of communicating information, however, they should not replace face to face meetings where an in-depth discussion is required.
- Teams should be used during the school day to convey messages from teachers to teachers and from children to teachers during remote learning periods.

- E-mail can be used during the school day and after school. However, e-mail responses should not be expected or chased for, out of school hours.

- Whats App Groups are in place for quick response to important/urgent matters - they should be used sparingly.

A Whats App Staff Social group is used at personal discretion.

- Posted communications will be delivered by hand from the office team.

- Teachers' meetings & SLT meetings action points are recorded.

- Governors' meeting minutes are recorded on Governor hub. Copies can be given on request.

- The whiteboard in the staffroom is used for day to day notices.

- All letters must be seen by a member of SLT before going out to parents and a copy should be sent to the office (a copy will be placed on the school website if appropriate).

- The school uses Scholar Pack to communicate with parents/carers by text, e-mail or via the app.

- Urgent messages for parents/carers will be sent by text or a phone call as early as possible and followed up by the office staff to ensure receipt.

Safeguarding:

Communication of safeguarding concerns will be in accordance with the agreed Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Authorised personnel will communicate through CPOMs where appropriate. (See Safeguarding Policy)

External methods of communication

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Our aim is to have clear and effective communications with all parents and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting school.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. To this end parents should always be addressed in an appropriate manner. In principle, teaching staff should not accept friendship

requests from parents on social media, however, within the context of a small village school where employees live locally or are parents themselves it is unrealistic to expect that this can be enforced. Employees should make it clear to friends that school matters can't and will not be discussed through these channels. Staff should inform the headteacher if this is not adhered to.

We will try to make written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions to our society by all cultural groups represented in our school.

Communications with Parents/Carers

Letters:

Almost all letters sent by the headteacher or teaching staff will be e-mailed to parents. On occasions hard copies may be sent.

Staff will respond to parents' letters requiring an answer within 48 hours (2 school days) to acknowledge receipt of the communication. Where staff are part-time, non-working days are not included in the response time. Up to a further 5 school days can be granted where further investigation of the matter is required. Any letter of complaint must be referred to the Head Teacher immediately.

Letters to parents must be approved by the Head Teacher before they are sent. Copies of all correspondence to individual parents will be filed in Scholar pack.

A copy of general letters will be available on the school website.

E-mail/Text:

The school has an e-mail/text system which it uses to communicate with parents. If a parent communicates with the school using email with a complaint or a matter that requires an action, a copy will be stored in a digital file.

Staff should forward relevant e-mails from parents to the Head Teacher and should always do so if the content is a complaint or concern. All e-mails requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours (2 school days) to acknowledge receipt of the communication. Up to a further 5 school days can be granted where further investigation of the matter is required.

If a parent wishes to contact a teacher or member of staff via e-mail then the teacher's school address should be used. Teachers will communicate with parents only regarding

children, and not third parties or other relations. An e-mail to the school office account would also be passed on to the relevant member of staff if received. E-mail communications concerning a child are kept for the academic year in a digital folder unless they are required for evidence trailing, in which case a copy should be printed.

Telephone calls:

Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency.

Social Media Sites/Blogs: Staff are advised not to communicate with parents via social networking sites or accept them as "friends". Staff will not accept pupils or ex-pupils as "friends".

Written Reports: Once a year, we provide a full written report to each child's parents on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. Pupils are also given an opportunity to comment on their progress.

Termly Report Cards: Three times a year, we provide a short report to each child's parents on their attainment and effort in Reading, Writing and Maths.

Newsletters: Newsletters are e-mailed out monthly.

Parent meetings:

In addition, parents meet their child's teacher/s twice year for a private consultation at a Parents' Evening. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being. When children have particular education needs, or if they are making less than expected progress, parents will be invited to meet with their child's teacher more regularly. We will also make reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand communication.

Dropping off and collection:

There may be occasions where a quick word at the door may be of use to either/both parents or staff. These should be very brief and not an expectation. Where further discussion is required a meeting should be arranged through the school office.

School Website:

The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

Twitter:

The school has a twitter account which regularly updates stakeholders on school activities.

Home-School Communication:

- The monthly school newsletter is e-mailed and posted on the school website.
- Parents/carers will be texted or phoned if there is an unexpected cancellation of a club.
- Questionnaires are sent out to parents through e-mail and the results are discussed and used to improve the school.

Communication between Pupils and Staff:

Pupils and staff should not be in contact out with the school day or school premises. If a child is isolating and completing work at home communication will be through their dedicated Teams channel during school hours. The use of Teams should align with the E-Safety and Safeguarding policies. Parents will be aware of this communication and will supervise their child as appropriate. Staff should inform the Headteacher if contacted out with these parameters.

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