



# Home-school Communication Policy

## 2023-24

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## 1. Introduction and aims

Parkhill Junior School believes that clear, open communication between the school 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
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

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

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

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

### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff, to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves) This should be within **48 hours**.

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours 9:00am to 3:30pm or their working hours (if they work part-time). 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.

## 2.3 Parents

Parents 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
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not expect** staff to respond to their communication during teaching core school hours or during school holidays.

## 3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly, to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

### 3.1 Email/GroupCall

We use email to keep parents informed about the following:

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

### 3.3 School Calendar

Our school website and monthly Headteacher newsletter, include a full school calendar for the year ahead. In all newsletters, we advise regularly of additional dates and parents /carers must note this.

We give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

### 3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about educational visits and special school events
- Consent forms
- Our monthly HT newsletter

### 3.6 School planners and Reading Records

School Planners are used by Year 6 learners only. Learners in all other year groups have a Home – School Reading Record. Parents/Carers are expected to check and sign this regularly.

### 3.7 Reports.

Parents receive reports from the school about their child’s learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- Mid year progress report in the spring term
- A report on KS2 SATs tests in Year 6

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold one parents’ evening per term. During these meetings, parents 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 concern.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents’ evenings if there are concerns about a child’s achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs, will also be asked to attend further meetings, to address these additional needs.

### 3.9 School Website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

**Parents should check the website before contacting the school.**

## **4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school**

Parents 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.

### **4.1 Email**

Parents should always email the school about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within three working days.

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

### **4.2 Phone calls**

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within at least two working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within two days of their request.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

### **4.3 Meetings**

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they 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

## **5. 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 the following language:

- English

Parents 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.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every two years with staff.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing plan

## Appendix 1: school contact list

### Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the school office on [insert school office email address and phone number]
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

We try to respond to all emails within 48 hours during term time. During school holidays, the Admin email account is checked periodically and a response will be provided on the return back to school.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher
First Aid, injuries and medication	Mrs Whisker – Reception - 0208 550 5253
Payments	Mrs Whisker – Reception - 0208 550 5253
School educational visits	Your child's class teacher and Mrs Whisker (Reception - 0208 550 5253)
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's class teacher and Mrs Whisker (Reception - 0208 550 5253 )
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 0208 550 5253  If you want to request approval for a term-time absence, collect a leave request form, from Reception. <b>You may be asked to meet with the Headteacher.</b>
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's class teacher.
School events/the school calendar	Mrs Whisker – Reception - 0208 550 5253

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Special educational needs (SEN)	Mrs Tanner (SENco) via Reception - 0208 550 5253
Breakfast Club and after-school clubs	Mrs Whisker – Reception - 0208 550 5253
Parents of Parkhill (PoPs)	Mrs L. Whitehead - 0208 550 5253
Governing board	Ms Reeves – School Business Lead - 0208 550 5253
Catering/meals	ISS - 0845 057 6467
Redbridge Music Service	0208 708 2828

### Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our Complaints Policy, located on the school's website.