

# Home School Communication Policy

<b>Policy status</b>	Non-statutory school derived policy
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	December 2024
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2026
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	2 years
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Senior Leadership Team

## 1. Introduction and aims

We believe 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 and how the school expects parents/carers to communicate with us

Setting clear standards 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

Setting out the methods of communication available to parents for contacting the school and our expectations from parents when visiting our school or communicating with staff at our school

## 2. References

We believe it is important to create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents in our school. We encourage clear, open communication links with parents as we believe it has a positive impact on pupils' learning. It provides parents with the information they need to support their child's education and helps to build a partnership between home and school. Such communication can be entirely positive and practical for example to seek information, ask a question, clear up a misunderstanding or to draw attention to a matter. Sometimes there is a need to resolve an issue or misunderstanding.

We use the term 'parents' in this policy to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child or who is in loco-parentis

The term member of staff as referred to in this policy includes:

- Anyone employed by the school
- Anyone training in a professional capacity at the school
- Governors (when acting in this capacity)
- Volunteers at the school (when acting in this capacity)
- Anyone employed through an external agency, who are acting in a professional capacity on the school site

We acknowledge that sometimes there can be situations that can be emotional and challenging for parents and staff to work through. Nonetheless, we expect all our community to show mutual respect. We have clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct) and pupils (through our behaviour policy). We also expect parents to engage constructively with school staff and to work together with them in the best interests of our children.

We will only communicate with parents in respect of their own child at the school. Requests to raise a concern on behalf of another parent will be declined, as will be requests for information on another child. Should any correspondence be received from legal advisers then this will be shared with the school's legal advisers.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

**Headteacher** is responsible for:

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

**School Business Manager and Admin Officer** are responsible for:

- Managing response to admin emails
- Providing and supporting parents with log-ins to school online systems

**Staff** are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy and the GDPR 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)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (Monday to Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm), 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 or not, but they are **not expected** to do so.

**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 within the Home School Partnership Agreement](#), or we may seek legal advice to resolve the matter.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of school core hours (Monday to Friday 8.00am – 5.00pm) or during weekends or school holidays.

## 4. 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.

This is not an exhaustive list.

**Email / ParentMail** - We use email to keep parents informed about the following things, but this list is not exhaustive :

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- Unscheduled school closures (for example, closure due to extreme weather)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Changes to school operations and timings
- Contact parents or respond to parents formally regarding school activities or individual children
- Contact parents regarding payments

**Text messages** - We will text parents about the following, but this list is not exhaustive:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to extreme weather)

### Seesaw Online Learning Platform

Parents are able to communicate directly with teachers via our remote learning platform, Seesaw. This can be accessed using your child's login.

Teachers will use this platform to provide home learning and remote learning when necessary.

Staff will respond within school core working hours, 8.30am to 4.30pm

### School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term and may include events

beyond the current term.

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

Any such event will be included in the school calendar, [found on our website and in our newsletter](#).

## Phone calls

Staff will call parents when appropriate to discuss a pupils' performance, behaviour, pastoral issues, attendance, medical issues or to deal directly with any queries.

Staff will use school landline phones or a school mobile to contact parents/carers via their phone numbers provided to the school.

Only in an emergency will staff call parents directly from personal mobile phones with their numbers withheld.

## Letters

We send letters home when necessary, via email / ParentMail or hard copy, whichever is most appropriate.

## Home learning, school key dates, home school communication

Staff will contact parents via phone, Seesaw, parent text message service, ParentMail or letter.

The school will communicate with parents via parent text message, email, the school website or hard copy letter.

Parents can communicate in person, via phone, email via the school admin address, via Seesaw (learning platform) or through a written letter.

We provide Reading Record books to children to record reading in school and daily reading at home, in line with our home learning policy. The children are responsible for carrying reading records to and from school on a daily basis.

## Reports

Parents receive an annual end-of-year written report covering their child's achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, behaviour and social development, next steps in learning and their attendance.

We may write additional reports for parents to support a child's particular need or provision.

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress.

## Meetings

We hold two Learning Consultation evenings for parents and their child in the autumn and the spring terms; we offer the opportunity for parents to discuss end of year reports in the summer term. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, learning across the curriculum, their child's wellbeing, or any other area to celebrate or to address of concern.

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

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs

will be asked to attend additional meetings to Learning Consultations to address targets on ILPS (Individual Learning plans) or EHCPS (Education Health Care Plans).

## School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including and not limited to:

- All statutory information required of a school website
- Transition and key school information
- 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.

## 5. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

In the case of communications with the school, that are not raising a formal complaint the following guidance will apply. Please 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.

### Communication during school hours/ working days

Office staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours during term time 8.30am-4.30pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time).

Teaching staff will respond to communication after the school day has concluded, subject to other commitments. (timeframe needs to be communicated)

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8.00am – 5.00pm, or during weekends or school holidays.

Staff may choose to work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so nor obliged to do so particularly at weekends and during school holidays.

Staff **will not** usually respond to communications outside of school hours Monday to Friday 8.00 – 5.00, or their working hours (if they work part-time), at weekends or during school holidays.

### Email - [adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk)

Parents should email the school, or appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance marking it for the attention of a particular member of staff.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within **2** working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within **3** working days.

## Phone calls – 01256 762 468

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter or a general query, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within **2** working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within **2** days of your request.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Family emergencies or change in circumstances
- Sudden change of collection or drop off arrangements for your child

## Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the school office, call the school or message via Seesaw directly to the teacher to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within **2** working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- a. Any concerns they have about your child's learning
- b. Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

## Social Media

The school will not respond to concerns raised via social media.

Where the social media presence is run by the school, comments will be removed if they do not meet the criteria of the social media platform or Home School Partnership Agreement.

Should the school be made aware of any threats or abusive behaviour towards staff members on social media, the school will report this to the police and seek action on their advice.

## 6. Complaints

Parents should refer to the school's Complaints Policy available on the school website and follow the stages of complaint.

## 7. Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

### Parents with additional communication needs

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) can be made available in multiple formats on request.

All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible.

Accessibility is considered when designing and updating the school website.

Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Interpreters or sign language interpreters for meetings or phone calls

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## Parents with English as an Additional Language

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English.

Content on our website can be made translated with in-page links.

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.

## 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 [adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk), 01256 762 468

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Child protection or Safeguarding.  I am concerned about a child's safety, treatment or welfare.	Any of the following DSL/DDSLs:  Miss Powell (HT & Designated Safeguarding Lead)  Mrs Bailey (DHT & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)  Miss Carne (SENDCO & Inclusion Leader & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)  Miss Stewart (Assistant Head & Deputy

	Designated Safeguarding Lead) Mr McLaren (Assistant Head & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) Mrs Doughty (Attendance Officer)
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's teacher
My child's wellbeing or pastoral support	Your child's teacher in the first instance. Miss Stewart (AHT) – Y3 & Y4 Mr McLaren (AHT – Y5 & Y6 Miss Carne (SENDSCO & Inclusion Leader)
My child's attendance	Mrs Doughty (Attendance Officer)
Behaviour (including online), bullying, prejudicial language	Your child's teacher Miss Carne (for parents of SEND children) Assistant Headteacher for your child's year group
Payments, free school meals and trips	Mr Grant (Business Manager)
School clubs	Mrs Little (Administration Assistant)
Uniform / lost and found / pre-loved	Mrs Little (Administration Assistant)
Admissions	Mrs Spooner (Administration Officer)
Reporting your child's absence	Follow the Attendance Policy procedures Telephone school office: 01256 762 468
School events/the school calendar	Mrs Little (Administration Assistant)
Special educational needs	Miss Carne (SENDSCO)
Hiring the school premises and lettings	Mr Grant (School Business Manager)
The HSCA	Refer to the HSCA website: <a href="http://hsca.org.uk">hsca.org.uk</a>
The Governing Body	Chair: Bruce Anderson via <a href="mailto:a.governor@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk">a.governor@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk</a>
Catering / meals	Mr Grant (School Business Manager)
Health, safety and security	Mr Grant (School Business Manager)