



Communication Policy

Guidance on how the school communicates with Parents/Carers and how Parents/Carers can reach the relevant member of staff within the school

This Policy has been adopted and approved by Oxlip Learning Partnership and is to be used by all members of the Trust.

History of Document:

Issue No.	Author/Owner	Date Written	Approved by Trust on	Comments	Next Review
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Contents

Item	Description	Page
1.	Introduction and aims	1-2
2.	Roles and responsibilities	2
3.	How we communicate with parents and carers	3-4
4.	How parents and carers can communicate with the school	4-5
5.	Inclusion	5
6.	Monitoring and review	5
7.	Links with other policies	6
Appendix A	School contact list	7-8

1. Introduction and aims

At Oxlip Learning Partnership (the Trust), we believe that maintaining respectful and constructive communication between home and school 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

While we value parental engagement, we will not tolerate aggressive, abusive, or threatening communications in any form, including those generated using artificial intelligence or automated systems.

High-volume or repeated aggressive communications place unacceptable pressure on staff and divert resources from supporting children's education and wellbeing. Where a parent/carer sends excessive or aggressive correspondence (including AI-generated content), we reserve the right to:

- Limit communication to specific channels or designated staff members
- Request that all communication is submitted in writing to a single point of contact
- Set reasonable limits on the frequency and length of communications
- Restrict contact to essential matters relating directly to the child's education and welfare

These measures are designed to protect staff wellbeing whilst ensuring that genuine concerns are heard and addressed appropriately. We will always seek to resolve issues constructively, but we have a duty of care to our staff as well as to our pupils.

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

On occasions, parents and carers may need to raise a complaint about the Trust or one of its schools. The Trust takes all complaints seriously and is committed to seek to resolve any matter raised in a positive way and make identified improvements.

To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be raised in line with the **Complaints Procedure** and brought to the attention of the school or Trust as soon as possible.

Definitions:

Concern or Complaint

A concern is defined as an 'expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions or lack of action'.

Definition of a Parent

For the purposes of education law, section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- all natural (biological) parents, whether married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for the child or young person (this could be a step-parent, guardian or other relative)
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

A person has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

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

'Principal' also refers to any other title used to identify the leader of a school, where appropriate, or other senior manager delegated to deal with the matter by the Principal.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents/carers 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/carers in line with this policy and the Trust's Acceptable use of ICT and Internet 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)
- Ensuring parents have logins for the school Management Information System (MIS)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication within 2 school days during core school hours 8.30am – 4.00pm, 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/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times, including being respectful of other demands on staff time
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Making every reasonable effort to ensure communications are concise
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school
- Keeping their child's profile up to date on the school's MIS including permissions and medical

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8.30am – 4.00pm, or during weekends or school holidays. Parents should receive an acknowledgement or a response within 2 school days and are asked not to chase before this time.

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 via the school MIS

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Newsletters
- Reminders for payment

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

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

3.3 School calendar

Our school website and newsletters include a full school calendar for the half-term or full term where possible.

We also try to give parents at least two 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.

3.4 Phone calls

We will phone parents in the following circumstances:

- First day calling if your child is absent without explanation
- Medical emergencies or illness which may need collection from school
- To discuss immediate concerns

The school also encourages staff to call parents regularly to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative).

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our regular newsletter

3.6 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
- Termly progress reports (some schools)
- A report on EYFS and phonics screen test outcomes and KS2 SATs tests (Primary schools only)

- A report on the results of public examinations
- Information about vocational qualifications gained, or credits gained towards these (High School only)

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

3.7 Meetings

We hold a number of parents' evenings 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. Please see the calendar on the school website for dates.

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 (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

3.8 School website

Key information about the school is posted on each school's 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 A 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, or the appropriate member of staff, to request a phone call about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two school days, and to respond (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five school days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents have identified it as such, we will consider whether a response can be provided sooner than this.

Correspondence with the following characteristics may be deemed to be vexatious:

- Obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
- Which makes unreasonable requests that demand a disproportionate amount of staff time;
- Which makes requests in an unreasonable manner;
- Which is designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- Which lacks any serious purpose or value.

AI-generated, generic correspondence with the above attributes or used in the above manner may also be deemed to be vexatious.

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 five school 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 five school days of your request.

If the issue is **urgent**, parents should call the school office and ask for the relevant member of staff, as per Appendix A (page 6).

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 address (see Appendix A), or call the school to book an appointment.

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

At our Primary schools, while teachers may be 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

4.4 Recording Conversations

We do not accept the recording of conversations obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded. For the avoidance of doubt staff do not consent to being recorded. Any attempt to record a conversation may result in the school imposing a restriction on how you contact the school in the future. Where any recordings made without consent are made public, this would risk serious legal implications for the person who committed that act and the school would be forced to take legal advice.

4.5 Demands to see a member of staff

Parents/carers must not arrive unannounced at the school demanding to see a particular member of staff or the Principal under any circumstances. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct.

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 languages:

- 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

If you have a disability or special needs which would affect your ability to attend or take part in a meeting or access school communications, we can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The Trust monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every four years.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Acceptable use of ICT and Internet
- Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Procedure
- Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct

Appendix A: School Contact List

Who should I contact?	Main Office 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 the most appropriate address - Include your child's full name in the subject line Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there. We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days.	School	Telephone	Email
	BACTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	01449 781367	admin@bactonschool.org.uk
	BRITANNIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	01473 728566	office@britannia.suffolk.sch.uk
	CEDARS PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL	01449 778230	admin@cedarspark.suffolk.sch.uk
	MENDLESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL	01449 766224	admin@mendleshamschool.org.uk
	ROSE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL	01473 727552	mail@rosehillprimary.net
	COPELSTON HIGH SCHOOL	01473 277240	mail@copleston.suffolk.sch.uk
	STOWUPLAND HIGH SCHOOL	01449 674827	enquiries@stowuplandhighschool.co.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...		WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO					
	BACTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	BRITANNIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	CEDARS PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL	MENDLESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL	ROSE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL	COPELSTON HIGH SCHOOL	STOWUPLAND HIGH SCHOOL
Urgent issues such as: - Safeguarding or welfare - Family emergency	Please see the contact details for each school above						
My child's learning /class activities /lessons /homework	Your child's class teacher	Your child's class teacher	Your child's class teacher	Your child's class teacher	Your child's class teacher	Your child's form teacher/subject teacher via school office or Year Group email addresses	Your child's form teacher/subject teacher via school office or Year Group email addresses
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	School office/class teacher/Inclusion Lead	School office/class teacher	School office/class teacher	School office/class teacher/Inclusion Lead	School office/class teacher	School office/ Year Group email addresses	School office/ Year Group email addresses
Payments	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office
School trips	School office/class teacher	School office	School office	School office/class teacher	School office	School office	School office

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO						
	BACTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	BRITANNIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	CEDARS PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL	MENDLESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL	ROSE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL	COPLESTON HIGH SCHOOL	STOWUPLAND HIGH SCHOOL
Uniform/lost and found	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office
Attendance and absence requests Requests for term-time absence, contact the school office	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01449 781367	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01473 728566	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01449 778230	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01449 766224	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01473 727552	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01472 277240	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01449 742428
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher via school office	Class teacher via school office	School office/class teacher	Class teacher via school office	Class teacher via school office	Class teacher via school office	School office/ Year Group email addresses
School events/the school calendar	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENDCo via school office	SENDCo via school office	SENDCo via school office	SENDCo via school office	SENDCo via school office	SENDCo via school office	SENDCo via the School office
Before and after-school clubs	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	n/a
Hiring the school premises	School office	School office	School office	School office / schoolhire.co.uk	School office	School office / Sports Centre (01473 277260)	Sports Centre Office / schoolhire.co.uk
PTA	School office - FOA Chair of PTA	School office - FOA Chair of BFF	School office - FAO Chair of PTA	School office - FAO Chair of FOMSA	School office - FOA Chair of PTA	n/a	n/a
Local Board	Chair of Local Board via School Office	Chair of Local Board via School Office	Chair of Local Board via School Office	Chair of Local Board via School Office	Chair of Local Board via School Office	Chair of Local Board via School Office	Chair of Local Board via School Office
Catering/meals	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office	School office

Complaints If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the process set out in our Complaints Procedure:

[Complaints Procedure](#)