



# Home-school communication policy

<b>Approved by:</b>	Gill Kozlowski	<b>Date:</b> 13/01/21
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## 1. Introduction and aims

The Goldsworth Trust aims to establish and promote positive close relationships with all parents, in the interest of their children. We recognise that children will feel more secure when they receive consistent messages from both home/school.

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
- 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

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
- 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)

Staff **will not** respond to communications outside of normal working hours, or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

The ICT and Acceptable Use Policies can be found on the school websites.

## **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
- Attending meetings about their children organised by the school e.g. parent's evening.

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

Parent Code of Conduct can be found on the school website.

## **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**

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
- Key information about curriculum and learning
- Invitations to meetings
- Email is used to communicate to the whole school community, individual year groups and classes and individual parents

### **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)
- Quick reminders

### **3.3 School calendar**

Our school websites includes a full school calendar for the year.

Where possible, we try to 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.

### **3.4 Phone calls**

The school will phone parents for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- To follow up on non-attendance
- If a child is unwell or has had an accident
- To feedback on learning, behaviour, medical need or well-being

### **3.5 Letters**

Letters will generally not be sent as hard copies, unless the school is aware that parents cannot access email or other forms of communication.

### **3.6 Contact books**

The contact book is a way of recording the daily reading that we ask parents to do with their children. A count of the number of nights reading is kept in the contact book, in line with our 'Let's Get Reading Programme.'

### **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
- A report on phonics KS1 and KS2 SATs tests

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

### **3.8 Meetings**

We hold 2 parents' evening(s) per year. 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 and attendance, 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. If a parent has concerns about a child's achievement, progress or wellbeing, they should contact, in the first instance, their class teacher.

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.

### **3.9 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
- General parent information such as uniform or medical arrangements

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

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

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.

### 4.1 Email

Parents should email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 5 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 10 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

Relevant pastoral information e.g. that Grandmother has been admitted to hospital, can be emailed to the class teacher.

### 4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 5 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 you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 10 days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding, welfare or well-being issues
- Bullying, racist or serious behaviour issue or incident
- Time-bound issues that require a rapid response

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

### 4.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the appropriate address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

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

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your 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.

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.

If a parent has additional needs or requires communication arrangements to be adjusted, they should contact the person listed in the appendix and we will endeavor to make alternative arrangements.

## **6. Supporting parents and carers of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

The school recognises the importance of positive relationships with parents and carers of all pupils with additional needs. The SEND Code of Practice emphasises the importance of positive, supportive attitudes to parents and carers and user-friendly information and procedures. All staff will make every effort to ensure effective communication with parents and carers. All staff within the school are expected to help parents and carers understand how to contribute effectively to their child's education and will make every effort to ensure that parents understand their rights and responsibilities. All relevant information will be provided in a way for all to understand and respond to.

When pupils who have special educational needs are making less than the expected progress or if they are experiencing behavioural difficulties, we would expect to meet with parents and carers more regularly. Parents and carers are encouraged to communicate immediately where they have a concern about their child's needs being met and should also refer to the Inclusion section of the website.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years.

## **8. Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- SEN Policy
- Inclusion Policy

## 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 the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 5 days. For urgent communication, always call the school office on 01483 476450.

Please note office hours are 8.30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday – Friday term time. Messages can be left using Option 1 at any times.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's teacher (email address: their initial and surname @stjohnsknaphill.co.uk)
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's teacher (email address: their initial and surname @stjohnsknaphill.co.uk)
Payments	<a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
School trips	<a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
Uniform/lost and found	<a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01483 476450  If you want to request approval for term-time absence, email <a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a> for the correct form.
Bullying and behaviour	<a href="mailto:head@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">head@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
School events/the school calendar	<a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
Special educational needs	<a href="mailto:senco@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">senco@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
Before and after-school clubs	<a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
Hiring the school premises	<a href="mailto:premises@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">premises@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>
The PTA	<a href="mailto:ptastjohnsprimary@gmail.com">ptastjohnsprimary@gmail.com</a>
The governing board	<a href="mailto:clerk@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">clerk@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Catering/meals	<a href="mailto:admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk">admin@stjohnsknaphill.co.uk</a>

## Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our [Complaints Policy](#). This can be found on our school website or a copy requested from the school office.