

Lobley Hill Primary School

Communication Policy

2025

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date:
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1. Introduction and Aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school, parents/carers, staff and other professionals has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers, staff and other professionals the information they need to support children's education
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers, staff and other professionals
- Builds trust between home and school, and with other professionals, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

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

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers, staff and other professionals
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers and colleagues
- Helping parents/carers and professional 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 and professionals to include internal staff and external professionals.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

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

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Checking emails at the start of the school day and reply to any communications from the school office at least once each working day
- Responding to communication from parents and other professionals 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 and other professionals get timely information

Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours or their working hours on their working days. 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 to office staff outside of these hours, but they are not expected to do so.

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 referred to the Headteacher.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays. Class based staff, such as teachers, may be more limited in terms of times when they can respond due to their duties in class.

Other Professionals

We acknowledge that communications from professionals working for other organisations will be governed by the policies of their employer and as such, this is beyond the jurisdiction of our school policy. We will respect the communication policies and practices of external organisations and professionals. If we have concerns about communications we are receiving, we will raise these in line with the policy of the organisation the communication originated from and where this does not contradict our school policies.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be referred to the Headteacher.

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 the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Text Messages

We will text parents about:

- Letters for trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly bulletin
- Our monthly newsletter
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, bad weather)

Email

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

- Letters regarding attendance
- Class activities and teacher requests or responses

School Website

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term including INSET days for the current academic year and following year. It also includes key information, including:

- School times
- All letters to parents/carers
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information

Please check the school website in the first instance if you are looking for this kind of information.

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

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Start of the year letter which includes as many dates as possible for the coming year (these are subject to change)
- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly bulletin
- Our monthly newsletter

These may be sent as paper copies or through the text messaging service.

Phone Calls

Staff members will return calls to parents who have asked to speak to them, where they are the appropriate point of contact. Usually this will be the class teacher, or a member of the school office team. **Please note the response times below (Section 4).**

Teachers will call parents to discuss their child if there is a need for a conversation and information in the home/school journal would not be sufficient.

If parents provide important information during a phone call that needs to be shared with others, such as a message for the class team, this will be circulated to everyone through our secure internal system.

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
- Updated Individual Education Plan each term

We also arrange regular meeting where parents can speak to their class teacher about their achievement and progress.

Meetings

We hold a parents' meeting each 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.

Autumn term	-	Meeting regarding children settling into new class
Spring term	-	Child's achievement and progress
Summer term	-	Optional meeting regarding child's progress

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

4. How parents and carers can communicate with School

Parents should use the list in Appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate member of staff in the first instance, if these are issues that cannot be appropriately communicated through the Home/School journal.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days.

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

Any initial conversations regarding your child should be made between parents and their child's teacher. If you are unhappy with the response please contact school to arrange a call or meeting with the phase leader. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome then please organise a meeting with the Headteacher through the school office.

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 5 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 8 school days of your request.

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

Urgent issues might include the following:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

- Notifying the school that your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease such as chicken pox, that could impact on the school's needs to advise pregnant staff and visitors of possible contact.

Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the school office (see Appendix 1) or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 10 working days of the request.

While teachers may be available at the beginning or end of the school day on the telephone, 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. Internal Communications

We have a range of methods of communicating internally within our school staff team. These methods include:

- Emails
- Meetings
- CPOMs internal reporting software

The choice of communication method will be determined by the circumstances, taking into consideration who needs to be included, level of urgency and the importance and retention requirements.

6. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Governors will monitor the implementation of this policy and will review it every 2 years.

7. Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedures set out in our Complaints Policy. This is available on our website.

APPENDIX 1: School contact list

Who should I contact?

I have a question about....	Who you need to talk to
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's teacher by emailing the school office or by telephoning the school office or by speaking to the class teacher before or after school at the class door.
My child's wellbeing/behaviour	Your child's teacher/Miss K Jobling – Family Support Worker
Safeguarding	Designated Safeguarding Leads – Mrs R Hocking - Headteacher Mrs L Wood-Williams – Deputy Headteacher Miss K Jobling – Family Support Worker Mrs L Warren – Class Teacher/TLR
Payments for dinners, visits etc	Telephone the school office on the number above/Mrs K Turland, Business Manger
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's teacher/school office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence please call school and leave a message If you need to request an absence from school please contact the school office or log onto the school website for the form.
School events etc	Email or contact the school office or log onto the school website for the newsletter and dates for the diary.
Governing Body	Email or contact the school office
Catering/school meals	Email or contact the school office

School Email Address lobleyhillprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

School Telephone Number **01914334080**