



# Communication Policy

## Introduction

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is given, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality is respected and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message, but also how that message is delivered.

## Aim

To ensure that Weyford Nursery and Primary Academy is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communication between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

## Objectives

All communication at Weyford Nursery and Primary Academy should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- Be actioned within a reasonable time
- Use methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience
- Take account of relevant school policies
- Be compatible with our core values and Journey to Excellence plan

## Responsibilities

This section details the responsibilities of the different groups within the school.

### Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- To ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner and via appropriate channels, where practicable face to face
- To ensure that staff have the relevant information available to communicate with colleagues effectively
- To maintain open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comments from all staff
- To keep governors informed of developments and concerns.

### All staff

- To communicate regularly with each other, preferably face to face, to ensure information is available and understood within the context of the classroom and working environment
- To ensure they are informed and have access to information in order to be as effective as possible in their role and to support their work within the school
- To use open channels of two-way communication to keep the leadership team and colleagues informed

### Governors

- To ensure the use of trusted online spaces when communicating between governors or with the school
- Using a variety of communication methods to promote and explain the work of the governors
- Listening to people online to hear what is being said about the school
- To ensure the posting of minutes of meetings in appropriate places

### **Internal methods of communication**

- All staff receive an induction providing them with important information about organisation and procedures within the school.
- A planned programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff both formal and informal e.g. PDM meetings, TA meetings, Office meetings, PPA meetings, Team meetings, Leadership meetings, business meetings
- All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda
- Email and texting are quick, effective way of communicating information however, it should not replace face to face meetings where discussion is required.
- Written communication should be placed in pigeon holes which staff must check daily and clear regularly
- Teachers' meetings, TA meetings and leadership meetings take place every week and the minutes should be sent to all appropriate members of staff. Events are discussed in advance of meetings but staff also have the responsibility to check future actions.
- Office meetings take place once a term.
- Weekly business meeting notices are emailed to staff and placed on the noticeboard in the staffrooms
- The whiteboard in the staffrooms is used for day to day notices.
- Reminders or letters to individual parents are sent to classes to be given out by the class teachers and must be given to children on the same day. Every class must have a system for distributing letters and materials to go home with the children.
- The school uses the school website to communicate with parents alongside a social media platform
- Urgent messages for parents/carers will be sent by text as early as possible and followed up by the office staff to ensure receipt
- A paper copy of spare letters will be kept in the offices
- The monthly newsletter is displayed in both school buildings and is available of the website and the calendar on the website is kept up-to-date with events
- School visit letters will be sent in a timely manner – at least one month prior to the visit.

### **External methods of communication**

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain; with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Our aim is to have clear and effective communications with all parents and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting school and their child's learning.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. To this end parents should always be addressed in the appropriate manner. Teaching staff will not accept friendship requests from parents on social media. We will try to make written communication as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions to our community by all cultural groups represented in our school.

### **Communications with Parents/ Carers**

**Letters:** Staff will respond to parents' letters within 48 hours (2 school days). Any letter of complaint must be referred to the Headteacher immediately. Letters to parents must be approved by the Headteacher before they are sent. Copies of all correspondence to individual parents will be placed in pupil files. A copy of general letters will be placed in the school offices.

**Email/Text:** The school has an email/text system which it uses to communicate with parents. If a parent communicates with the school using email with a complaint or a matter that requires an action a copy should be stored in a digital file or printed and filed. Staff should forward relevant emails from parents to the Headteacher and should always do so if the content is a complaint. All emails requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours (2 school days). Email communications concerning a child are kept for the academic year in a digital folder unless they are required for evidence trailing in which a copy should be printed.

**Telephone calls:** Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency

**Social media sites/ blogs:** Staff are advised not to communicate with parents via social media networking sites or accept them as 'friends'. Staff will not accept pupils or ex-pupils as 'friends'. The school Facebook and twitter pages are used to inform parents of school events and celebrations. Tapestry is used to celebrate learning with parents.

**Written reports:** Once a year, we provide a full written Report of Achievement to each child's parents on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. Pupils are also given an opportunity to comment on their learning and progress. Two targets sheets are provided during the year to show areas for development.

**Newsletters:** Newsletters are emailed once a month by the Headteacher and half termly curriculum letters sent by the year group. Hard copies are kept at the school office for any parent who hasn't received an email. In addition, parents are invited to meet their child's teacher three times during the year for a private consultation at a Parents' Evening – one of which is a drop in. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being. When children have particular educational needs, or if they are making less than expected progress, parents will be invited to meet with their child's teacher more regularly. We will also make reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand communication. Parents of children with an SEND will have the opportunity to review their plan three times a year and meet the SENCO.

**School Website:** The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. The year group pages are kept up-to-date with current learning and information for parents and the calendar and newsletter are updated monthly.

**CPOMS:** The school uses an online system for recording safeguarding and behaviour concerns. All staff have a login and can record incidents. These must be done on the day of the incident in order to preserve the chronology of the incident. Key members of staff have a higher level of access in order to oversee the logs and may use them to support any outside agency referrals ie Hampshire Behaviour Support or Children's Services.

#### **Home-School Communication:**

- Home school agreements are signed annually
- Data protection information sheets are updated annually
- Preschool visits take place during the summer term for those joining in September with a home visit in September
- Information is displayed on the noticeboards outside school and in the reception area
- The monthly school newsletter is emailed out and posted on the school website. Paper copies are kept in the school offices.
- Parents/ carers will be texted if there is an unexpected cancellation of a club
- Parents are invited to meetings with the teacher three times a year where they have the opportunity to discuss their learning and progress
- Once a year a questionnaire is sent out to parents and the results analysed and used to improve the school

We recognise that children's protection is a shared responsibility, and that Weyford Nursery and Primary Academy should provide a safe and secure environment. If any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputies who may share this information with Social Services.

#### **How will this policy be monitored and evaluated?**

This policy will be monitored through on-going school self-evaluation. The Headteacher will use a variety of methods to evaluate this policy with staff, parents and governors.

Reviewed September 2022

Agreed by the LGB Autumn 2022