



CLARENDON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Together we shine



Communication Policy

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Headteacher:

Mrs V. Chatterjee

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1. Introduction and aims

As a school community, we believe our children possess unique gifts and qualities, and as such they have the right to succeed, recognise their own greatness, and develop who they are in a respectful and caring environment. Our school ethos is firmly rooted in our values with a 'love of learning' being the foundation of everything we do... So that 'Together We Shine.'

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 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

In the following sections, the term 'parents' will be used to refer to both parents and carers.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Parents are all asked to ensure that contact details are current so that they can be contacted at any point. All parents are encouraged to use the school app as this is used as the main form of communication between home and school. Should any parent incur difficulties with the system (log in details / software updates etc) the office staff are willing to support and if required, will send information electronically or by hard copy.

2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents 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 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 **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30am – 4pm Monday to Friday), or their working hours (if they work part-time), but due to the nature of their roles, they might not be free to respond until after school. 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. We aim to reply to emails within three working days. However, responses may be sooner for any safeguarding concerns, which are treated with urgency.

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
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Signing up for and checking all communications systems from the school

Any unreasonable and/or persistent requests for updates or calls from the teacher will be referred to the school's leadership team to arrange a meeting. Abusive or aggressive behaviour – in person, by phone or email – will not be tolerated. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our Parent Code of Conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.

A copy of the schools School & Parent/Carer Partnership Agreement can be found on the School Website in the Policies section.

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.

School is best placed to consider which communication method is most appropriate when conveying information clearly and professionally. Parents should not dictate their preferred method of communication. The school prides itself on the strong relationships with parents and will often invite parents in to discuss any concerns – this is often far more impactful when finding a resolution.

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 School App / Email

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

- Upcoming school events, extracurricular activities / clubs
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)

- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Trips & visits, WOW events, workshops
- Dinners

This is not an extensive list

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

Adapt this list as appropriate

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

3.3 School calendar

Our newsletter includes a full list of information of upcoming dates and events that parents should know about.

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).

Parents are also given a list of trips / visits & visitors at the start of the year, this enables them to ensure the trip is funded (where necessary) and thoroughly planned for.

3.4 Phone calls

Staff may contact you by telephone to check information, for example, if a child does not have the correct equipment (e.g. packed lunch, PE kit, musical instruments), regarding payments, attendance, behaviour or if there are other concerns. Staff can contact you to make you aware of positive achievements and progress your child has made.

On occasions telephone calls may be recorded, consent must be sought and approved by all parties.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

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

These letters are sent electronically, however parents without access to ICT devices can request hard copies at the school office.

3.6 School planners

All children have School planners, parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers through the planners by leaving short messages if appropriate. For example, this could be a request for a teacher to phone home.

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 KS2 SATs, Multiplication Check & Phonics Check results

3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' evenings per year; these are in Autumn & Spring terms. 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.

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 children 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

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.10 Social Media

The school does not use any Social Media platforms. Blogs that show the children's learning are saved in the class section of the school website. It is requested that the information on the website is not shared / adapted in any way.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

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

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

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

We are aware that AI is being used increasingly to draft communication between home and school. Although this may have benefits, if AI has been used to draft any correspondence with school please ensure that it is factually correct and that the tone of the correspondence is respectful and appropriate. Often a short meeting or telephone call with a member of staff is more beneficial than a lengthy AI generated email.

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 three 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 5 days of your request.

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

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 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

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

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them at any other time, 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

Please note that conversations at the gate or on the playground in the morning / afternoon should not be used to discuss confidential issues as they could be overheard by other adults or children. In these cases, a meeting should be arranged via the school office.

4.4 Home-school communications app

The school app can be used to notify school of any absences. The parent should record the absence on the first day and then on subsequent days. Parents can also use the app to update their contact details. It is important that there are contact details for at least two parent / carer contacts.

5. Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. If there are additional communication needs it is the parents responsibility to inform school.

5.1 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 are made electronically so that language conversion tools can be used
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- 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
- Sign language interpreters for meetings
- Translators for meetings (where possible)

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

- We are sensitive to the needs of the community. Whilst all of our workshops are delivered in English, there are some that are delivered in Gujrati / Urdu

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.

6. Recording of Communications

On occasions meeting and / or telephone calls may be recorded, consent must be sought and approved by all parties. The data from these meetings will not be shared with other third parties, but will be used to factually minute the meeting which may then be stored on our school systems, thus allowing the member of staff to be fully engaged in the meeting, rather than taking minutes. Prior to meetings taking place, parents may be asked to read and sign appendix 2, Parent/Carer – School Meeting Recording Agreement.

7. Monitoring and review

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

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

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
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing
- Social Networking policy
- Information management & data protection

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 office@clarendon.bolton.sch.uk or phone (01204) 333411
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within three working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Safeguarding	Mrs Cairns, Mrs Chatterjee, Mrs Stone
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher / Learning Mentor
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform/lost and found	School office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call school / notify school using the app If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office
Bullying and behaviour	Learning Mentor / Senior Leadership Team
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENDCo – Mrs Cairns
Before and after-school clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	Business Manager – Mrs Stokes
Governing board	Headteacher – Mrs Chatterjee Chair of Governors – Mrs Rowan
Catering/meals	School office

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 the School Website.

Appendix 2: Recording Agreement

Parent/Carer – School Meeting Recording Agreement

This Agreement is made between **Clarendon Primary School** and **[Parent/Carer Name]**.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to establish clear expectations regarding confidentiality and the recording of meetings, discussions and communications between the School and the Parent/Carer.

2. No recording

The Parent/Carer agrees that they will **not audio record, video record, photograph or otherwise capture** any meeting, conversation, or interaction with School Staff, whether conducted:

- In person
- By telephone
- By video call
- Through any digital or electronic platform

unless **explicit prior written consent** has been given by all participants.

3. Staff Right Not to Be Recorded

All School staff have the **right not to be recorded**. This right applies to all meetings and communications, regardless of format.

4. Termination of Meeting

If the School reasonably believes that a meeting or call is being recorded without consent:

- The staff member will request that the recording stop immediately.
- If the recording continues or consent is not confirmed, **the meeting or call will be terminated immediately**.
- The School is under no obligation to continue the meeting at that time.

5. Consequence of Breach

Failure to comply with this agreement may result in:

- Meetings being restricted to written communication only, and/or
- Meetings being conducted with additional School representatives present, and/or
- Any other reasonable measures the School deems necessary to protect staff and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

6. Acknowledgement

By signing below, the Parent/Carer confirms that they:

- Understand the contents of this agreement
- Agree to comply with its terms
- Acknowledge the School's responsibility to safeguard staff wellbeing and confidentiality

Signed on behalf of the school

Name.....

Position.....

Signature.....

Date.....

Signed by Parent/Carer

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....