

Communication Policy

Highfield C of E Primary School



Approved by: The Governing Body

Date: 9.9.25

Last reviewed on: 12.09.2025

Next review due by: September 2027

The governing body of Highfield C E Primary School adopted this policy on:

It will review it in: September 2027

Introduction

Positive communication is an essential element of the aims and vision of Highfield CE Primary School. This enables our children and families to feel valued and listened to. The majority of this communication takes place through the frequent verbal interactions between families and staff as children are brought to and collected from school as well as by email, telephone and other electronic communication.

Aim

To ensure that Highfield CE Primary School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively and respectfully with each other, with our children, with their families and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are open, honest, respectful, ethical and professional.

Contact details

The school holds emergency contact details for all children on the School Information Management System (SIMs). Families are expected to inform the school immediately if contact information needs to be revised/updated. Depending on the nature of the information being shared, the school will use the most practicable means to contact families.

Communications with Families

Hereafter the term ‘families’ will be used to refer to all those individuals who have a role in the up-bringing and care of the child. Outside of teaching their designated class, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school. These duties will include care of children, organisation of extra-curricular activities, continued professional development opportunities or whole-school coordination of a curriculum subject.

Teaching staff will aim to return contact **within 48-hours** of the request being made via telephone, email and/or other electronic communication i.e., ParentMail. If a meeting is deemed necessary or appropriate, staff will aim to arrange this within 5 school days. If the school feels that more than one member of staff is needed to attend the requested meeting, school reserve the right to exceed this number of days. The following list, whilst not exhaustive, covers the main ways in which we will communicate with families. All response times are indicated in the following paragraphs, where extensions are needed the family will be updated with an expected response time.

Each morning on the playgrounds there are adults that you can speak to. Teachers will stand on their classroom entrance and are happy to take any messages. These adults are there to help bring children into school, take messages and listen to any concerns. The school office is manned from 8.45am everyday. Emails and Electronic Information The school subscribes to Parent Mail allowing us to send

messages and email letters to families. Not only is this more environmentally friendly as it decreases paper usage, it also reduces photocopying and other costs in the school. Families must provide us with a valid email address. Families are permitted to use e-mail as a means of providing a quick, effective way of communicating information about their child or to arrange a meeting with their teacher. All emails will be received by the school office and will be directed to the relevant member of staff accordingly.

All emails to school must be sent to info@highfieldschool.co.uk and emails will be directed to the relevant staff member.

Staff reserve the right not to respond to emails that are sent directly to them from families. Families are reminded that teachers are teaching and their priority is being with the children. They are actively discouraged from checking emails during the school day, therefore requests which require immediate or quick action should be communicated via the school office. We request that messages are only sent between 8am and 4.30pm.

All electronic communication requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours. Staff are not expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to electronic communications outside of the hours stated. However, staff are encouraged to work flexibly and respond to this type of communication in a way that suits them to balance their working hours. Staff do not expect families to read, respond or action emails outside hours that suit them. Indirect communication does not replace face to face meetings where sensitive discussion is required. All staff and families should seek face to face communications when indirect communication is not appropriate. Staff and families are discouraged from entering into in-depth discussions about a child's progress or well-being by electronic communication.

Confidentiality

All emails and communication will be dealt with strict confidentiality from all staff. We do not give out personal emails of staff. The school office email address is manned during school hours and can direct emails to relevant staff as appropriate and in a timely manner.

Home/School Communication

ParentMail

The school uses ParentMail to send message to families. This is not a reply service. Any responses should be sent to info@highfieldschool.co.uk

The school uses Google Classroom (infants) and Showbie (juniors) to send home photographs, share home-learning, send messages and reminders.

Telephone calls

Inbound

All telephone calls will be answered by staff in the main office. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person. If the call requires a response from a teaching member of staff, we aim to do this within 48 hours. Very often a member of the office staff can relay a response to the family.

Outbound

Telephone calls will be made where immediate contact with a family member is required i.e. for illness or injuries. A member of staff will call the first named emergency contact as listed. Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth. In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will either leave an answer phone message or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers where possible.

Written Reports

Once a year, we provide a full written progress report to each child's family. This report identifies areas of strength and next steps.

Newsletters

Our Newsletter (weekly update) is sent out each Friday via Parentmail and contains important reminders, dates and messages for the week ahead. Families are strongly encouraged to read the weekly newsletter.

Parent Consultations

All families are provided with two, 10-minute meetings each academic year. Families are asked to book a single appointment for an allocated date and time and to attend together. Should there be exceptional circumstances that mean you cannot attend, your child's class teacher will offer one further appointment to the family. Families are welcome to request additional meetings should they have further concerns regarding their child's progress or well-being throughout the year. Additional parent meetings are held throughout the year where required.

Annual Reviews for Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will have an Annual Review each academic year to discuss their progress in relation to the aims and objectives of their plan and termly review meetings are held to ensure provision and support is appropriate.

School Website

The school website <https://www.highfieldceprimarieschool.co.uk/> provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

Complaints

All formal letters of complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's separate Complaints Policy. Emails will NOT be treated as a formal letter of complaint. All formal letters to families must be approved by the Headteacher before they are sent. Formal correspondence with families will be kept in the child's personal folder and held for a period of time in accordance with our Disposal of Records Schedule.

The school does not accept or act upon anonymous communication unless in relation to matters of serious Child Protection.

Requests for Information

Please refer to our Data Protection and GDPR Policy for copies of children's records, freedom of information and Subject Access Requests. This will detail procedures and protocols, including timings.

Final Note

Although it is a rare occurrence, when communication becomes inappropriate, aggressive, vexatious, persistent, or disproportionate and the school deems it is unacceptable, then actions will be put in place. This behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in a parent/carer being banned from the premises. These actions will involve: The headteacher, senior management and the school Chair of Governors, and if appropriate, the police. As stated in paragraph 2 'communications should be honest, respectful, ethical and professional', staff will strive to adhere to this and hope this will be reciprocated by the wider school community.

Communication Flow chart

All emails need to go through our office at info@highfieldschool.co.uk and it will be directed to the relevant staff member.

Emails sent to personal email addresses will not be responded to due to email filtering systems.

Learning Concerns ↓	Pastoral concern ↓	Concern relating to particular learning or physical needs ↓	Issues relating to staff ↓	Concerns & Queries relating to school administration ↓
Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher in the first instance.	<i>(Pastoral care covers our support of your child's individual needs, their emotional wellbeing and helping them with any personal problems they may be experiencing at school.)</i>	<i>Where a concern is related to a special need and you feel an adjustment may be required to support successful learning e.g. issues related to ASI (autistic spectrum indicators), dyslexia or dyspraxia or physical disabilities</i>	Please ask to speak with a Phase Leader either Miss Ellis (infants) or Miss Collins (Year 3,4) Mr Lewis (Year 5,6)	Please speak to Carol Donnachie School Business Manager
	↓ Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher or ELSA (if they are known to the ELSAs) in the first instance.	↓ Please arrange an appointment with our Deputy Head and SENCO Mrs Bond		
↓ If you feel the class teacher is unable to help, please contact the Phase Leader. Our Phase Leaders are responsible for the behaviour and pastoral care of each of their year groups				
↓ If you are not satisfied with the outcome and your concern relates to a learning or pastoral concern in the Infant Department, please ask to speak with the Deputy Headteacher Mrs Bond				
↓ Please make an appointment to see our Head Teacher, Mrs Walford , if you remain concerned after following the steps above.				
<p>Teachers are available after school for informal conversations and appointments can be made with all of the above by contacting the school office on 02380 863159 or emailing info@highfieldschool.co.uk</p> <p>If you are writing to the school it is really helpful if you give us as much information about the background of your concern or complaint as possible, including who it involves, and what you would like the outcome to be.</p> <p>Our chair of Governors, Mr Alan Hunt is also here to support when a parent has a concern or complaint. He can be contacted through the school office.</p>				