



Community Special School

# HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

ALFRETON PARK COMMUNITY SPECIAL SCHOOL

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Approved by:        | Date:        |
| Last reviewed on:   | January 2020 |
| Next review due by: | January 2022 |

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## 1. Introduction and aims

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** routinely respond to communications outside of school hours (8.30-4.00) or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

### 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
- Ensuring that the school has updated information regarding email address and mobile phone numbers for all with parental responsibility
- Download the Dojo app and access messages via the app.

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

### **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/carers 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 may use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- School surveys or consultations
- Parent group meetings

#### **3.2 Text messages/Parent Hub**

We will text message via Parent Hub parents about:

- Events in school
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

#### **3.3 School calendar**

Our school website (<https://www.alfretonpark.derbyshire.sch.uk/diary/grid>) and newsletter includes a school calendar for the term.

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**

School will phone parents to keep them informed of any health or welfare concerns.

#### **3.5 Letters**

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

➤ Our weekly/termly newsletter

### 3.6 Home School diaries

Staff endeavour to write in pupils home school diaries daily and give the level of information agreed with parents. Bookmarks will be attached to indicate required information as requested by parents.

Classrooms are very busy and sometimes it may not possible to write in every pupil's diary every day.

Parents are asked to read these daily and sign to indicate that they have read it. They are also asked to communicate with school in the diary provided.

If a pupil has packed lunch staff will return any uneaten food and empty wrappers so that parent know how much has been eaten.

### 3.7 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- Annual review report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- Termly progress reports as part of their Individual Learning Plan review
- A report on the progression in relation to EHCP objectives

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold 1 parents' evening 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, 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.

All pupils have at least one review of their EHCP annually.

### 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.

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

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 1 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 2 working days.

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

#### 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 2 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 1 day of your request.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Health concerns
- Bullying

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 15 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

#### 4.4 Social Media

School policy states social media should not be used to communicate directly with parents/Carers and staff.

The school has an 'Alfreton Park Community Special School' Facebook page and a 'Friend of Alfreton Park' page where we will share information regarding events and activities taking place and celebrate pupils' achievements. Parent, carers and staff are free to comment on posts and these will be monitored to ensure that posts are appropriate and support the positive work of the school.

In addition, parents have a Facebook group for mutual support this is not controlled by the school. All parents are welcome to join and comment. The admin for the page comprises solely of parents and it is monitored regularly by them. Any derogatory or inappropriate comments will be deleted.

### 5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages/braille
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls
- Support with reading and writing as required

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## 6. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

## 7. 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

### 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 [info@alfretonpark.derbyshire.sch.uk 01773 832019]
- 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 2 days

| I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...                            | WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO   |
|---|---|
| My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework | Your child's Class Teacher  |
| My child's wellbeing/pastoral support                 | Sharon Walker   |
| Payments  | Holly England   |
| School trips  | Class Teacher   |
| Uniform/lost and found                                | Class Teacher   |
| Attendance and absence requests                       | If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01773 832 019<br>If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact Holly England |
| Bullying and behavior                                 | Class Teacher/ Cheryl Smart   |

| I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...        | WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO          |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| School events/the school calendar | Toyah Ridgway                    |
| Special educational needs         | Cheryl Smart                     |
| After-school club                 | Denise Scrimshire                |
| The PTA                           | School office Rebecca Dallman    |
| The governing board               | Cheryl smart or Catherine Hughes |
| Catering/meals                    | Yzzy Nield                       |

### Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

<https://www.alfretonpark.derbyshire.sch.uk/general/>