

Haslingfield Endowed Primary School
Communication Policy
February 2015

1. Introduction

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve.

In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with 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 the school.

2. Aims

Our school aims to ensure all communications are:

- Clear
- Comprehensive
- Two way
- Timely
- Respective Responsibilities

This explains the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities towards the children, the responsibilities of parents, and what the school expects of the children.

School

The school will undertake to ensure that:

- Parents and children have clear lines of communications
- The curriculum is clearly communicated to parents
- Parents are informed of forthcoming events within appropriate timelines
- All communications will be treated as confidential within the school context

Parent/Guardians/Carers

Parents will undertake to:

- Read the key communications issued by the school
- Raise issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity with the school in the appropriate manner
- Act on the communication (for example, attending special meetings)

3. Open Door Policy

3.1. Email

We ask parents to email office@haslingfield.cambs.sch.uk. For the purposes of administration we require all emails to go to a central email address. However, all emails will be treated with full confidentiality and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please note all emails should specify the member of staff to whom the query is addressed.

We will respond to parents' emails within 10 working days (during term time; to cover sickness and investigations).

3.2. Letter

Letters can be handed into, or posted to, the school office. As with emails all letters will be treated with full confidentiality and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please note all letters should specify the member of staff to whom the query is addressed. Please let the office staff know if the letter contains information about your child which you would like the class teacher to receive urgently.

We will respond to letters within 10 working days (during term time; to cover sickness and investigations).

3.3. Telephone

This would be appropriate where enquiries are deemed more urgent by the parent, such as communicating particular information about the child to the school. We ask parents to phone the school on 01223 870457. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, we aim to do this within 2 working days.

3.4. Appointments

If necessary parents can visit the school to ask questions, gain support or to have the opportunity to talk about their child/home issues with either the child's class teacher or the Senior Management Team. Parents are asked to phone the school office on 01223 870457 to make an appointment.

This allows the school time to organise cover to make staff available to speak to the parents. We will aim to make appointments within 5 working days and are willing to meet either before (from 8.00 am) or after school (3.30 – 4.30 pm) to fit in with parents.

Parents are asked not to approach teachers to discuss their child if they meet them outside of school as this does not allow for confidential discussion.

3.5. Absence Requests

We ask parents to complete a school 'Absence Request Form' which we require to be given to the school a minimum of 10 working days before the requested date, in order to receive a response before the date of the absence.

4. School prospectus and website

Our school prospectus and website contain a range of specified information to give parents and carers, and the wider public, a full picture of provision at our school. We update this for each school year.

5. Home-school communication

- 5.1. A calendar of school events will be produced at the start of each term and communicated via the school Newsletter and on the website. The school Newsletter is sent to parents weekly. It contains general details of school events and activities. We send other letters when necessary.
- 5.2. There is a Home / School agreement which will be sent home at the beginning of the year for parents to sign and return.
- 5.3. At the beginning of each half-term, all teachers write to the parents or carers of the children in their classes with details of the work to be covered during the forthcoming half-term. We invite parents and carers to support their child's work through a range of suggested activities to be shared with the child at home.
- 5.4. We welcome and value all feedback from parents and carers about our school's policies and practices. We conduct an annual survey to canvas the views of parents and carers about our school and report back on the outcomes.
- 5.5. We arrange regular curriculum meetings for parents and carers. These are evening meetings to explain various areas of our curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning. We hold a meeting for new parents/carers each June, and for Year 6 parents and carers each March, concerning the national tests. All residential visits that children make to involve a number of meetings with parents and carers regarding the planning and content of the visit, and a post-visit review.
- 5.6. If a child is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, we contact a parent (by telephone, if possible) to find out the reason for the absence.

6. Written Reports

- 6.1. In autumn and spring, parents receive a termly report with details of the child's attainment and progress in the core subjects and their attitude to learning. There is a more in depth report in the summer which gives feedback on all areas of the curriculum.

7. Parent Consultations

- 7.1. Parents meet their child's teacher twice during the year for parent consultations. To support parents attending a variety of afternoon and evening times are offered.
- 7.2. Where possible it is more effective for parents to attend the consultation together so that a common approach to supporting the child in their learning can be agreed. If exceptional circumstance mean this is not possible we will try to arrange separate consultations.

8. Parent Forum/Tea and Chat

- 8.1. The Parent Forum/Tea and Chat is the place where parents/carers, the Headteacher and governors meet to discuss aspects of their children's education. The Parent Forum is for everyone and anyone can attend a meeting.
- 8.2. The Parent Forum does not have the power to make decisions unless the school has specifically asked for a decision to be made. However, the Headteacher and governors want to hear the views of parents so that they can make sure that those views feed into the decisions made by the school.
- 8.3. The Parent Forum meets five or six times a year, with two meetings each term. Dates of meetings are advertised well in advance.

9. Parentmail

- 9.1. We encourage all parents to inform the school of their current e-mail address, to allow them access to parentmail, which is a quick and efficient method for the school to communicate with parents. Those who do not have access to parentmail will receive a paper copy of any correspondence.
- 9.2. Parentmail is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted group, or to all parents on parentmail. The newsletter, information about whole school events and all letters relevant to the whole school are sent out to all parents on parent mail and in addition, some specific communications regarding trips and events are sent out to the relevant groups of parents.

10. Governors

- 10.1. A notice board detailing the names of governors is on the school website. Governors should be contacted via the school (email: office@haslingfield.cambs.sch.uk or written communications left at the school office and will be forwarded to the Chair of Governors). As governors support the school in a strategic role, if parents contact them on a matter to do with the management of the school, governors will be unable to respond and will direct them to take their concern to the school.

11. Communication with the Community

- 11.1. Members of the local community are invited to school functions such as Special Assemblies, Harvest, Christmas Fairs, Christmas Carol services and school productions.
- 11.2. Guest speakers from local churches, community organisations and charities come into school to speak to the children.

12. Communication within our school

- 12.1. So that we all know what is going on, there is a timetable in the staff room of the week's activities, and a whiteboard for the day's messages.
- 12.2. All our procedures are detailed in the staff handbook.
- 12.3. Written communications with members of staff are delivered through pigeonholes or by email.
- 12.4. Staff members' personal details will not be shared with other members of staff or persons external to the school, without due authority.

13. Communication with other Schools

- 13.1. The school regularly communicates with staff and children of other primary schools. Such communication may be by means of personal contact with specific staff or through more formal contact such as cluster groups and by means of sports fixtures and other inter-school events.
- 13.2. The Head teacher is a member of Network 23, a cluster of primary schools in the local area. The chair of governors is a member of the chairs group of this network
- 13.3. Communication with the local secondary schools is predominantly for Y6 children. We have particularly close links with Comberton Village College.

14. Communication with Outside Agencies

14.1. Close contacts are maintained with support agencies including the Educational Psychologist, Learning Support Services, the Library Service, the Peripatetic Music Service, the EWO, the School Doctor and the School Nurse.

15. Confidentiality

15.1. We store useful information about pupils in our school and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details have been sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed.

16. Freedom of Information

16.1. Refer to Haslingfield School's Freedom of Information Policy.

17. Monitoring and review

This policy will be regularly monitored, and will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required.

This Policy was ratified by the Governing Body on

Signed:.....Chair of Governors

Date of next review: