



Home-school communication policy

Approved by:	Pete Sayers	Date: January 2023
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Contents

1. Introduction and aims.....	2
2. Roles and responsibilities.....	2
3. How we communicate with parents and carers.....	3
4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school	5
5. Inclusion	6
6. Monitoring and review	7
7. Links with other policies	7
Appendix 1: school contact list	8

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 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, 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
- 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 (8.00am to 4pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time) bearing in mind teaching commitments may prevent this. 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. For all general enquiries the expectation is that we will respond within 5 working days where possible. We will endeavour to attend to all emails sent to our urgent email address the next working day.

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

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 (8am to 4pm) or during school holidays.

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 should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

On occasion, we may need to contact individual parents to discuss their child. It is important that staff take time to talk and listen to parents and carers with respect. Therefore, in these instances, we will endeavour to arrange a meeting or phonecall so that confidentiality is maintained rather than discussing individual children in front of other parents or pupils.

3.1 Email

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

- Upcoming school events

- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Communication texts will be sent during core school hours unless urgent information needs to be shared outside of these hours.

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about the following:

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

Communication texts will be sent during core school hours unless urgent information needs to be shared outside of these hours.

3.3 School calendar

Our school website contains a termly calendar for the term and this will be sent out via email also. 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.

On occasion, events will be organised at shorter notice, in this case parents concerned will be notified via email and text.

3.4 Phone calls

Phone calls to parents may be made to clarify information, to discuss a child's attendance, for medical/first aid reasons, to arrange a meeting or to keep parents up to date with relevant information, if necessary.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly via email:

- Letters about events, trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our newsletter
- Information

If parents would prefer to receive a hard copy letter, they can request this from the school office.

3.6 Homework books/school planners

See Homework policy for details.

3.7 Reports

- Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, abiding by the statutory requirements made in the ARA (Assessment and Reporting Arrangements) including:
- Termly progress reports indicating their achievement in the curriculum, their progress, their attitude and their attendance.
- A report on Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 SATs tests results.
- A report on EYFS assessment results, Year 1 Phonic Screening results and Y4 MTC (Multiplication Check) results.

3.8 Meetings

We hold 2 parents' evening(s) 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.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

Parents have the opportunity to request a further parents' evening in the Summer term following their child's end of year report, if required.

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 Home-school communications app

School is working towards using Arbor for communications and will advise parents when this feature is fully working.

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 3 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days.

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

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 5 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 working 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
- Attendance

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 5 working days of the request.

Teachers are on the door at the beginning or end of the school day however, if parents need to speak to them, 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

This will ensure that confidentiality is maintained (see section 3).

4.4 Home-school communications app

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. If you require information in an alternate format or in large print for example, please contact the school office.

6. Monitoring and review

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

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
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Classteacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Classteacher/Mrs Craven
Payments (including School Trip payments)	Mrs Miller (school office or via enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk)
School trips	Lead Teacher (as advised on the trip letter to parents)
Uniform/lost and found	School office (school office or via enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk)
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01274 410111 or email attendance@idle.bradford.sch.uk If you want to request approval for term-time absence, please contact the office for the form
Pupil behaviour	Classteacher/Phase Leader
School events/the school calendar	School office (school office or via enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk)
Special educational needs (SEN)	Mrs R Kaur (school office or via Rajbinder.kaur@idle.bradford.sch.uk)
Before and after-school clubs	Mrs Nelson (school office or via enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk)
Hiring the school premises	Mrs Ackroyd (school office or via enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk)
PTFA	idleceptfa@gmail.com
Governing board	School office or via

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
	enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk
Catering/meals	School office or via enquiries@idle.bradford.sch.uk
Other concerns	Headteacher