

Policy title	Parent/carer Communication
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Policy owner	Marcus Still (Principal)

Status	Approved
Summary of change	Policy created

Approval date	December 2025
Approval authority	Principal
Review date	December 2027

1. Purpose/aims

The aim of this policy is to set out how we communicate and interact with parents and carers. It will clarify expectations for staff and our school community when it comes to communication and outline appropriate and effective interactions between staff and parents/carers.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

2.1 Under the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005, all parents can receive information about their child. They have the right to:

- Receive information, such as school reports
- Be asked to give consent, such as to the child taking part in a school trip
- Be informed about meetings involving the child, such as governors' meeting on the child's exclusion from school.

It also states that school and local authority staff must treat all parents equally, unless a court order states differently.

2.2 Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 sets out parental legal obligations including ensuring their child receives a suitable full-time education.

3. Communication from school

As a school, Lindfield Primary Academy is committed to ensuring that communication with parents/carers is:

- Clear, accessible and inclusive - all communication will use language and formats that all parents/carers can understand
- Timely (within three working days) and responsive where important information is shared promptly
- Confidential and secure, and
- Respectful and professional to ensure that positive relationships between the school and parents/carers are maintained.

Communication will come from different members of staff in different ways as outlined below:

3.1 General communication

Most communication will come from the school office. This will include communication from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), teachers, Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) and wider school communication. Such communication will come via the 'Reach More Parents' app, email and telephone and will include, but is not limited to, such things as:

- School events (sports days, parents' evenings etc)
- PTA events
- Sporting events
- Trips
- Clubs
- Wider community events (holiday clubs etc)
- Workshops in school
- Attendance

Fortnightly newsletters will also be sent to all staff and parents/carers via the office. These will be composed by the SLT.

3.2 Senior Leadership Team communication

Most communication from the SLT will come via the school office. However, there will be times when the SLT may telephone parents/carers. This may be in response to an email/telephone call to the office from parents/carers, to arrange a meeting, discuss a child etc. SLT members are also available for parents/carers to interact with at morning drop off and afternoon pick up. There will always be at least one SLT member on each set of the school gates for parents/carers to speak to should they need/wish.

3.3 Teacher communication

As previously stated, most communication from teachers to parents/carers will come via the school office. Communication will also come via the 'Seesaw' app where appropriate. However, like the SLT, there may be times that teachers need to communicate with parents in different ways. This will mostly be via telephone and again may be in response to an email/telephone call to the office from parents/carers, to arrange a meeting, discuss a child etc. However, this will come in other different forms and will differ across different age phases within the school. These differences are outlined below.

Where a parent/carer requests a meeting/phone call etc from a teacher, they will respond as soon as is possible and within three working days.

3.3.1 EYFS communication

A lot of communication from the EYFS teachers will come from the use of the 'Seesaw' app. This will include such communications, but is not limited to, as:

- Phonics videos
- Journal updates
- Weekly overviews
- Trip information including volunteer requests
- Reading information, and
- Homework information

Using the app, teachers and parents/carers can also converse using the message feature. Such messages may include things like parents/carers letting the teacher know that a different relative will be collecting their child that day or letting the teacher know their child forgot their water bottle that day etc. If a parent would like to meet their teacher to discuss an issue relating to their child, they could also use this feature. Alternatively, they can contact the school office to request and arrange a meeting.

EYFS teachers meet their children on the gate each morning and see them out at the end of each day. This means that there is further opportunity for communication between them and parents/carers. Teachers will use this to mostly report on a child's day, ask questions etc. Parents/carers should only use this to communicate issues briefly such as those outlined when discussing the message feature of the 'Seesaw' app.

3.3.2 Key Stage One communication

Similarly to EYFS, Key Stage One (KS1) teachers are present at drop off and collection each day via the playground outside the KS1 cloakroom. This is to help children and parents/carers transition from EYFS and continue communication, albeit less frequently than in EYFS. This presence means that communication at

these times is used in the same way as it is in the EYFS. If a parent would like to request a meeting with their child's teacher and is unable to do so briefly at drop off or pick up, they must do so via the school office. KS1 teachers will also continue the use of the 'Seesaw' app as part of the transition from EYFS.

3.3.3 Key Stage Two communication

As children progress to Key Stage Two, their growing independence means communication between parents/carers looks different from their previous school years. Teachers will no longer collect their classes at the beginning of the day but instead, will be outside their classroom doors to greet all pupils apart from in year six. This means communication between teachers and parents/carers at drop off continues in the same way as EYFS/KS1 until children leave year five. At the end of the day, all teachers send their children out from an exit point and therefore, face-to-face communication like in EYFS/KS1 can continue. Just like EYFS and KS1, if a parent would like to request a meeting with their child's teacher and is unable to do so briefly at drop off or pick up, they must do so via the school office.

The 'Seesaw' app is no longer used in KS2 expect for when children go on residential in years five and year six.

4. Communication from parents

Generally, parents/carers will use the above guidelines as to how and when to contact their child/s teacher/s. All communication between parents/carers and school should be respectful and look to build/maintain positive relationships. Any communication deemed not to be respectful will result in sanctions as set out in the parent code of conduct policy. The below further outlines this and looks at some other specific situations.

4.1 Before/after school communication

Parents/carers may wish to speak to their child's teacher at drop off/pick up before and/or after school. As a school, this is something we of course encourage and facilitate. However, parents/carers must be aware that the teacher will have children waiting for them in the morning and that they may have meetings etc to attend after school. Therefore, this communication should be short and centre around things such as missing items, who may be picking the child up etc.

4.2 Requesting a meeting with a teacher

There may be times when a parent/carer wishes to discuss their child further with their teacher and a quick conversation at drop off/pick up will not suffice. Again, this is something we encourage and facilitate as a school. In order to book in a meeting, parents/carers should contact the school office or, in the case of EYFS children, contact the teacher via 'Seesaw'. Where possible, offering a range of potential times and dates and giving a brief explanation of why they wish to meet is beneficial. This is to ensure that the time within the meeting can be used most effectively. Parents/carers should also be aware that teachers may state a finish time for the meeting which should be adhered to in order to enable them to effectively carry out the rest of their professional duties.

4.3 Email communication

All emails to teachers from parents/carers should go through the school office.

4.4 School events

Parents/carers should be aware that school events such as coming in to the classroom to look at work, school fairs etc are not appropriate times to discuss their child at length. We understand as a school that parents/carers and teachers may engage in conversation about children at such events however; any

conversations relating any issues in class, academic progress, friendships etc should all follow the protocols outlined above. This is also the case for school events away from the actual building such as sporting competitions, trips etc.

4.5 Parents evenings

Parents/carers can and should book an appointment with their child/children's teacher/s every Autumn and Spring term. Parents/carers should be aware that these are ten-minute slots and that the timings should be adhered to. This is to ensure all meetings run to time. If a parent/carer would like to discuss anything that comes up in the meeting or an issue further, they should arrange a meeting with the class teacher for another date in the same way as described previously.

4.6 Reports

In the spring and summer terms, all parents/carers will receive a report on their child's progress over the academic year. If a parent/carer would like to discuss the report further with the class teacher, they should arrange a meeting in the same way as described previously.

4.7 Outside of school

Parents/carers should not approach teachers to discuss their child outside of school hours. Any communication would be similar to that of school events – both parties may engage in general talk about the child however, these conversations would not include things about friendships, academic progress etc. If a parent/carer would like to discuss such issues with the class teacher, they should follow the protocols outlined above.

5. Reading journals

Reading journals should not be used by staff or parents/carers to communicate anything other than progress in reading. They should be used to inform staff of what a child is reading, how they progressed with their reading and how the text was discussed by the child. At no time should the reading journal to be sent messages relating to missing items, which adult will collect the child from school etc.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership to:

- Effectively communicate the contents of the policy to all staff
- Effectively communicate the contents of the policy to parents/carers and the wider school community
- Implement the contents of the policy effectively
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy
- Communicate with parents/carers in a respectful, professional way to maintain effective, positive lines of communication.

6.2 It is the responsibility of teachers to:

- Be aware of this policy and make themselves familiar with its content
- Consistently and accurately implement the policy in all communications with parents/carers
- Communicate with parents/carers in a respectful, professional way to maintain effective, positive lines of communication

- Make Senior Leadership aware of any areas where the policy is not effective/fit for purpose so that it can be reviewed.

6.3 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to:

- Familiarise themselves with the contents of the policy
- Adhere to the contents of the policy when communicating with the school – use official channels for communication
- Communicate with teachers in a respectful manner to maintain effective, positive lines of communication.

7 Procedures

The Senior Leadership Team will make all teachers aware of this policy through their communications with them. This will initially be through a professional development meeting where the details of the policy will be outlined along with the reasoning behind decisions made. The Senior Leadership Team will then ensure this policy is a part of any new teacher’s induction.

8 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. However, this policy may be reviewed sooner if needed. This would be in response to feedback from parents and/or staff. It may also be as a result of observations by the Senior Leadership Team.

We will regularly monitor the implementation by staff of this policy to ensure that it is consistently used across the Academy. Any staff that are not consistent or accurate in its implementation, will receive further support and training where necessary/appropriate.

Finally, we will regularly monitor the impact of this policy upon children and parents/carers. If necessary/appropriate, the monitoring of the policy will lead to a review.

9. Contact details

If unable to speak to the school office in person, parents/carers should contact them using the below details:

Telephone: 01444 482524

9 Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Attendance policy
- Behaviour appendices
- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Early Years policy
- Good Behaviour policy
- Handwriting policy
- Homework policy
- More Able policy
- Online Safety policy

- Parent code of conduct policy
- Preventing Bullying policy
- Progression in Calculation policy
- Reading and Phonics policy
- Relationships and Sex Education policy
- Spelling policy
- Staff code of conduct policy
- Teaching and Learning policy
- Uniform policy