



Preston Candover CE Primary School

Date: February 2024

Review Date: February 2026

Communication Policy

1. We believe it is important to create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents in our school. We encourage clear, open communication links with parents as we believe it has a positive impact on pupils' learning. It provides parents with the information they need to support their child's education and helps to build a partnership between home and school. Such communication can be entirely positive and practical for example to seek information, ask a question, clear up a misunderstanding or to draw attention to a matter. Sometimes there is a need to resolve an issue or misunderstanding.
2. We use the term 'parents' in this policy to refer to:
 - Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
 - Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)
3. The term member of staff as referred to in this policy includes:
 - Anyone employed by the school
 - Anyone training in a professional capacity at the school
 - Governors (when acting in this capacity)
 - Volunteers at the school (when acting in this capacity)
 - Anyone employed through an external agency, who are acting in a professional capacity on the school site
4. This communication policy aims to set out the methods of communication, that the school uses to communicate with parents, how parents can contact the school and our expectations from parents when visiting our school or communicating with staff at our school.
5. We acknowledge that sometimes there can be situations that can be emotional and challenging for parents and staff to work through. Nonetheless, we expect all our

community to show mutual respect. We have clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the Staff Code of Conduct) and pupils (through our Behaviour Policy). We also expect parents to engage constructively with school staff and to work together with them in the best interests of our children.

6. We will only communicate with parents in respect of their own child at the school. Requests to raise a concern on behalf of another parent will be declined, as will be requests for information on another child. Should any correspondence be received from legal advisers then this will be shared with the school's legal advisers.
7. If parents are considering making a formal complaint, please see our Complaints Policy. However, stage 1 of our policy suggests that other forms of communication can often help in resolving issues and we encourage parents to use this route. However, this is not compulsory and does not prevent the use of the Complaints Policy either straight away or after other forms of communication have been tried.

8. How we communicate with parents & 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.

9. **Email via T2P**

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

- The Headteacher's Newsletter
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, staff training days)
- Class activities
- Class curriculum newsletters
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

10. School Calender

Our school website includes a school calendar for the year.

Where possible, we try to give parents at 10 days 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). These events will be included in the school calendar.

11. Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about school trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Newsletters

12. Home School Communication Books

Every child has a home school communication book in their school bag. This can be used by the parent/carer, to advise the class teacher of information such as change in end of day collection arrangements.

13. Reports

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

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing and their attendance.
- 1:1 consultations in Autumn and Spring
- A report on KS2 SATs Assessments

We also arrange meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher.

14. Meetings

During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum, 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 education needs (SEN) or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these needs.

15. School Website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:-

- School times and term dates
- Important events and news

- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

16. How parents & carers can communicate with the school

In the case of communications with the school, that are not raising a formal complaint the following guidance will apply.

17. **Meetings**

Face-to-face conversations are generally the best way of communicating with the school at drop off or pick up for quick, short messages.

When a member of staff is not able to speak to you immediately face-to-face due to school commitments, or a longer conversation is deemed necessary or appropriate, then a request for an appointment can be made to discuss the matter either in person or by telephone, at a later date. The school will aim to arrange that meeting within five working days.

Outside of teaching hours, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school so availability of staff outside of teaching hours should not be assumed.

Should a meeting be requested, the decision of which staff member will attend will rest with the Headteacher.

18. **Email**

Parents are welcome to email the school at admin@prestoncandover.hants.sch.uk about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Emails will be most helpful if they are concise, explaining queries/concerns in a clear way. Lengthy and overly detailed accounts can make it more difficult to understand what is being explained and to respond in a timely and clear way.

The school will aim to respond with an acknowledgement within two working days. If a response is unable to be provided within this timeline, which can be to ensure a full and considered response, then a revised timeline will be provided and communicated. We ask that parents await a response from the school and that further emails are not sent pending that response, unless the new deadline has passed.

19. Phone calls

If a query or concern is time sensitive and urgent the parent should call the school office, who will liaise as necessary at the earliest opportunity. In most circumstances, teaching and leadership staff are unlikely to be available to receive calls due to teaching and other commitments.

If the query or concern is not time sensitive and urgent then parents should email or call the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them **within three 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.

For general enquiries, please call or email the school office.

20. Social Media

The school will not respond to concerns raised via social media.

Where the social media site is run by the school, comments will be removed if they do not meet the criteria of the social media site.

Should the school be made aware of any physical threats or abusive behaviour towards staff members on social media, then the school will consider reporting this to the Police and seeking the removal of this content from the site.

21. Communication during school hours/ working days

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during 8.30am – 4pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time). 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 are not expected to.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8.30am – 4pm or during school holidays.

Staff may choose to work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

22. Types of unacceptable behaviour and communication

There are some types of behaviour / communication that the school consider unacceptable.

These are as follows:

- Any physical aggression e.g., slapping, hitting, punching and kicking;
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, or pupils e.g., standing very close to her/him;
- The use of aggressive hand gestures including finger pointing towards a member of staff or pupil;
- Spitting at a member of staff or pupil;

- Shaking or holding a fist towards a member of staff or pupil;
- Shouting at members of staff or pupils (either in person, on school grounds, over the telephone or over video conferencing)
- Swearing, or using offensive language including derogatory language about protected group or characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010;
- Threatening or offensive comments about a member of staff or pupil of the school; this can include verbally, via texts, emails, social media, etc.;
- Sending abusive messages to a member of staff, including via text, email or social media
- A large volume of emails in respect of the same matter over a short period of time.
- Continuing to raise the same issue despite it having been already addressed by the school.
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, on social media platforms
- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Breaching or not conforming to the school's security procedures
- Covertly recording phone calls or meetings with member of staff without permission
- Any other behaviour that is disrespectful, threatening or offensive

This list is not an exhaustive list, but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour which has no place in our school community.

23. Actions that may be taken by the school as a result of unacceptable behaviour and communication

In the first instance, (if the unacceptable behaviour has occurred on site) the school will ask the parent to desist and/or leave the site. If the behaviour is of a serious nature, then the police will be contacted.

Thereafter the school (Headteacher/Member of School Leadership team) will gather information on allegations of unacceptable behaviour. This may include talking to the parties concerned or others as witnesses to the behaviour.

If unacceptable behaviour is considered to have occurred the following actions may be taken by the school, dependent on the severity/gravity of the behaviour:

- The parent will be told verbally that his / her behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and if it is not modified, the school will take further action.

- The parent will be told in writing that his / her behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and if it is not modified, the school will take further action.
- Advising the parent that all future meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and will be minuted;
- Putting in place a contact plan to deal with any communication between the individual and school. For example, except in emergencies, communication to the school must be in writing only to a named individual and the school can set out timescales for school responses
- A warning letter or an immediate ban from the school site;
- Contacting the Police where behaviour is criminal in nature.
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action.

The school will always seek to respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to the unacceptable behaviour and communication rests with the Headteacher and, where necessary, the Governing Body

Dated: **February 2024**

Policies to be read alongside – Code of Conduct / Safeguarding & Child Protection / Behaviour /Attendance/ Home school agreement

Appendix – 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 admin@prestoncandover.hants.sch.uk / 01256 389278
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line for emails
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

Remember to check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning /class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher – via my child's home school communication book
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Class teachers / Inclusion Lead or Headteacher
Payments	School Office
School Trips	School Office / Class teachers
Uniform / lost and found	School Office / Class teachers
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call the School Office. If you want to request approval for term-time absence, please complete an absence request form - for the attention of the Headteacher. This can be found on the website or from the School office.
I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher, Inclusion Lead, Headteacher
School events / the school calendar	School Office
Special Education Needs (SEN)	School Office / Inclusion Officer
After-school clubs	School Office / Club Providers
PCSA	School Office / Chair of PCSA
Governing Body	School Office / Chair of Governors
Catering Meals	School Office
Sports Events	School Office / PE Lead