



Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School

Home–School Communication Policy

Date approved: Summer 2023

Reviewed by: Governing Body

Next Planned Review: Summer 2027

Safeguarding Statement

At Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Contents

1. Introduction and aims
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. How we communicate with parents and carers
4. Absence and emergency communication
5. How parents and carers can communicate with the school
5. Concerns
6. Complaints

1. Introduction and aims

We believe at Hardwick and Cambourne Community Primary School (HCCPS) 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 an appropriate 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 Governors

The Governing Body are responsible for:

- > regularly reviewing this policy.

2.2 Co-Head teachers

The Head teachers is responsible for:

- > ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate

2.3 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** respond to communications outside of school hours 08.30 – 17.00 (unless they choose to do so) or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

2.4 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
- > responding 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, which can be found on our school website.

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.

3.1 Written / Email Communication

We regularly communicate with parents through:

- > a regularly updated school website, which includes calendar dates for the term
- > updates on the school's Twitter pages when appropriate
- > monthly HCCPS Times, sent out via Parentmail, hard copies and on the website
- > short weekly notes on Parentmail giving reminders of key events and class/year group/group specific information
- > regular articles in local magazines about pupils' activities and achievements
- > end-of-year report covering achievement, progress and attendance.

3.2 Day-to-day communication

For daily communication, face-to-face contact is much preferred and a dialogue between staff and parents often clarifies information. If this is not possible, please contact the school office to ask the teacher to contact you by phone or by email.

The beginning of a day is a busy time for teachers, as they are preparing to teach, so are only available for messages to be passed on to. Class teachers are available at the end of the school day for short, informal conversations such as queries about trips, homework etc. If you need anything clarifying or need more time, then please book an appointment and the teacher will be able to suggest a time (normally after 3.30pm) within the next few days.

Some questions can easily be answered by our office staff or by looking on our website, which is regularly updated.

3.3 Meetings

We hold 2 parents' evenings 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. Likewise, if parents have any concerns about their child's progress, it is better that they let the school know this sooner rather than later so that actions can be put in place straight away.

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 needs.

4. Absence and emergency communication

If your child is unwell, please inform us by telephone or email as soon as possible on the first morning of the absence, explaining the reason for absence and expected day of return.

If your child is feeling unwell, sick at school or has hurt themselves badly, especially bangs to the head, we will contact you immediately, so up to date contact details, kept in the school office, are vital.

If the school has to close due to snow or another unexpected emergency, then Parentmail, a message on the school website and Twitter will be used.

5. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

5.1 Email

Parents should always send an email about non-urgent issues to the school office in the first instance – this will then be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff to respond to.

We aim to acknowledge all emails, where necessary, within 1 school day, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call), if appropriate, within 3 school days.

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

5.2 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 3 school 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.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- > family emergencies
- > safeguarding or welfare issues.

5.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the school office or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 3 school 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.

5. Concerns

A concern may be defined as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

If you have a concern, it should normally be possible to find a satisfactory conclusion through informal talks.

In the first instance, you should book an appointment with the class teacher. This meeting will often be a discussion and there may be a need for further investigation or a follow up meeting. A short email explaining the main issue is usually better than a detailed account at this point. These concerns may include issues including friendship problems, unsettledness at home or school, change in family circumstances, confidence with school work, or an incident that your child has recounted involving pupils or staff.

If you feel that the matter has not been resolved after time and/or discussion with the class teacher, or your concern is about the class teacher, please book an appointment to meet with the Head of Campus, via the school office.

Very serious concerns, such as those relating to the conduct of a member of staff, should be raised directly with the Headteacher.

At no stage in the process, should a parent approach individual governors to raise concerns. They have no power to act on an individual basis.

6. Complaints

The Governing Body uses the Local Government Ombudsman definition of complaint, which is *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

If a concern has not been resolved by the process described above, and the situation becomes more formal, then it is considered to be a complaint. Please see the Complaints Procedure for further guidance which you will find on our school website. This explains clearly how to proceed with a complaint.