



Home-school communication policy

King's Academy Northern Parade

Approved by:	Local Governing Body	Date: January 2022
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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	6
7. Links with other policies	6
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
- Ensuring a consistent approach to all school communications
- 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

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents/carers 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/carers 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/carers 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 – 5.30pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). Class teachers will not respond to communication during the hours in which they are teaching. 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.

2.3 Parents/carers

Parents/carers 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/carers should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication during their teaching time, outside of core school hours (8.00am – 5.30pm), or during school holidays.

Our parent conduct policy can be found on our school website.

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents/carers up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents/carers 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 Email

The school subscribes to Teachers2Parents allowing us to email letters to families. Not only is this more environmentally friendly as it decreases paper usage, it also reduces photocopying and other costs in the school. We urge families to provide us with a valid email address.

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

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

For letters that require financial contributions e.g. school trips, an initial letter will be emailed followed by a reminder letter if required. This may then be followed up with a final text message reminder.

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Payments (including final reminders)
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Reminders of upcoming school events

Any text messages that serve as REMINDERS will be labelled accordingly.

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the half-term. We also send out key dates on our fortnightly newsletter. This fortnightly newsletter will be sent out to all parents/carers, staff and governors.

Where possible, **we try to give parents/carers 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).

If an event e.g. school trip/ visitor requires a financial contribution, **we aim to give parents/carers at least 4 WEEKS' NOTICE.**

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Phone calls

Parents/carers may receive a phone call for the following:

- Where immediate contact is required, e.g. injuries or accidents.
- In response to a parent/carer query, usually from the Class Teacher or Year Lead
- A wellbeing check-in from the Pastoral or Attendance Team
- To discuss pupils' behaviour

3.5 Letters

As we are a paperless school, we send all letters via email (Teachers2Parents) unless they require a printed reply slip. All letters that are follow up letters will be labelled REMINDER at the top. **Copies of all letters to parents/carers will be sent to staff and governors.**

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our fortnightly newsletter
- Our termly year group newsletter

3.6 Reports

Parents/carers 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
- A report on Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 SATs tests and phonics screening tests

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.7 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening(s) per term. 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.

3.8 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/carers should check the website before contacting the school.

3.9 Studybugs

Studybugs is used by the school for parents/carers to report their child's absence. It helps safeguard your child by automating schools' processing of sick reports, so if any children are unaccounted for, the school will know right away.

All data is confidential and secure and will not be shared.

3.10 School Facebook Site

Staff are advised not to communicate with families via social networking sites or accept them as "friends". Our Facebook feed is designed to remind our parents/carers of upcoming events and highlight positive aspects of our school only. Any negative comments or complaints will be deleted and the school reserves the right to 'block' any user from the school's page.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents/carers 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/carers should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Parents/carers are reminded that teachers have little to no time during their teaching day to check emails and therefore requests which require immediate or quick action should not be sent via email. For example, emailing your child's teacher to inform them you will be collecting them for an appointment or to change pick-up arrangements is not appropriate due to the high likelihood that the message will not be read in time. It is important that families telephone the school office with this information. Staff, if appropriate, may forward emails to the Headteacher.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 3 working days.

Staff are not expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to emails outside of their working day (8.00am – 5.30pm). However, staff are encouraged to work flexibly and respond to emails in a way that suits them to balance their working hours. Staff do not expect parents/carers to read, respond or action emails outside hours that suit them. Email does not replace face to face meetings where some discussion is required. All staff should seek face to face communications, when email is not the most effective

form of communication. Staff and families are discouraged from entering into in-depth discussions about a child's progress or well-being via email.

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

4.2 Phone calls

All telephone calls will be answered by staff in the main office. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, we aim to do this within 3 working days.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

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.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, 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

4.4 Studybugs apps

Studybugs is used by the school for parents/carers to report their child's absence. It helps safeguard your child by automating schools' processing of sick reports, so if any children are unaccounted for, the school will know right away.

All data is confidential and secure and will not be shared.

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

Parents/carers who need help communicating with the school and outside agencies can request support. #

Our school website can be translated into different languages (click on the world icon).

Please contact the school office to discuss further arrangements..

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years.

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
- Parent conduct policy
- Staff code of conduct and behaviour
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement

Appendix 1: 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 the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 3 working days.

Remember: 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 or Year Lead
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Class Teacher (who if required can make a referral to Pastoral team)
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform/lost and found	School office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, do this via Studybugs or call: 023 92 662129
Bullying and behaviour	Class Teacher or Year Lead
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Miss Rollings or Mrs Elliott
Safeguarding or vulnerable children	Miss Davies
Before and after-school clubs	Leapfrog / Lynn Vince
Hiring the school premises	Sarah Rose
PTA	Emily Kingdon, Emily Norton or Kathryn Wilden
Governing body	Hugh Whittaker (Chair of Governors)
Catering/meals	School office

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

The complaints policy can be found under the policies and information section on our school website.