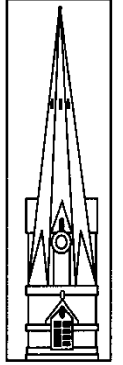


*Higher Walton C.E. Primary
School*



Communications Policy

MISSION

Higher Walton CE Primary School aims to celebrate everyone's uniqueness, enabling our children to flourish and reach their true potential. We do this in a caring, supportive and stimulating environment, so that everyone has the very best opportunity to manifest, "Life in all its fullness" (John 10 v 10).

VISION

Our school vision is "Life in all its fullness" (John 10 v 10). Within this school each child is considered as a unique child of God. All members of our school family are welcomed into a safe and secure Christian environment where they are valued, included and accepted. Our Christian ethos promotes self-worth, self-respect and trust, so that everyone develops the confidence to ask questions, talk through problems and explore values and beliefs leading to responsible behaviour and citizenship.

AIMS

Our school works with the Church, parents and carers, and other partners to provide an effective teaching and learning environment, where everyone is:

- Happy, valued, secure and cared for.
- Confident in talking through problems, asking questions and exploring their own values and beliefs.
- Listened to with respect and supported.
- Safe from bullying and discrimination in a Christian school that respects and cares for others.
- Encouraged to develop self-regulation and accept responsibility for their own behaviour.

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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

Roles and responsibilities

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

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 and 6.00pm 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 are not expected to respond out of these hours.

A copy of our model ICT and internet acceptable use policy are available on the school website.

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; 8.00am-6.00pm or during school holidays. Teachers and teaching assistants are not able to respond to emails during lesson time. If your message is urgent please contact the office staff who are able to process your enquiry. Please note we cannot guarantee that messages arriving late in the afternoon are passed on in time to the teachers or After School Club in time for end of school pick up. This is due to the high number of calls/emails and messages we receive. Please let school know by 10.00am if your collection arrangements for that day are any different.

Please see Parent's code of conduct Policy on the school website.

How we communicate with parents and carers

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

- Email We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:
 - Upcoming school events and visits
 - Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
 - School surveys or consultations
 - Class activities or teacher requests
 - Annual curriculum overview
 - Newsletters
 - Attendance
 - Half-termly extra-curricular school clubs

Studybugs We use Studybugs to process messages and share alerts regarding attendance and punctuality

Text messages/Groupcall Messenger & Xpressions Transitioning to Schoolcomms (ParentPay APP) for Summer term 2024

We will text parents about:

- Payments (e.g. school lunch payments, trips, music lessons)
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Extra-curricular activities (sharing link to consent & information via Microsoft forms)
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Absence
- Cancellation of after school clubs

School Calendar

Our School website and newsletters include a full school calendar for the academic year. 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.

Phone calls

If your child has an accident in school or is feeling unwell we will contact parents and give them an opportunity to call into school to see their child, speak to their child on the phone or collect their child to take them home. We will contact parents by phone if there are any incidents during the day that we feel parents should be aware of such as:

- Poor behaviour
- Conflict with friends
- Attainment and progress
- Attendance and punctuality

Letters

- We send the following letters home regularly:
- Attendance and punctuality letters
- Printed Microsoft forms on the request of parents
- Newsletter on the request of parents
- Curriculum information on the request of parents
- End of year reports
- SEND Information and consent forms

Homework

We communicate with parents and deliver homework activities using the following:

- Reading records
- School website

Reports

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

- A comprehensive end-of-year report covering a child's achievement in every area of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, their attitude to learning and their punctuality and attendance.
- A report on EYFS, (Key Stage) KS1 and KS2 SATs test results

Meetings

We have two Parents' Evenings in the autumn and spring term and an open evening event in the Summer 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.

We also operate an Open Door Policy where parents can see their child's teacher briefly before or after school if they have any immediate concern or wish to share information with the child's teacher

- 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
- Admissions information
- Extra-curricular activities

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.

Email

Parents should always email the school office who will then forward the email to the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within three working days. If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

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 two 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 three 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
- Health issues

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 three 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

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English but are happy to accommodate any other language if required.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls
- We can make additional alternative arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

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.

Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing

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 aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days

I have a question about...	Who to ask?
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk and please put FAO (name of class teacher) in the email subject line.

My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk and please put FAO (name of class teacher) in the email subject line.
Payments	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk
School trips	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk
Uniform/lost and found	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence please use the Studybugs APP or if you are unable to do so, call the school office on 01706 213756 leaving a message on the answer machine or email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office and a member of staff will issue the appropriate form.
Bullying and behaviour	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk and please put FAO (name of class teacher) in the email subject line.
School events/the school calendar	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk
Special educational needs (SEN)	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk and please put FAO Jackie Noblet in the email subject line
Before and after-school clubs	
Hiring the school premises	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk
PTFA	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk and please put FAO PTFA in the email subject line.
Governing board	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk and please put FAO Alison Moxham in the email subject line
Catering/meals	Email: bursar@walton.lancs.sch.uk

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which is available on the school website.