James Cambell Primary School

Partnership Learning

James Cambell Primary School

Home-School Communication Policy

2026-29

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Staff responsible:	Mrs K Shears (Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Parent Voice and Behaviour)
Approved by:	Ms C Breakwell (Headteacher)

Aims 2
Roles and Responsibilities 3
Headteacher 3
Staff 3
All staff are responsible for: 3
Parents 3
Communicating with parents/carers 4
ParentMail 4
ParentMail 4
School calendar 5
Phone calls 5
Letters 5
Homework 5
Reports 5
Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including: 5
Meetings 6
School website 6
How parents and carers can communicate with the school 6
Email 7
Phone calls 7
Class Dojo 7
Additional Meeting requests 7
Inclusion, including SEND: 8
Accessibility 8
Parents with additional communication needs 8
Monitoring and review 8
Links with other policies 9
Appendix 1: School Contact List 9

Aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning and parental relationships 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 the term 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

Parents should note that the provisions of this policy may not be applicable in certain exceptional circumstances, such as staff illness or the child's absence. In the case of a child's absence, it remains the parent's responsibility to notify the school's front office.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher
The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate

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
- Checking Class Dojo and e-mails on a regular basis
- 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 parental communication during core school hours 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 they are **not expected** to do so.

Parents
Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times in accordance with the parental code of conduct (can be found on the school's website or requested at the front office)
- 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
- Not excessively requesting updates beyond the expectations of this policy
- Using the communication methods outlined in this policy and not contacting the school regarding individual matters through social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram.

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 or during school holidays.

Communicating 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.

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

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Payments
- Emergency school closures
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Inclusion matters

ParentMail
We will send Class Dojo messages to parents about:

- Class teacher communications
- Communication about your child and any that are relating to minor issues (major concerns will result in an additional phone call home)

- Inclusion matters from the class teacher

School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term and INSET days for the academic year. The newsletter on our website also provides key dates and information to parents surrounding upcoming events and celebrating successes across the school. 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 and communicated via Parentmail.

Phone calls

Staff members will return calls to parents who have asked to speak with them, where they are the appropriate point of contact. Usually this will be the class teacher, or a member of the school office team. The school aims to return calls, once received by the intended recipient, within 5 working days.

Excessive requests for calls without prior arrangement, to our inclusion team or class teachers will not be returned unless adequately justified.

The school may call from time to time about:

- Inclusion matters
- Absences
- Emergencies
- In accordance with other policies
- Academic progress, including homework
- Behaviour matters
- Any other significant event

Letters

We send letters home via Parentmail: hard copies are available from the office on request.

Homework

Homework plays a vital role in reinforcing and embedding the knowledge acquired during lessons. Given the developmental differences across age groups, the format and expectations for homework may vary from one year group to another. To ensure clarity regarding the specific homework expectations for your child's year group, we encourage you to reach out to either the class teacher or the year group lead. For contact details, please refer to Appendix 1.

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
- Termly progress reports, either via parent's evening or the end of year reports
- A report on Key Stage 2 SATs tests

Meetings

We hold two parents' evenings per academic year, during the Autumn and Spring 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 that has not been raised previously via the other routes of communication. Those with an EHCP will also have the addition of the annual review meeting.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour for learning 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. For any arrangements of communications outside of the routes of communication already mentioned, there would need to be a justifiable and robust reason for exceeding the expectations on staff under this policy. This would be determined by the staff member and the parent. How parents can request a meeting is detailed in section 4.4 and 4.5.

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 should check the website before contacting the school.

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. All communications must be in conjunction with the parental code of conduct.

Parents should communicate with the school using the approved methods outlined in this policy, including ParentMail, email, telephone, Class Dojo and arranged meetings.

The school's social media accounts, including Facebook, Instagram and any future social media platforms, are not monitored for individual enquiries, complaints, safeguarding concerns or matters

relating to pupils. Parents should not use social media messaging services to contact the school regarding school matters.

Email

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

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 5 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 10 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 5 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 10 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
- Delayed pick-up
- Delayed drop-off
- Absence

Class Dojo

Parents can send Class Dojo messages to teachers (if they have signed up) about:

- Class teacher communications
- Two-way conversation instigated by parent
- Communication about your child regarding minor concerns as well as their successes. (Major concerns will constitute an additional phone call to the school)
- General classroom queries

For more general enquiries outside of the above remit, please call the school office.

Additional Meeting requests

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email, speak to, or call the front office who will take a message and pass onto the relevant person. All meetings with staff will only go ahead within the realms of the parental and staff code of conduct.

We try to schedule all meetings within 10 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, including SEND:
Some children may require additional communication with parents due to specific needs arising from Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or other inclusion-related factors. In such cases, if a child requires an inclusion plan (e.g., SEN plan, disability support plan, or another formal inclusion plan), provisions may be made, in exceptional circumstances, for increased communication frequency to further support the plan's objectives.

Any deviations from the standard communication protocols outlined in Section 1 would need to be deemed reasonable and practical for the school to implemented. These additions will only occur as part of an agreed course of action between the parent and the designated inclusion practitioner.

These communications will occur via a mutually agreed-upon medium, which may include Class Dojo, end-of-day meetings, ParentMail, or a combination of these methods.

When additional communication is deemed necessary to advance the objectives of the inclusion plan, it should occur no more than once daily. This communication must focus on extraordinary or noteworthy occurrences, including positive accomplishments. Such measures will be implemented only under exceptional circumstances, agreed upon with the inclusion practitioner, and documented within a formal inclusion plan, such as a behaviour support plan, SEND inclusion plan, or EHCP. Without a formalised agreement, the provisions for additional communication outlined in this section will not apply.

Communications established under a formal plan must be reciprocal, as effective inclusion often relies on parents sharing relevant information about their child's temperament or any potential triggers, such as events before school or over the weekend.

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

Parents with additional communication needs
We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats for example requesting hard copies of documents from the front office.
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- The school does not pay for translators at meetings but can be arranged where possible. For example where a member of staff speaks the requested language.

Monitoring and review

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

Links with other policies

- The policy should be read alongside our policies on:
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement

All of these policies can be requested from the front office if you cannot find them on our website.

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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:

- Call the school office on 0208 270 4684 or email the office at Office@jamescambellprimary.org.uk. Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff
- Direct communication with the class teacher can be via Class Dojo or direct with the teacher after school.
- **Remember:** check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.
- We try to respond to all emails within 10 school days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT…	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework/trips	Your child's class teacher (either front office email, Class Dojo or face to face at the end of the day). If your child's class teacher is not able to support, you can contact the Year Lead or the member of Senior Leadership who is supporting your class (as set out on our website)
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Class teacher via email, Class Dojo or face to face at the end of the day. Further queries beyond what your class teacher can provide: SENCO Behaviour Lead Pastoral Lead
Parental support	Learning Support Mentor

Payments	School office either via email, face to face or telephone
Uniform/lost and found	Front office or your class teacher
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 0208 270 4684 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office
Bullying and behaviour	Behaviour lead
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENCO
Before and after-school clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	School Business Manager
Parent Forum or volunteering	School office, who will forward to the relevant member of Senior Leadership
Governing board	Governing body Clerk (request their details from the front office)
Catering/meals	School office

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy, which can be found on our website or via the front office.