



COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & CARERS POLICY

March 2024



Rationale

Madeley School recognises the importance of clear and effective communication with all stakeholders (pupils and parents/carer, Academy Councillors, The Shaw Education Trust, outside agencies etc.) and is committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school. This policy aims to ensure effective two-way communication between home and school to support the learning and pastoral care of our students. This policy should be read in conjunction with the appendix who to contact, and the Parent Communication Charter.

Communications can take a variety of different forms: phone calls, email, text message, notes on the school website and through letters. It is imperative that all parent/carer contact details are updated and maintained to ensure clear channels of communication.

Telephone communication can sometimes be problematic as teaching staff may be in class full time, be engaged with out of class activities or other commitments. This, on occasions, may mean that a teacher may not have time to return a phone call or speak directly about an issue. We understand that parents/carers may feel exasperated if they cannot illicit a response, but we endeavour to respond either by telephone or email as soon as possible within school working hours. This policy aims to set out timelines for a response and the protocols for communication.

Due to the above challenges, the school is keen to utilise email and other means of modern communication methods to promote the sharing of information. The school office email (office@madeley.set.org) can be utilised to contact all staff, and the Subject Bar should include the name of the teacher that parents/carers wish to contact. Alternatively, a list of key staff can be found attached to this policy where they can be contacted directly using their listed e-mail address.

Brief notices and points, such as cancelled Sports fixtures, may be communicated via group text message. The school may also wish to gauge parental opinion and feedback by utilising platforms such as Microsoft Forms. In addition, all letters and recent communications are uploaded to our website; the website also features latest news and events on its front page.

Aims of the policy:

1. To improve the quality of service given to the pupils of Madeley School by ensuring that effective communication and consultation takes place between the school, parents, pupils and other stakeholders.
2. To improve the quality of service by ensuring there is a robust process for consultation between school, parents/carers and other stakeholders.

Communication:

Communication between the school and parents/carers operates in the following ways:

1. Prospective Parents are invited to an Open Evening in the Autumn Term preceding the year of entry into the school. All prospective parents receive documentation giving an overview of exam results and the curriculum. Feeder primary schools are also visited by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
2. New Intake parents/carers are invited, along with their child, to an induction evening in July of the year of entry where the main channels of communication are outlined, the Form Tutor is introduced and the Head of Year is met.
3. Parents/carers are invited to a Year 7 Form Tutor Catch Up event during the first half term in order to review how their child is settling into the school.

4. Parents/carers are invited to attend a Consultation Event each year in order to meet the Subject Teachers of their child. This is primarily to review academic progress and to discuss the “next steps” for their child.
5. Class Charts is the key communication tool for out of class work. Parents/carers can download the App and will receive push notifications with information about homework tasks so that they can support their child at home.
6. The school website provides parents/carers with access to a range of school communication and documents. At a whole school level, the website provides weekly updates on events, key reminders via the newsfeed, the school calendar and our social media platforms. It also gives parents/carers access to a range of Key Information documents such as policies and Ofsted reports.
7. Communication about pupil progress takes place formally through Progress reports three times a year and a summative, more detailed report once a year.
8. Queries about school events can be made via email or by telephone to the school’s Main Reception.
9. The school also has an Instagram, Facebook, Linkedin and X account which highlights and celebrates key events: @MadeleySchool. This also tags into any subject specific feeds and the Shaw Education Trust.
10. The Shaw Education Trust have a centralised website at www.shaw-education.org.uk which contains information about the Multi-Academy Trust, the Mission Statement and vacancies etc.
11. A fortnightly Newsletter is published, “Principals Post: Parent Edition,” as a snapshot of the recent events, to celebrate success and to showcase pupil experiences and achievements.
12. Appointments can be made to speak directly to members of staff at a mutually convenient time, allowing for working hours and teaching commitments.
13. The Principal hosts a termly ‘Open Office’ event where parents/carers can drop in for a discussion with issues important to them.

Service Standards at Madeley School

The following response times are a guideline for communications between the school and home:

1. Any requests for information, concerns, requests for references or progress are dealt with within 5 working days.
2. Concerns may be raised via letter, email or telephone. Letters will receive either a verbal or written acknowledgement / response within 2 working days.
3. Emails sent at weekends, or outside of school working hours, will not be dealt with until the following day or the next working week.
4. Complaints Procedure: A full Complaints Policy can be found on the school website. Initially concerns should be addressed via the Head of Year, Faculty/Subject Leader, or Senior Leadership Team.
5. We kindly request that parents and carers consider the way they communicate with our staff and respect the rights of our staff to be spoken to politely and moderately. Aggressive and abusive behaviour towards our staff will lead to a further action being taken by the school. Madeley School staff must also be polite and respectful to all parents/carers and work to uphold the core values of the school at all times: politeness, pride and respect, resilience, confidence, positivity, enjoyment and aspiration.

Parent/Carer and Pupil Consultation:

1. Parent/Carer and Pupil voice is captured by the Shaw Education Trust termly via an email link sent via text message and email. The outcome of this is communicated by the Principal.
2. Further consultation throughout the school year may arise with regards to specific issues such as curriculum, uniform and behaviour policy. This may be through surveys sent via a link or with face-to-face consultation meetings.
3. Parents/carers of each Year group may be invited in for Year Group specific meetings such as Parent Forums, residential preparation, or Options Events. These events aim to share information pertinent to the school year of the child as well as provide an opportunity to gather parent/carers points of view.
4. The Academy Council will review and reflect on the outcome of all consultations and discuss the actions and strategic matters which may arise as a result of this.
5. Following the issuing of school reports or a parents consultation event, electronic feedback links inviting parents/carers to make comment about the content of the report or opinions about the format.
6. Madeley Parliament (student leadership) are consulted on a range of key issues and the meetings are chaired by the Head Boy and Head Girl.
7. Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Middle Leadership Team undertake daily Learning Walks and talk to pupils about their learning as part of this exercise.
8. The Staff body meets regularly through a calendared programme to share best practice and national research to improve and develop the learning experiences of pupils.
9. Exercise books provide next steps and information for parents/carers and pupils about progress, predominantly formative assessment.
10. The Special Educational Needs department work closely with parents and carers to map effective provision for individual students.

Advice for parents

If parents are unsure about who to contact with a specific issue or query, please refer to the "*Who to contact? FAQs*" document which is on the school website and attached as an appendix to this policy.

Parents are encouraged to raise concerns at an early stage. This can be done through a variety of means:

- A letter via their child's tutor
- An email or phone call to the school office (details are on the school website)
- A phone call to Student Services
- An email or phone call to their child's Head of Year or Pastoral Support Officer
- By making an appointment to meet a member of staff
- At Parents' Consultation Events
- An email or phone call to the Principal's PA (denise.downie@madeley.set.org)

Whilst the Principal is very willing to receive both suggestions and enquiries, parents will appreciate that in some circumstances it may be more appropriate for another member of staff who has a more detailed knowledge of the issue to respond in the first instance. However, if the response does not answer your concerns, then you are very welcome to contact the Principal directly.

- **Unannounced Meetings**

The school respectfully requests that parents who wish to meet a member of staff do so, where possible by prior arrangement at an agreed mutually convenient time. The school cannot guarantee that parents will be able to meet specific staff members if they arrive at reception without a prior appointment. The receptionist will gladly take the necessary details to arrange a suitable date and time.

We understand that sometimes parents and carers may be frustrated about issues that arise and we will always do our best to solve any problems. At the same time, our staff should not have to put up with communication that is rude, abusive or aggressive. In addition, we would much prefer parents or carers to contact us directly with concerns rather than raise them on social media before we have had the chance to respond.

APPENDIX 1: PARENTAL COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL FAQ

When should I contact school?

As soon as you have a concern! If in doubt, please contact us; we would far rather you contacted us for reassurance over something that turns out to be minor than spend time worrying about something.

I know class teachers are very busy. Is it ok to contact them?

Yes, it is absolutely fine to contact a class teacher if you need to. We only ask that you respect the fact that most teachers teach around 200 students and cannot, therefore, realistically enter into a detailed dialogue over a prolonged period of time with individual parents. The vast majority of instances where parents need to contact teachers can be dealt with via a quick email exchange, so feel free to do this in the first instance. Please also note that, as stated in our Communication Policy, we do not expect teachers to reply to messages outside of working hours.

Can't I just contact the Principal if I've got a problem?

Yes, you are always welcome to contact the Principal if you feel you need to (by emailing the Principal's PA, Mrs. Downie, denise.downie@madeley.set.org or calling (01782 982076). At the same time, parents will appreciate that in many circumstances it may be more appropriate for another member of staff who has a more detailed knowledge of the issue to respond in the first instance.

How quickly can I expect a response to my queries?

Please refer to the service standards section of the Communication Policy (on the website) for full details. Ordinarily, you can expect a response within 48 hours.

How do I know who is the best person to contact?

The table below is intended to help parents with information about who to contact in certain, common scenarios. If you are unsure about who to contact, we recommend you call the main school reception on 01782 987800, where our staff will be able to point you in the right direction. Email addresses can be found at the end of this document.

Is there anything I else I should bear in mind?

Hopefully this guide, along with our full communication policy and the Parent Charter and Communication Charter covers what you need. The only other thing we would say is that we understand that sometimes parents or carers may be frustrated about issues that arise and we will always do our best to solve these. At the same time, our staff should not have to put up with communication that is rude, abusive or aggressive. Equally, we would much prefer parents or carers to contact us directly with concerns rather than raise them on social media before we have had the chance to respond.

APPENDIX 2: WHO TO CONTACT: QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

<i>ISSUE</i>	<i>WHO TO CONTACT</i>	<i>HOW?</i>
Any Safeguarding concern	Lead Safeguarding Officer Mrs S Halstead Deputy Safeguarding Officers: Mrs E Boustead Mr L Royall	School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org
Reporting Absence or other queries regarding attendance	Please phone the School Office to report an absence. Our Attendance Officer Mrs J Carter will be able to deal with any other attendance related queries.	School Office: 01782 987800 Mrs J Carter our Attendance Officer can be emailed at attendance@madeley.set.org
Concerns about bullying	Any member of staff, however Form Tutors will usually be the first port of call, Head of Year or our Pastoral Support Officers will also be able to help.	School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org Pastoral Support Officers jacqueline.bates@madeley.set.org hollie.bentley@madeley.set.org brittany.stokoe@madeley.set.org
Concerns about your child's progress in a particular subject.	Class teacher initially, but please contact the Head of Department if this does not resolve the issue.	Email is the most effective way to contact teachers). They can always phone you back if necessary.
Need for information about a particular subject – e.g. the best revision guide to buy or how best to support with homework.	The 'Curriculum' section on the school website has a lot of information otherwise try the class teacher or Head of Department.	www.madeleyschool.org
Concerns about the progress of your child generally – i.e. in more than one subject.	Head of Year	Email or phone call.

A complaint about any issues relating to the school.	The complaints policy and procedure is published on the school website, however if it is especially serious then the Principal should be informed.	Complaints to the Principal should go to Mrs Downie, Principal's P.A. at office@madeley.set.org
Concerns about friendship issues.	The Form Tutor will usually be the best person to contact, or our Pastoral Support Officers may also be able to help.	Pastoral Support Officers jacqueline.bates@madeley.set.org hollie.bentley@madeley.set.org brittany.stokoe@madeley.set.org
Queries about 'Arbor'.	Mr M Hawkins, Assistant Principal would be the best person to contact.	martyn.hawkins@madeley.set.org
Questions about Uniform	The school website has details of our uniform policy. The main office or Head of Year will also be able to help.	www.madeleyschool.org School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org
Questions or concerns relating to SEN provision.	Ms E Boustead our SENCO will be able to help.	Mrs E Boustead (SENCO) emma.boustead@madeley.set.org
Information about extra-curricular activities e.g. times of clubs.	The website has an up-to-date timetable of termly extra-curricular activities or the main school office will be able to help.	www.madeleyschool.org School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org
Questions about or problems with Parent Pay	Any Parent Pay queries should be directed to Mrs S Lee.	Mrs S Lee sue.lee@madeley.set.org
Questions about or problems with Lettings	Any Lettings queries should be directed to Mrs V Morris.	Mrs V Morris finance-team@madeley.set.org
Exam queries – e.g. dates / times of exams	All examination timetables are uploaded to the school website under both the Parent and Student Tab. Mrs D Downie our Examinations Officer will also be able to assist.	www.madeleyschool.org Mrs D Downie, Examinations Officer office@madeley.set.org
Term Dates	These are on the school website under the Parents Tab. There is also a school calendar on the website's main home page.	www.madeleyschool.org
Questions about transport / buses	Please contact the main school office.	School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org

Lost Property	Please contact the main school office.	School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org
School Nurse	Please contact the Pastoral Support Officers to ask for a Student Referral to the School Nurse.	Pastoral Support Officers jacqueline.bates@madeley.set.org hollie.bentley@madeley.set.org brittany.stokoe@madeley.set.org
Something that doesn't fit into any of the above categories.	Please contact the main school office and they will direct you to the appropriate person.	School Office: 01782 987800 office@madeley.set.org