



Communication Policy

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Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and families has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives families the information they need to support their child's education.
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with families.
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school to 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 families.
- Setting clear standards for responding to communication from families.
- Helping families 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 'families' to refer to both parents and carers.

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with families are effective, timely and appropriate
- Regularly reviewing this policy

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from families in line with this policy and the school's IT and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure families get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff **will not** respond to communications outside of school hours (8.30am – 5pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

Families

Families 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, including information in the weekly newsletters.

How we communicate with families

Families can discuss things briefly with staff when they drop their children off at school on a morning, but we ask them to be mindful that during this time staff are looking after the children in their care. For anything longer than a few seconds interaction we ask that they find another way to communicate with school.

Staff may need to pass information on to families when they pick their children up at the end of the school day. If families would prefer a meeting or phone call at another time, they should indicate this to the member of staff. If staff have a prior arranged meeting or appointment this may delay families receiving the information.

For children who attend the before or after school club (The Hive), the staff member who signs the children in or out will act as the school's representative for communications.

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

Families 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 emails to keep families informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events (many detailed in weekly newsletter).
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days).
- School surveys or consultations.
- Class activities or teacher requests.

Text messages via Arbor

We will text families about:

- Short notice changes to the school day.
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather).

School calendar

Our school website includes a school calendar for the year and highlights upcoming events. Where possible, we try to give families 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).

Zoom/Teams/Phone calls

- Some family consultations will be conducted by Zoom/Teams/telephone.
- Teachers will call families back at a convenient time on request.
- Teachers may call families after or before school to discuss a concern or query.

Reports

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

- An end-of-year report covering their academic achievement, how well they are progressing, their behaviours and attitudes to learning and their attendance.
- A report on phonics screening check and KS2 SATs tests.
- A short update on progress at the start of the spring term

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

Meetings

We hold family meetings across the year:

Autumn:	meet the teacher
	family consultation sessions
Spring:	family consultation sessions
Summer:	Book Look
	family consultation sessions to discuss end of year reports where requested.

The family consultation meetings are timetabled to be 10 minutes long. During these meetings, families 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. If you require more time to discuss a specific issue, families may decide to arrange an alternative meeting with their child's class teacher.

The school may also contact families to arrange meetings between those scheduled if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Families of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, will be invited to a School Support Plan review meeting as an alternative to the family meetings but may also be asked to attend further meetings to support these additional needs.

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.
- Information about school uniform.
- Information about school admissions.

Families should check the website before contacting the school.

How families can communicate with the school

Please 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

Families should always email the school office, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. The email address to use is office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk

Emails sent to the office will then be forwarded to the relevant person.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within **2 working days** and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or telephone call) **within 3 working days of our initial response**.

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

Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, please email or call the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you **within 2 working 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. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 working days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office at 01270 845911.

Urgent issues might include things like: Family emergencies, Safeguarding or welfare issues.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office. The office staff will take messages for teachers and other staff.

Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the appropriate address (see appendix 1), or call the school office to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within **5 working days** of the request however this is not always possible.

Teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, although their focus is on the welfare of your children. Therefore, we recommend you book an appointment if you would like 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.

Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years.

Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- IT and internet acceptable use
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints

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, and the staff member you wish to speak to.

We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days and within office hours which are: 8:30am – 4:00pm, Monday to Friday term time only.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Please email school office who will inform and forward to the teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	esheridan@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Safeguarding and Learning Mentor: Mrs Sheridan
Payments	office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Business Support Officer: Mrs Cornes
School trips	office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Office team: Mrs Morgan or Mrs Clipson
Uniform/lost and found	office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Office team: Mrs Morgan or Mrs Clipson
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: [01270 845911] If you want to request leave of absence for your child: office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Principal: Mrs Whitehead
Bullying and behaviour	esheridan@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Safeguarding and Learning Mentor: Mrs Sheridan
School events/the school calendar	office@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk Office team: Mrs Morgan or Mrs Clipson
Special educational needs	senco@wheelock.cheshire.sch.uk SENCO: Mrs Lewis

Complaints

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