

COMMUNICATION POLICY 2025-2026

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 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
- We will only communicate with parents in respect of their own child at the school. Requests to raise a concern on behalf of another parent will be declined, as will be requests for information on another child. Should any correspondence be received from legal advisers then this will be shared with the Local Authority's legal advisers.

PLEASE NOTE: In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher/SLT

The headteacher, along with other members of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for:

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

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy, the staff Code of Conduct and the school's 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 not respond to communications outside of their directed school hours (usually 8.30am until 4.30pm) or their working hours if they work part-time. Responses will not be made during school holidays; instead these will be answered once the school term has re-commenced. Members of the Senior Leadership Team may respond outside of working hours/days in some circumstances and this decision will be made by their own professional judgement.

Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is always respectful.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance through the school office.
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner.
- Checking all communications from the school.
- Ensure the school has the most up-to-date contact and medical information for their child. This is to be provided in writing by emailing the school office.
- Inform the school office if they do not wish to use Class Dojo or the school's Gateway App as these are our school's main ways of communication.

Communication with the school

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

Meetings

Face-to-face conversations are the best way of communicating with the school at drop off or pick up for quick, short messages.

When a member of staff is not able to speak to you immediately face-to-face due to school commitments, or a longer conversation is deemed necessary or appropriate, then a request for an appointment can be made to discuss the matter. This request can be made either in person to a class teacher/a member of our office team or by telephoning our school office or by message via Class Dojo. The school will aim to arrange this meeting as soon as possible and within 3 - 4 working days.

Outside of teaching hours, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school, so availability of staff outside of teaching hours should not always be assumed.

Should a meeting be requested the decision of which staff member will attend will rest with the Headteacher and the SLT.

We hold one parents' consultation meeting per year. During this meeting, 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. During the year, parents will be sent three written reports during the school year, detailing their child's progress, effort and achievement. Parents are invited to come and speak to their child's class teacher once this report has been received. Parents are asked to contact class teachers directly to request this meeting. In addition to this, school holds regular parent drop in sessions. During these sessions, parents are encouraged to look through their child's class books and speak to both their child and the class adults about the work completed.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings 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, will also be asked to attend additional meetings where appropriate.

Some meetings may be held face to face or via telephone. On occasions some meetings may be held via Google Meet. Meetings are always arranged to suit the needs of the parties involved.

Email

Parents are welcome to email the school, info@primrosehillprimary.co.uk about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Emails will be most helpful if they are concise, explaining questions or concerns in a clear way. Lengthy and overly detailed accounts can make it more difficult to understand what is being explained and to respond in a timely or helpful way.

The school will aim to respond within 3 working days. If a response is unable to be provided within this timeline, which can be to ensure a full and considered response, then a revised timeline will be provided and communicated. We ask that parents await a response from the school and that further emails are not sent pending that response, unless the new deadline has passed.

The School Gateway App & Class Dojo

The School App and Class Dojo are our chosen communication routes. These methods of communication are secure and minimise the risk of any data breaches or information being shared with unintended recipients.

We use Class Dojo to keep parents informed about the following:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures
- A termly class newsletter
- Class activities, information about homework or teacher requests
- Your child's behaviour

Teachers and parents can message each other via Class Dojo. This is a convenient way of keeping in touch. Teachers cannot reply to messages sent to them during school hours as they will be teaching. When using Class Dojo to send a message, these should be short and polite. Sadly, staff do not have time to read long messages, nor do they have time to write long replies. A simple message such as 'Could I please speak to you about my child's homework?' is sufficient.

In addition to this, we use our school's Gateway App to help you access

- Consent forms
- Your personal contact details
- Lunch/dinner bookings
- Your child's medical information
- Payment options
- School uniform orders
- Important school information (eg free school meal vouchers, urgent news etc)
- School surveys or consultations

Parents will be invited to download The School Gateway App and Class Dojo onto their phone using a link. School will help any parent who is struggling to access or download any of these applications. Parents who do not wish to use The School App or Class Dojo need to understand that school does

normally use any other methods of communication, unless specifically requested by a parent.

On occasion, a formal letter may be sent to an individual family. On these occasions, the school office will send these letters to the address stored on our school system.

Phone calls

School office: 0161 921 2400

If a query or concern is time sensitive and urgent the parent should call the school office, who will liaise as necessary at the earliest opportunity. In most circumstances, teaching and leadership staff are unlikely to be available to receive calls due to teaching and other commitments.

If the query or concern is not time sensitive and urgent then parents should email or call the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them within 3 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.

For general enquiries, please call or email the school office.

Staff will call parents if their child presents as unwell during the school day.

Parents are expected to call or email the school office before 9.10am if their child is absent.

We will call parents if their child has had a head injury, even if minor (see First Aid Policy).

The headteacher or a senior member of staff will call parents if their child is admitted to hospital.

Social Media and Online Platforms

The school will not respond to concerns raised via social media or online platforms.

Should the school be made aware of any physical threats or abusive behaviour towards staff members or children on roll at our school on social media, then the school will consider reporting this to the Police and seeking the removal of this content from the site.

School Calendar

We use the school calendar on the website to communicate with parents about term dates and school holidays. At the start of a school year, we will share our annual events calendar. This gives notice of all of the events we plan to hold during the school 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).

Reports

Parents receive 3 reports, one near the end of each term, from the school about their child's learning. These reports cover their achievement and effort in each part of the curriculum, as well as providing information about their child's attendance. By comparing reports from the previous term, parents can see how well their child is progressing across the year. Parents are invited to speak to teachers about any aspect of their child's report once it has been received and before that term ends.

A report detailing the child's KS2 (Key Stage 2) SATs results is also sent out when national data has been released.

School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Notable events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about Breakfast Clubs and After-School clubs

Parents are encouraged to check the website before contacting the school.

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Our website has a language translate feature to help assist families who do not have English as their first language.

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

Interpreters for meetings or phone calls through Salford's EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service) or via Language Link.

If requested, messages can be sent by email rather than phone call to allow parents to translate the written words.

We take a serious view of our responsibility to treat all members of our school community appropriately and with respect. You can expect to be received at Primrose Hill politely and professionally, whatever the reason for your visit or communication. We similarly expect appropriate standards of behaviour from children, parents & visitors.

Offensive, abusive or aggressive behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated.

Types of unacceptable behaviour and communication

There are some types of behaviour / communication that the school considers unacceptable. These are as follows:

- Any physical aggression e.g. slapping, hitting, punching, and kicking;
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, or pupils e.g., standing close to her/him;
- The use of aggressive hand gestures including finger pointing towards a member of staff or pupil;
- Spitting at a member of staff or pupil;
- Shaking or holding a fist towards a member of staff or pupil;
- Shouting at members of staff or pupils (either in person on school grounds, over the telephone or over video conferencing);
- Swearing, or using offensive language including derogatory language about a protected group or characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010;
- Threatening or offensive comments about a member of staff or pupil of the school; this can include verbally, via texts, emails, social media, etc.;
- Sending abusive messages to a member of staff, including via text, email, or social media
- A large volume of emails in respect of the same matter over a short period of time.
- Continuing to raise the same issue despite it having been already addressed by the school.
- Posting defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, on social media platforms

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Breaching or not conforming to the school's security procedures
- Covertly recording phone calls or meetings with member of staff
- Any other behaviour that is disrespectful, threatening, or offensive

This list is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour which has no place in our school community.

Actions that may be taken by the school because of unacceptable behaviour and communication

In the first instance, (if the unacceptable behaviour has occurred on site) the school will ask the parent to desist and/or leave the site. If the behaviour is of a serious nature, then the police will be contacted.

Thereafter the school (Headteacher/Member of School Leadership team) will gather information on allegations of unacceptable behaviour. This may include talking to the parties concerned or others as witnesses to the behaviour.

If unacceptable behaviour is considered to have occurred the following actions may be taken by the school, dependent on the severity/gravity of the behaviour:

- The parent will be told verbally that his / her behaviour is unacceptable and, if it is not modified, the school will take further action.
- The parent will be told in writing that his / her behaviour is unacceptable and, if it is not modified, the school will take further action.
- Advising the parent that all future meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and will be minuted;
- Putting in place a contact plan to deal with any communication between the individual and school. For example, except in emergencies, communication to the school must be in writing only to a named individual and the school can set out timescales for school responses
- A warning letter or an immediate ban from the school site;
- Contacting the Police where behaviour is criminal in nature.
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal or school security team regarding further action.

The school will always seek to respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to the unacceptable behaviour and communication rests with the headteacher, the SLT and, where necessary, the Governing Body.

Monitoring and review

The headteacher, with the SLT, monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside:

SEN Policy

Homework Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Complaints Policy

Acceptable Use Policy

Children with Medical Conditions Policy

Appendix 1: Making Contact With School - Who should I speak to?

I have a question about the school. I want to find out some information about Primrose Hill

This could be a query about holiday dates, school uniform, dinner menus, a lost item of clothing, eligibility for free school meals, problems logging into Class Dojo, a question over payment for a school trip etc.

At times like this, you are best telephoning the school office on 0161 921 2400 or emailing the school at info@primrosehillprimary.co.uk

I need to let the school know that my child is ill and will not be attending

Sometimes parents send a message to their child's class teacher with this information. We would however strongly advise you to telephone the school office on 0161 921 2400 with this information as sometimes this is not passed on to the office in time before the class registers close. This could result in a phone call from the office being made to the parent to ask why their child is absent, and this sometimes causes distress.

I have a concern about another child

Please contact our school office and ask to speak to our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

I would like to inform the school about a holiday we have arranged

Please contact our school office and ask to speak to our Attendance Lead.

I have a concern about my child

This could be a concern or query linked to anything connected to your child. It could be about their class work, problems they may be having with some of their classmates, worries over their progress or development, concerns over their mental health or well-being, issues at home, struggles they may be having with their homework, a reluctance to want to come to school, poor attendance, bullying etc.

In the first instance, a parent must always reach out to their child's class teacher. This can be arranged face to face at drop off/pick up time, or via a short message on class dojo or by speaking to someone in our office. The

class teacher has a lot of information to hand and will usually be able to help with most queries, worries or concerns. If it is felt that another person within the school is needed to further support this, the class teacher will liaise with that member of staff who will, in turn, make direct contact with the parent. This could be from our school's special needs co-ordinator (SENCo), our learning mentor, our attendance lead, a phase leader or a member of our Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

If a concern or query has not been satisfactorily dealt with by the class teacher, then contact with one of our school's phase leaders should occur.

Our phase leaders are:

- EYFS – Karen Mackey
- Key Stage One (Year 1 and Year 2) – Emma Shaw
- Lower Key Stage Two (Year 3 and Year 4) – Sharon Franks
- Upper Key Stae Two (Year 5 and Year 6) – Aneesa Rawat

Our phase leaders can be contacted via our school office. Please note that phase leaders should only be contacted after communication with a child's class teacher has taken place.

Support from our school's Deputy Headteacher, and finally the Headteacher, may be sought once the above two stages have taken place.

I have a complaint about the conduct of a member of the school's staff.

I have a complaint about the actions of the school and the application of one or more of its policies.

In situations like these, contact should be made with the school's Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher (unless your concern is about them).

I have a complaint about the Headteacher

Please contact the school office and ask for the Chair of Governors to contact you.

Appendix 2 – Query or Complaint?

It is important to note the difference between a concern, a question, a comment and a complaint.

A **concern** is an expression of worry about an issue, often seeking information or a proactive solution, and is generally resolved informally through open communication. A **complaint**, in contrast, is an expression of dissatisfaction about an action or lack of action that requires a formal response, potentially leading to a more serious investigation or process. The key difference is that a concern implies a willingness to collaborate for a solution, while a complaint focuses on expressing unhappiness with something that has already happened.

Characteristics of a Concern:

- **Purpose:** To express worry, seek reassurance, or get information about a potential problem.
- **Tone:** Inquiring, open, and solution-oriented.
- **Outcome:** Often leads to dialogue, discussion, and informal resolution.
- **Example:** You might express a "concern" about a proposed curriculum lesson or a potential safety issue, wanting to be informed and involved in finding a solution.

Characteristics of a Complaint:

- **Purpose:** To express dissatisfaction about a past action, lack of action, or a service provided.
- **Tone:** Can be blame-based and critical, aiming to highlight what is wrong.
- **Outcome:** Requires a formal response and a formal process to resolve the issue.
- **Example:** You would make a "complaint" when you are dissatisfied with the actions of a staff member, and it requires a formal acknowledgment and resolution process.

Key Distinction:

- **Focus:** Concerns focus on preventing or addressing a problem, while complaints focus on expressing dissatisfaction with an existing situation.
- **Relationship:** Concerns are about collaboration and finding a positive way forward, whereas complaints are about rectifying a wrong or dissatisfaction.
- **Escalation:** An unresolved or unsatisfactory concern can escalate into a formal complaint

At Primrose Hill we are keen to listen to you and help you in any way we can. By following the procedures above we can work together to help ensure you get to speak to the right people at the right time.