



# Home-school Communication Policy

This policy is reviewed biannually

Policy Type	Desirable
Version	1.0
Author	M.Miall, School Support Manager
Approved by / on	School Improvement Board
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Description of changes	New

## **1. Introduction and Aims**

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

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.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **2.1 Headteacher**

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

### **2.2 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
- 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 8.30am – 4.00pm and within 72 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.

## **2.2 Parents**

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
- Responding 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 Conduct Policy
- Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8.30am – 4.00pm, or during school and public holidays
- Our Parent Conduct Policy can be found on the school's website under our policies section

## **3. How we communicate with parents**

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.

Wherever possible, the school will issue all correspondence electronically. If parents would like a paper version of anything issued by the school, please request this by calling the School Office on 01449 613541 or emailing the School Office at: [enquiries@stowhigh.com](mailto:enquiries@stowhigh.com)

### **3.1 Email**

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

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- ParentPay

### **3.2 Text messages**

We will text parents about:

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

### **3.3 School calendar**

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the academic year. Our monthly Parent Newsletter will give up and coming date reminders for events/examinations.

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.

### **3.4 Phone calls**

Phone calls home will be made for ensuring bookings are made for Tripod Evenings, arranging meetings, arranging collection of students due to sickness/suspension and to celebrate exceptional achievements.

### **3.5 Letters (Electronic)**

We send the following letters home regularly (the majority sent via email):

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our monthly newsletter

### **3.6 Reports**

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

- Termly progress reports covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- A report on the results of public examinations
- Information about vocational qualifications gained (or credits gained towards these)

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

### **3.7 Meetings**

We hold a minimum five Tripod (parents') evenings per year, one per year group. 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.

### **3.8 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

### **3.9 Go 4 Schools**

Parents can get frequent class specific updates from class teachers including:

- Behaviour/Detentions
- Home learning
- Remote learning
- Achievement/Merit points
- Progress reports
- Attendance
- Student's contact details

## **4. How parents can communicate with the school**

Parents can get in touch with the school using the following methods:

### **4.1 Email**

To message individual teachers with specific questions or to arrange an individual in-person meeting. We try our best to respond to messages within 72 hours and sooner if marked urgent. Teachers individual email addresses can be found on our website.

For general enquiries please contact [enquiries@stowhigh.com](mailto:enquiries@stowhigh.com). If urgent, please mark accordingly. Emails are checked daily during work hours.

### **4.2 Phone calls**

To report student absences (please report before 08:00am if possible) and do so on the separate attendance line (**option 1**). Please leave a voice message if staff are unable to take your call in-person. We will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible, but please be aware that the beginning of the school day is the busiest time of the school day and consider using an alternative method of contact.

### **4.3 Meetings**

Sometimes things are best discussed in person and our teachers are more than happy to arrange a time

to do this. We do however ask, wherever possible, to avoid having these conversations at the start and end of the school day, as these are critical moments where the teacher needs to prioritise the safety and readiness of our children.

## **5. Accessibility**

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

### **5.1 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
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website such as: providing alt text for images, using text colours that show up clearly against the background colour
- Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Sign language interpreters for meetings, please contact the school office to discuss these
- Meetings in-person can be accessed by wheelchair

### **5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)**

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) in English, however 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 arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every two years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This 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
- Social media policy

All policies can be found on the school's website.

## **8. Review and Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually and monitored for effectiveness by the school leadership team. Feedback from staff and parents may be considered in the review process.