

Streatham Wells Primary

Home-school Communication Policy



Approved by:

S. Wordlaw

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1. Introduction and aims

At Streatham Wells we **value and respect** parents and carers, and are keen to **work together** in the best interests of the children. We believe that clear, open and respectful 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 spirit of the above we know that **meeting face to face** is best, but we can **adapt this to include online meetings**. We would always provide a summary of the main points of any meeting, upon request. We aim to avoid communication solely through email.

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)
- Feeding back to parents/carers if a concern or issue has been raised

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (generally 8am to 4pm) 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.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school, and other parents, 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
- Take up concerns through the appropriate channels, and use the Complaints Policy where necessary (this can be found on the School Website or printed off at request in the school office).

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.

3. How we communicate with parents and 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.

3.1 Email and Newsletters

We use emails and newsletters 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
- Weekly newsletters from Headteacher (whole school update)
- Half termly newsletters from Class Teachers (curriculum)
- Termly specialised newsletters (on topics such as Wellbeing, Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Neurodiversity etc)

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

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

3.3 School calendar

Our school website and weekly newsletter includes a full school calendar for the half term.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including 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

School encourages staff to call parents to discuss pupils' performance where necessary (both positive and negative). This may be in regard to a behaviour incident for example, or could be to celebrate an amazing piece of work.

3.5 Letters

We aim to be paper-free, but appreciate this does not work for all families. We generally send letters home via email. A paper letter that may be sent home could be:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

3.6 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
- A report on Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs tests

3.7 Meetings

There are many opportunities across the year to meet with staff members:

- We hold 2 parents' evening(s) per academic year. 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, behaviour 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.
- Coffee mornings and focussed meetings regularly (for example about special projects around the school or key issues)

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 Home-school communications app

School gateway is used for:

- Payments
- Messaging
- New parents to the school will be invited to register to the Gateway (parents can speak to the school office for more information)

3.10 Operational Management and Staffing

There are a number of school matters which staff are not permitted to discuss with parents. This may be because of data protection, safeguarding or another confidential matter or it falling outside of a parent's remit. Staff and Leaders are qualified and experienced professionals, who work in line with school, Trust and National policies, to ensure children are safe and that children reach their learning potential. All relevant policies can be found on our school website and Charter Trust website, or if you would like a policy printed this can be requested from the school office.

These matters include:

- Operational management of the school (this includes duties, timetabling, cover, etc)
- School finances (all schools financial benchmarking can be found on the government website [here](#))
- Personal information about staff

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

We understand it can sometimes be challenging trying to find the right person to answer a query. We are here to help. 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. Please note the school will not tolerate inappropriate, disrespectful or verbally/physically abusive conduct, and will result in action being taken by the school - you can read further about this in the Parent Code of Conduct.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about **non-urgent issues** in the first instance. The email address is: **office@streathamwells.org**

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days. Please bear in mind that some staff work part time.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.2 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 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. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 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

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

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

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 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

4.4 Social Media Use

Social media platforms (Twitter, Whatsapp, Facebook etc) are being used increasingly to share complaints about schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. School Leaders and Governors consider the use of social media websites or apps being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the pupil or the whole school community.

Any parental concerns must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the appropriate member of staff, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents or children.

Concerns should be shared to the appropriate adult in the school (see Appendix 1). If a parent feels the concern has not been dealt with, they should refer to our Complaints Policy, found on the school website (or a print out can be provided upon request from the school office).

5. Monitoring and review

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

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

6. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

ICT and internet acceptable use Parent code of conduct Staff code of conduct Complaints Staff wellbeing

Appendix 1: school contact list

Key Contacts for Parents

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 or call the school office on office@streathamwells.org or **0208 674 3742**
- 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. **Remember:** check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there. 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

We try to respond to all emails within 2 days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's Class Teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's Class Teacher
Payments	School office
School trips	Your child's Class Teacher
Lost and found	School Office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 0208 674 3742 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the School Office for the appropriate form.
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's Class Teacher
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Your child's Class Teacher Following that, SENCO (Erica)
Before and after-school clubs	School office - Mandy

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Hiring the school premises	School office - Jonathan
Safeguarding concern	Designated Safeguarding Leads

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy, found on our school website.