



Communication Policy

Name of School	Petersgate Infant School
Date of review	September 2023
Date of next review	September 2024
Reviewed by	Wendy Mitchell Headteacher

School Vision

"for all children to grow into responsible, caring individuals who actively and positively contribute to the community."

At Petersgate Infant School, our vision outlined above is strengthened by our values of safety, caring, achievement, resilience and friendship. These values symbolise warmth, community and cohesion to ensure we are "working together to achieve our best".

As a school, we can apply these values through the following aims:

Aims

- Ensuring everyone stays healthy and safe.
- Ensuring everyone feels valued and has a sense of belonging.
- Providing a high quality learning environment.
- Helping everyone enjoy learning and achieving their best.
- Nurturing and developing the whole child.
- Ensuring everyone makes a positive contribution to the school and wider community.

Safeguarding at Petersgate Infant School is carried out in line with the statutory guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' published by the Department for Education.

Introduction

We believe it is important to create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents in our school. We encourage clear, open communication links with parents as we believe it has a positive impact on pupils' learning. It provides parents with the information they need to support their child's education and helps to build a partnership between home and school. Such communication can be entirely positive and practical for example to seek information, ask a question, clear up a misunderstanding or to draw attention to a matter. Sometimes there is a need to resolve an issue or misunderstanding.

We use the term 'parents' in this policy to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

The term member of staff as referred to in this policy includes:

- Anyone employed by the school
- Anyone training in a professional capacity at the school
- Governors (when acting in this capacity)
- Volunteers at the school (when acting in this capacity)
- Anyone employed through an external agency, who are acting in a professional capacity on the school site

This communication policy aims to set out the methods of communication available to parents for contacting the school and our expectations from parents when visiting our school or communicating with staff at our school.

We acknowledge that sometimes there can be situations that can be emotional and challenging for parents and staff to work through. Nonetheless, we expect all our community to show mutual respect. We have clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct), parents (through the parent code of conduct) and pupils (through our behaviour policy). We also expect parents to engage constructively with school staff and to work together with them in the best interests of our children.

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 school's legal advisers.

If parents are considering making a formal complaint, the complaints procedure can be accessed directly via our school website. However, informal stage of our complaints policy suggests that other forms of communication can often help in resolving issues and we encourage parents to use this route. However, this is not compulsory and does not prevent the use of the complaints policy either straight away or after other forms of communication have been tried.

Communication with the school

In the case of communications with the school, that are not raising a formal complaint the following guidance will apply.

Meetings

Face-to-face conversations are generally 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 either in person or by telephone, at a later date. **The school will aim to arrange that meeting within 5 working days. Please request this via the admin office email address. adminoffice@petersgate-inf.hants.sch.uk** If a class based incident please refer to the class teacher in the first instance.

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 be assumed.

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

Email

Parents are welcome to email the school, adminoffice@petersgate-inf.hants.sch.uk about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Emails will be most helpful if they are concise, explaining 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 clear way.

The school will aim to respond **within 5 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.

Phone calls

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 or urgent then parents should email or call the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them **within 5 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.

Social Media

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

Where the social media site is run by the school, comments will be removed if they do not meet the criteria of the social media site **which is to provide regular updated information about the school**.

Should the school be made aware of any physical threats or abusive behaviour towards staff members on social media then the school will consider reporting this to the Police and seeking the removal of this content from the site, as per the parent Code of Conduct.

Communication during school hours/ working days

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours **8.00am – 4.00pm**, or their working hours (if they work part-time).

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours **8.00am – 4.00pm**, or during school holidays and weekends.

Staff may choose to work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

The Seesaw platform is an educational platform in which parents can engage with their child's learning. The private messaging function has been deactivated as we believe it is important to create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents in our school.

This policy will be reviewed September 2024