



James Bateman Middle School

Home School Communications Policy

Approved by: Mrs T Price

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Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Introduction and aims..... | 2 |
| 2. Roles and responsibilities..... | 2 |
| 3. How we communicate with parents and carers..... | 4 |
| 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school..... | 5 |
| 5. Inclusion..... | 7 |
| 6. Monitoring and review..... | 7 |
| 7. Links with other policies..... | 7 |

1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on students' 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) Ensuring that all communications are treated as confidential within the school context.
- Ensuring that all communications are dealt with respectfully and with courtesy.

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication within 48 hours of receiving communications during core school 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.

A copy of our ICT acceptable use policy can be found here: [ICT Pupil Acceptable Use Policy](#)

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- In person visits to the school should be via appointment to ensure the relevant member of staff is available. All visitors to the school will be asked to make an appointment unless it is a safeguarding emergency.
- Refer to the communication flowchart included in this policy to ensure communications are sent to the right person/people.
- Read the key communication issued by the school through Arbor Parent App, All communications for James Bateman Middle School are sent through Arbor App. This is managed by the school admin team.
- 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

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should allow up to 48 hours for staff members to respond. They should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours, or their working hours if they are part time, or during school holidays.

Link to parent code of conduct policy: [Parent Code of Conduct](#)

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 Arbor

We use Arbor 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
- Consent forms/permissions
- Behaviour and Attendance records

3.2 Email

Parents and staff can also communicate via email

3.3 School calendar

Our newsletter includes a full school calendar for the half-term/term.

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 students to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar. This can also be viewed on our website.

3.4 Phone calls

Whilst email is preferable, telephone calls are one appropriate way to notify us that your child will be absent from school. Please telephone us to communicate brief information about your child that the school needs to know in an emergency, e.g. to let us know that you will be late collecting your child. We ask parents to telephone the school on **01782 973900**. The school office is open between 8.15am and 4.00pm, Monday - Friday during term-time. At all other times there is an answering service available to take your message. If the call requires a response, we aim to do this within 3 working days during term-time.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters via Arbor regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Our half termly newsletter

If a parent requires a letter to be printed this can be done by request through the main office.

3.6 Reports

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

- A mid- year and 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 KS2 SATs tests for Y6

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 two parents' evening(s) per 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, or wellbeing.

Parents of students 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.

4. HOW PARENTS AND CARERS CAN COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL

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.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Please see communication flowchart (appendix 1) included in this policy to know which email address to use.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within two working days.

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 two 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 five 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 five 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 Home-school communications app

We encourage all parents to engage with the use of Arbor App, as this is the main form of communication provided by the school.

Arbor App is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted class or group, e.g. specific communications regarding class trips and special events, or to all parents, e.g. urgent messages such as an unplanned school closure.

[Arbor Help](#)

5. INCLUSION

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

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

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 three years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. 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

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:

- Consult the communication flow chart
- Email the most appropriate address from the list below
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 48 working hours.

Parent Communication Flow Chart

- We know that when parents have a concern that relates to their child at school, whether it's pastoral, curriculum or staffing in nature, they often feel the best way forward is to ask to see the head or deputy head. In our experience many of these concerns can often be most quickly resolved by talking first to the most appropriate person. The flow chart below outlines who this will be.

| Learning Concerns | Pastoral Concerns | Concern relating to particular learning or physical needs | Issues relating to staff | Concerns & Queries relating to school administration |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher in the first instance. | (Pastoral care covers our support of your child's individual needs, their emotional wellbeing and helping them with any personal problems they may be experiencing at school.) ↓ | Where a concern is related to a special need and you feel an adjustment may be required to support successful learning e.g. issues related to ASD (autistic spectrum disorders), dyslexia or dyspraxia or physical disabilities ↓ | Please contact reception who will forward your concern to the headteacher. | Please speak to Mrs C Picken School Business Manager |
| | Please raise your concern | Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher in | | |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| | with your child's class teacher. | the first instance. | |
| | ↓ | | |
| | <p>If you feel that the class teacher is unable to help for pastoral concerns please contact our Student and Family Support Worker Mrs Wood</p> <p>Mr Walton (Assistant Headteacher) works with all of the students for behavioural and pastoral support.</p> | Please arrange an appointment with our Assistant Headteacher and Inclusion manager Mrs Fletcher | |
| | <p>Please make an appointment to see the progress leader if you remain concerned following the steps above.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> | | |
| | <p>Please make an appointment to see our Headteacher: Mrs Price if you remain concerned after following the steps above.</p> | | |
| <p>Teachers are available after school for informal conversations and appointments can be made with all of the above by contacting the school office on 01268 735329 or emailing: admin@runwell.essex.sch.uk</p> | | | |
| <p>If you are writing to the school it is really helpful if you give us as much information about the background of your concern or complaint as possible, including who it involves, and what you would like the outcome to be.</p> | | | |

- Our Chair of Governors, Mrs Sharon Maguire is also here to support when a parent has a concern or complaint. She can be contacted through the school office.
- Our full school complaints policy can be found on our website or a hard copy can be obtained from the school office.

Useful email addresses

Parents should consult this list to use the correct email address for staff members. If this email address is not listed please use main school office email and include staff members name in the email subject. This will then be forwarded to the right person.

| STAFF MEMBER | EMAIL ADDRESS |
|--|--|
| School Office | office@jamesbateman.staffs.sch |
| Mrs Price (Headteacher) | headteacher@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mr L Pace (Deputy Headteacher) | lpace@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs K Baggaley (Asst. Headteacher & Safeguarding Lead) | kbaggaley@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mr A Walton (Asst. Headteacher – Pastoral and Behaviour) | awalton@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs A Finch – (Asst. Headteacher, Y6 Progress Leader) | afinch@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs C Fletcher SENCO | cfletcher@jamesbateman.staffs.sch |
| Mrs C Picken – School Business Manager | cpicken@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs S Maguire – Chair of Governors | smaguire@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs S Fletcher - Y5 Progress Leader | sfletcher@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs A Finch – Y6 Progress Leader | afinch@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mrs L Perkin – Y7 Progress Leader | lperkin@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |
| Mr S Champ – Y8 Progress Leader | schamp@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk |

Complaints

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

[Complaints Policy](#)