



Radley CE Primary School & Foundation Stage Unit

Jesus said, "I come to give life - life in all its fullness," John 10:10

Communication Policy

To conform with the requirements of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) all data is handled according to the terms of our Privacy Notice. A copy of this is available on our school website.

Aim

At Radley CE Primary School we endeavour to ensure that communication among all members of the school community (staff, parents, helpers and the wider community) is both effective and efficient at all times. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated.

Definition of communication

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It involves:

- Respectful listening
- The management of relationships and appropriate involvement of people
- An awareness of attitude and behaviour as well as the clarity of the message
- Timely, effective action if required

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

Objectives:

All communications at Radley CE Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well-informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon-free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- Be actioned within a reasonable time
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience

- Take account of relevant school policies
- Be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Vision and School Development Plan.

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

Roles and responsibilities

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

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Their communication with parents and staff 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 8.45 – 3.15, 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 and internet acceptable use policy can be found on the school website.

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
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school
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Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.45 - 3.15) or during school holidays.

External methods of communication

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Good communication between the school and the home is essential and is a two-way process. In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community.

Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well-informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in

supporting the school. Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. To this end parents will always be addressed in an appropriate manner and staff will avoid developing close friendships with parents as a result of school. Friendships made outside of the school, through normal village life or through colleagues at Radley College must be conducted with the utmost professionalism within the remit of school.

We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our school.

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.

It is also acknowledged that there are some families who do not have electronic means of communication and arrangements are made accordingly.

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
- Newsletters
- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

Text messages

We will text parents about:

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

School calendar

Our newsletter includes a full school calendar for the term. The calendar on the website shows the full school calendar for the whole year, although some dates may be subject to change (these will be identified with a *)

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.

Phone calls

We will use the telephone if we need an immediate response or discussion with you. This may include illness or accident, medication or severe behavioural or emotional concerns. Teachers may also call parents if they have been unable to pass on a message of congratulations for the child's achievement or effort in person.

Letters

We aim to use as little paper as possible, as part of our drive for sustainability. Therefore we will only send paper copies of information if requested. We may also send paper copies of letters that require a written response or preference, such as

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 mid-year report
- A report on Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 SATs tests

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

Meetings with parents

We hold parents' evenings in the autumn and the spring terms. 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 autumn meeting is primarily to discuss how your child has settled in to their new class both socially and academically, and setting appropriate learning goals for the year. The spring meeting is to discuss how your child is getting on towards their targets based on both teacher and standardised assessments. These meetings give an opportunity to celebrate your child's successes and to suggest ways to support them in areas where there is a particular need for improvement.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

When children have special educational needs, or if they are making less than the expected progress, we find it helpful to meet with parents more regularly. We will also make any reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand a communication.

School website

The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. The Class pages display the class handbooks and termly curriculum plans for each year group. It also holds links to recent newsletters and Twitter feed. These showcase what is on offer through the enriched curriculum at Radley Primary School.

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 breakfast club and after-school clubs

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

Social networking sites/blogs, etc.

Staff will not communicate directly with parents or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as their 'friends'. The exception to this rule would be through Google Classroom for the sole purpose of teaching and learning.

Radley Primary School's Twitter account is used to ensure parents/carers and the wider community can see what is happening in school, and will feature regular pictures and updates from the Headteacher. Photos used will adhere to our Use of Photographs Policy. Positive comments and 'likes' are encouraged. Twitter is not a platform to raise or discuss concerns with school.

How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Email

Parents should always email the school office, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Parents are also encouraged to respond to general requests using email where possible e.g. permission slips, attendance at an event or query. However, it is acknowledged that electronic communication will not take the place of face-to-face conversation. All email communications should be sent to the school office in the first instance:

office@radleyprimary.uk

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 10 working days.

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

Raising concerns

The school aims to resolve all issues as speedily and informally as possible. However where it has not been possible to come to a satisfactory conclusion, the policy on Complaints Procedure will be used and parents will be communicated with in accordance with that policy

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 that day or their next working day if they are part time.

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 7 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.

Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email or call the school office to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 10 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

School prospectus

The school prospectus and class handbooks contain a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school. These are updated every year.

New pupils

Parents of new pupils are invited to an induction meeting where relevant information regarding how the school operates is shared. They are given a new parent pack containing useful information including a copy of the prospectus, class handbook and the home-school agreement which summarises the positive working relationship the school wishes to foster with the pupil and their family.

Communication with the community

Members of the local community are invited to school functions such as assemblies, Harvest Festival, Christmas Fete and school productions. The children take part in community events, such as the Radley Flower Show. Radley Primary School classes also write updates for the monthly Radley News. Regular contact is also maintained with the church community through 'Open the Book' assemblies. The partnership with Radley College is maintained through the partnership coordinator at Radley College and the Headteacher at Radley Primary School.

Internal methods of communication

Meetings

There is an integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff, both formal and informal and this includes a weekly staff meeting. All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. It is important that time is put aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to subject leader's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans. For all other team meetings notes should be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff. The approved minutes of staff meetings are available to all staff via the Google Shared drive and can always be requested.

Email

Information and notification of initiatives are communicated through the use of email where appropriate. Weekly updates for events and arrangements for staffing will be sent using this method to both teachers and support staff. It is each staff members' responsibility to ensure they check their Radley School emails regularly for information. Staff are **not** expected to respond to their communication outside of working hours (8.45 - 3.15 weekdays) or during school holidays.

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information; however, it does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required.

Mobile phones

Staff - Mobile phones should not be used during lessons or when in contact with the children. In exceptional cases, such as family illness, the circumstances should be discussed with the Headteacher. During trips and off-site provision, staff should ensure they can be contacted by mobile phone at all times.

Pupils – Pupils should not bring mobile phones to school. Any exceptions must be discussed with and approved by the Headteacher.

Parents/carers – Use of mobile phones whilst on the school site should be courteous and appropriate to the school environment. Parents are welcome to photograph or film school events such as shows or sports day, but images that include any children other than their own should not be published (e.g. on social networking sites).

Parents and visitors are required to turn phones off when volunteering in classrooms, accompanying school trips or at Forest School.

Making voice recordings on a mobile phone or other device during meetings or discussions with staff, parents or governors is not permitted.

Written communications

These are placed in pigeon holes in the staff room, which staff should check regularly, handed to staff personally or emailed. Notes may also be included in registers.

Staff notice board

The staff notice board is located in the staffroom and is updated for the week at the latest on a Monday morning, and added to regularly as needed. It is staff members' responsibility to check the notice board daily for updates.

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
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing

April 2022

To be reviewed April 2025

Claire Thomas Headteacher