



LEIGHSWOOD SCHOOL

Communications with Parents and Carers Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

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

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday to Friday), in line with their working hours. This is to promote staff wellbeing and help 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.

2.1 Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy.
- Regularly reviewing this policy.
- Providing all stakeholders with timely information relating to strategic decisions where this is appropriate.
- Arranging and inviting parents/carers to a termly Parent Forum to share updates and discuss any issues or concerns that have been raised.
- Ensuring parents/carers are provided with a written annual report that outlines their child's achievements, general progress and attendance record.

2.2 Head of School/Senior Leaders

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents regarding the day to day operation of the school are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Ensuring parents/carers receive timely information about whole school events such as parents' evenings, celebrations days, training days etc.
- Ensuring that systems are in place to share relevant information relating to individual children is shared with parents/carers in a timely manner regarding behaviour, special educational needs etc.
- Ensuring systems are in place to report accidents or injuries to parents/carers in a timely manner.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.

2.3 Teaching Staff

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communications from parents in a timely manner in line with this policy and the school's internet acceptable use policy.
- Ensuring parents/carers receive timely information about events and activities that will, or have taken place within their child's class.
- Ensuring parents/carers receive timely information about expectations for homework.
- Providing an annual written paper report to the parents/carers of children in their class with details of their achievements, general progress and attendance record.
- Providing a termly verbal update to parents/carers of children in their class regarding their achievements, general progress and attendance record.
- Providing parents/carers with timely information about any concerns around behaviour or general welfare.
- Providing parents/carers with timely information about any accidents or injuries that occur while in school.

2.4 Teaching Support Staff

Teaching support staff are responsible for supporting teaching staff in all of the above where appropriate.

2.5 Administration Staff

Administration staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in a timely manner in line with this policy and the school's internet acceptable use policy.
- Passing messages received either in person or other means e.g. via the online messaging service, postbox email or telephone, to the relevant staff on the day they are received or the first available working day where messages are sent outside of the school working day (Monday – Friday 8:30am – 430pm).
- Providing acknowledgements of messages received from parents/carers via the Reach More Parents app and email to the sender.
- Passing on messages to parents that have been requested by staff.
- Updating the calendar on the website and Reach More Parents app.
- Updating information on the school website.
- Updating forms and other information on the Reach More Parents app.

- Managing users, the login and update processes on the Reach More Parents app.
- Collating and disseminating information received on the Reach More Parents app.
- Providing parents/carers with support to use the Reach More Parents app.

2.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times.
- Sending written communication via the Reach More Parents app and not the emails of individual members of staff (Except where emails are published on the school website or in this policy).
- 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.
- Downloading and regularly checking the Reach More Parents app.
- Checking all communications from the school.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with Walsall Council's policies and procedures.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (between 8:30 am and 4:30pm Monday to Friday) 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.

3.1 Reach More Parents App

We use the Reach More Parents App to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events - where possible, we will 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 on the school calendar.
- Information about trips and visits.
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days).
- Homework activities.
- Activities that have been taking place in individual classes or across the school.
- School surveys or consultations.
- Class activities or teacher requests.
- All payments including dinner money and payments for school trips.
- Short-notice changes to the school day.
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather).
- Forms for completion e.g. trip permission forms, photo consent forms, parent/carer contact forms.
- Information about celebration assemblies e.g. when a child is to receive a Headteacher's Award in a Friday assembly.
- Weekly attendance figures.

Parents should monitor the app regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

3.2 School calendar

Our School website (<https://www.leighswood.walsall.sch.uk/>) includes a full school calendar for the current term and often beyond. This calendar is also available on the Reach More Parents app.

3.3 Phone calls

We will make phone calls to parents to:

- Give information where a child has had a head or other serious injury in school.
- Give updates on pupil behavior or to discuss any concerns we may have.
- Invite parents to attend meetings with staff to discuss concerns such as progress, attendance or well-being.
- Request additional information or to verify information.
- Request a child is collected from school due to illness, injury or behaviour.
- Request information regarding a child's absence.

3.4 Letters

We will send letters home for the following purposes:

- To provide information and required actions where individual pupil attendance has fallen below 93%.
- To inform parents/carers where there have incidents of discriminatory behaviour or bullying involving their child as a perpetrator or victim.
- To inform parents/carers of the outcome of a requested absence.
- To inform parents/carers of a suspension or exclusion of their child.

In addition, a termly newsletter will be provided for the parents/carers in each year group which provides an outline of what the children have done in the current term, what they will do in the next term and important dates for the following term. This will be published on Reach More Parents and the school website.

3.5 Homework

Details of homework activities will be provided in a weekly Reach More Parents Post to their class. This will provide suggestions for activities, items for discussion, spellings etc.

Pupils will be provided with details of how to submit any activities they complete using Google Classroom.

3.6 Reports

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

- An end-of-year written paper report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance.
- A report on attainment in national tests (Year 1 Phonics, Key Stage 2 SATs etc.).

We will 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 parents' evening each term over several days. 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.

3.9 Home-school communications app

The majority of communications from school to parents/carers will be delivered through the Reach More Parents app as detailed in the sections above. Parents/carers can gain access to the app by speaking to our admin team, either in person or via telephone. They will then be provided with a log in code to get started.

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 not send email messages to individual members of staff unless their email address is published on the school website under the Contact Details page or in this policy. Staff whose details are published are:

- The Executive Headteacher – Mr J Pearce - jpearce@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
- The Head of School – Mrs J Hanmer - jhanmer@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
- The Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator – Mrs A Robinson – arobinson@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
- The Pastoral Support and Home support worked – Mrs H Hughes hhughes@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk

Where emails are sent, they should be set to be delivered during the working day (8:30am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday) using a delay send function where necessary and should not be sent during school holidays.

Parents/carers can email the school's postbox email address (postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk) at any time as this is only monitored during the working day (8:30am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday). This address can be used for non-urgent issues, request for information, call backs etc.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 5 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 10 working days.

4.2 Phone calls

Parents/carers should call the school office to:

- Raise concerns about pupil attainment or progress.
- Provide details of pupil absence.
- Provide information regarding family emergencies.
- Provide information regarding safeguarding or welfare issues.
- Raise concerns about bullying or discriminatory behaviour.
- Request a call back/meeting with a specific member of staff.
- Request information.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting (in person or via telephone) with a member of staff, they should either call the school or send a message using the Reach More Parents app. We will respond within 2 working days to agree suitable dates and times.

Meetings can be arranged to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning.
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

Teachers are unavailable at the beginning and end of the school day to meet with parents. However, senior staff are available at these times.

4.4 Home-school communications app

Parents can communicate directly with the school using the Reach More Parents app.

The app can be used to:

- Send messages to school (these messages will be sent to a central point and will be distributed to the relevant member of staff).
- Complete necessary forms (e.g. trip forms, personal information forms etc.)
- Make payments for dinner money, trips etc.
- Make comments on class posts (where this facility has been enabled).

5. Inclusion

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

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 Executive Headteacher and Head of School monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

- internet acceptable use
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Staff wellbeing

8. Complaints

If you would like to file a complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found on the school website by following the link below

<https://www.leighswood.walsall.sch.uk/policies/>

Appendix 1: 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:

- Email the school office using postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk or call 01922 743621
 - Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- or
- Send a message using the Reach More Parents App. The message will then be passed to the relevant member of staff

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within 5 working 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	The school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
School trips	The Educational Visits Coordinator - Miss R Clifton
Uniform/lost and found	The school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01922 743621 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Bullying and behaviour	Executive Headteacher – Mr Pearce – jpearce@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk Head of School – Mrs Hanmer - jhanmer@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk Deputy Headteacher – Mrs A Robinson – arobinson@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
School events/the school calendar	The school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Special educational needs (SEN)	Deputy Headteacher – Mrs A Robinson – arobinson@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Before and after-school clubs	The school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Hiring the school premises	The school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Governing board	Clerk to the Governors – c/o postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk
Catering/meals	The school office - call 01922 743621 or email postbox@leighswood.walsall.sch.uk