

# Halfway Junior School Communication Policy

## Introduction

Good communication is the key to ensuring that our school runs well. It allows all stakeholders to feel that they have a voice and that this voice is listened to and valued.

## Aim

To ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

## Objectives

All communications at our school should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest and professional.
- Use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all.
- Be actioned within a reasonable time.
- Use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience.
- Take account of relevant school policies.
- Match the values of our school.

## External methods of communication

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Our aim is to have clear and effective communications with all parents and 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 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 should always be addressed in an appropriate manner.

Teaching staff will not accept friendship requests from parents on social media.

We will try to make written communications simple and to the point.

## Communications from Parents/Carers

**Letters:** Staff will respond to parents' letters within 48 hours (2 school days). Letters to parents must be approved by the Head Teacher before they are sent. Copies of all correspondence to individual parents will be placed in pupil files.

**E-mail/Text:** The school has an e-mail/text system (ParentMail) which it uses to communicate with parents. Any communication that needs to be sent to parents using this system must be approved by the Head Teacher/Head of School.

If a parent communicates with the school using email with a matter that requires an action, a copy should be stored in a digital file or printed & filed. Staff should forward relevant emails from parents to the Head Teacher and should always do so if the content is a complaint. All e-mails requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours (2 school days). Whilst we understand that parents may work very different hours to a traditional school day and as a consequence may send a message outside our hours, we do not expect our staff to read or respond outside the school day.

E-mail communications concerning a child are kept for the academic year in a digital folder unless they are required for evidence trailing, in which case a copy should be printed.

**Telephone calls:** Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency. However, a note will be made of the call and this will be passed on at the earliest convenient. Staff will respond to the phone call within 48 hours (2 days).

**Social Media Sites/Blogs:** Staff are advised not to communicate with parents via social networking sites or accept them as “friends”. Staff will not accept pupils or ex-pupils as “friends”.

**Written Reports:** Once a year, we provide a full written report to each child’s parents on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. Pupils are also given an opportunity to comment on their progress.

**Newsletters:** Newsletters are sent home and are e-mailed out on a weekly basis.

In addition, parents meet their child’s teacher/s twice during the year for a private consultation at a Parents in Partnership meeting.

We do not expect parents to wait for this meeting should they have any concerns about their child. If a concern arises the parent should contact their child’s teacher, in the first instance, and request to meet.

When children have particular education needs, or if they are making less than expected progress, parents will be invited to meet with their child’s teacher more regularly. Parents of children with a My Plan will have the opportunity to review the My Plan three times in a year.

#### **School Website:**

The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

#### **Home-School Communication:**

- Home School Agreements are signed on entry
- Parents/carers will be texted if there is an unexpected cancellation of a club
- Once a year a questionnaire is sent out to parents and the results are analysed & used to improve the school

We recognise that children’s protection is a shared responsibility, and that Halfway Junior School should provide a safe and secure environment. If any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed to the Designated Senior Person for Children Protection, or the Deputy DSP, who may share this information with Social Services.

#### **How will this policy be monitored and evaluated?**

This policy will be monitored through on-going school self-evaluation. The Head Teacher will use a variety of methods to evaluate this policy with staff, parents & governors.