Poulner Junior School
Home School communication & code of conduct Policy

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Version	Reviewed	Ratified	Description of main changes	Signature
1.0	07/10/23	18/10/23	New policy	JR
1.1	5/10/25	Oct 25	Reviewed for 2 year cycle	JR

Next Review Date: Autumn 2a (2027-2028)

Reviewed by: FGB

Review Frequency: every 2 years (DfE Guidance)

Description of policy: **Home school communication & parent code of conduct policy**

- ***Other documents referred to:*** ICT and internet acceptable use, Staff code of conduct, Complaints, Home-school agreement,

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

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)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours 8.30-4.00pm, 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.

2.3 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
- Update child details and contact information via the Arbor portal.

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 8.30-4.00pm 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.

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

The school will adopt the default position of contacting the first parent listed on the contact list, which has been completed by parents. It is expected that parents will liaise with each other whether they are co-habiting or alternatively co-parenting from different addresses. School is aware that this is not always possible for a minority of parents. Where there are no lines of communication between parents then it is the responsibility of parents to inform the school, so that additional lines of communication can be set up to ensure that both parents are informed.

3.1 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
- Feedback on meetings or incidences on their child where this has been requested as the preferred line of communication.

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Minor injuries and bumped head

3.3 School calendar

Our school website and newsletter includes a full school calendar for the month and through key diary dates parents are informed of key events for the whole year.

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.

3.4 Phone calls

The school will call parents in the following cases:

- An emergency using the list of contacts provided by parents

- To clarify permissions when paper permission has not been received
- To clarify or request information/equipment
- Staff to call parents regularly to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negatively)

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our fortnightly newsletter

Additional letters may also be sent for specific communications or to inform you of updates regarding attendance, suspensions or requests for formal meetings with senior leadership.

3.6 School diary planners

The children's school diary planners are used to communicate brief messages and to record timestables, reading and information to support their child's homework.

Diaries will be signed by an adult at school each week.

3.7 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
- Termly progress reports
- A report on KS2 SATs tests
- A report on the results of public examinations

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

3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' evening(s) per term. 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.

3.9 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.

3.10 Home-school communications app

Arbor app is used to communicate minor behaviour issues and positive praise.

The app is also used to communicate payment and messages.

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.

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.

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 2 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 5 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
- Suspensions

For more general enquiries, please call or email 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 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

4.4 Home-school communications app

Parents should use the app to book spaces on breakfast club and JASPA after school provision.

Parents should also use the app for payments and booking spaces for extra-curricular clubs.

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
- The website can by accessed in a wide range of languages.

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. Parent Code of Conduct

We believe pupils learn best in a safe and supportive environment based on respect and trust and underpinned by an effective partnership between parents, staff and the school community. High standards of behaviour are required of pupils and staff are expected to act professionally at all times. The positive support of parents and carers is needed and highly valued by the school.

It provides a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the conduct expected of them. It sets out both what they should aim to do, and conduct which will not be tolerated. This is so we can continue to learn, grow and thrive in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. This code complements the school's 'Complaints Policy' which is designed to handle parental concerns or complaints in a sensitive and mutually supportive manner (see the school website, or contact the school office).

Expectations

We expect parents and carers (and, where appropriate, visitors) to:

• Respect the caring ethos and values of our school

• Work together with school staff for the benefit of their children

• Treat all members of the school community with respect using appropriate language and behaviour

• Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern

• Where appropriate, clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue

• Promote good behaviour of your own children at all times, especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour (but avoid using teachers as a threat if your child misbehaves).

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school will not tolerate parents, carers or visitors exhibiting the following:

• Disruptive or other inappropriate behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's operation or activities anywhere on the school premises

• Approaching another parent or child in order to discuss or chastise them because of an issue between the children, (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences) - please talk to a member of staff to resolve problems

• Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper

• Threatening, in any way, a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil

• Using physical or verbal aggression towards another adult or child, including physical punishment of your own child on school premises

• Any other behaviour, verbal or otherwise, which could be considered to be inappropriate, offensive, or abusive

• Sending abusive or threatening e-mails, text/voicemail/phone messages, or other written communications to anyone within the school community

• Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/carers/staff at the school on Facebook or other social media

• Damaging or destroying school property

• Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on school premises (alcohol may only be consumed during authorised events)

• Taking photographs with phones or other devices on school premises without permission from the school.

If we are unable to resolve issues in a reasonable manner, the school may have to ban parents/carers/visitors from entering the school grounds, and in extreme cases we may need to involve the police. We trust that parents, carers and visitors will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support of the school. We ask that parents and carers ensure they make all persons responsible for collecting their children aware of this policy.

Inappropriate use of social network sites

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, head teachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The governors consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the head teacher, or the chair of governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

Libellous or defamatory posts

In the event that any student or parent/carer of a child being educated at the school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately.

Cyber bullying

We take very seriously the issue of cyber bullying by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare. In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

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 or call the school office on adminoffice@poulner-jun.hants.sch.uk and 01425 474590
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on 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 2 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	Class teacher or Thrive pastoral team
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform/lost and found	School office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01425 474590 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact adminoffice@poulner-jun.hants.sch.uk
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher or Mrs Randall, Mrs Cason, Mrs Smalley, Mrs Homewood
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Class teacher or Mrs Homewood
Before and after-school clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	School office- Mrs Jones

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT…	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
PTA	School office
Governing board	School office or Chair of Governors Natalie Jolley
Catering/meals	School office

Complaints

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

This can be found on the school website or requested from school office.