



Communications Policy

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies and within the school.

At Weston Green we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values and keep parents well informed about school life.

Good communication between school and home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting their child and the school.

We recognise that the modern world means that we all have a large volume of emails and other forms of electronic communication to keep up with and that we all lead busy lives, both school staff and parents.

Aims

Weston Green aims to ensure all communications are:

- Clear
- Comprehensive
- Two-way
- Timely

As professionals, staff are required to be courteous and constructive in all communications. Therefore we also ask parents to be courteous and constructive in their communications with the school and individual members of staff, whether face to face, by phone or by email.

School

The school will undertake to ensure that:

- Parents and children have clear lines of communication
- The curriculum is clearly communicated to parents
- Parents are informed of forthcoming events within appropriate timelines
- All communications are treated as confidential within the school context

Parent/Guardians/Carers

Parents will undertake to:

- Read all communications issued by the school
- Raise issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity with the school in the most appropriate manner
- Act on the communication (for example, giving timely permission for children to attend trips, taking note of arrangements for special events, attending meetings)
- Not discuss school issues, apart from practical arrangements, on social media, including WhatsApp. Concerns are always more easily discussed in person.

Methods of communication

We will use the following methods of communication during term time:

- **Weekly mailing** which is sent by email every Thursday afternoon. This contains information for the week ahead and important diary dates for forthcoming events, as well as links to all letters and forms.
- **Termly newsletter** This is an email newsletter covering the latest blogs, news items, images and videos from the school.
- Regular written updates and photo galleries on the school website, Facebook page and Twitter account
- **Termly written reports** detailing children's progress, achievements and targets (summary reports in autumn and spring terms)
- **Termly parent meetings** (optional at the end of the academic year following receipt of a full written report)

Contacting the school

Communication by email is often the easiest method but parents can, of course, telephone the school if an urgent response is needed.

- Parents/carers, particularly of younger pupils, may be able to have queries answered directly by the class teacher at the end of the school day and staff are always willing to speak to parents when they hand children over.
- If an issue requires a face to face meeting this will be arranged at a mutually convenient time either before or after school, but may not be able to take place immediately as staff have commitments beyond school hours.

The following guidelines should help parents/carers to decide on the best way to communicate an enquiry or issue:

Telephone

Please use the main office number to contact the school

- Office staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible
- If a call is urgent, please let the office staff know and they will find a senior member of staff to speak to you
- Teachers will endeavour to respond on the same day, depending on the time of the call, or if not, the following day, between the hours of 7.45am and 5.30pm

Email

Parents can contact members of staff directly, via email. To ensure this works effectively for both parties, it is vitally important that parents are clear on the purpose of this communication channel. Please be aware of the following:

- Teachers are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day and the school does not expect work emails to be checked after 5.30pm or at weekends/during school holidays.
- Staff will always aim to respond to emails on the same day, even if just to acknowledge receipt, with a more detailed reply within 48 hours if needed.
- Teachers who work part-time are only expected to reply to emails on days that they work and may therefore take longer to respond.
- Please do not use email to discuss a child's progress as an email exchange cannot be effective for this - please arrange a meeting or a telephone call if you wish to discuss how your child is progressing in a particular area.
- Absences should be emailed to the office by 9.00am and copied to the class teacher. The office will acknowledge receipt.
- Children are expected, especially in Upper Prep, to take responsibility for their learning and their homework. Please do not email to say that a child has forgotten a book or has not done their homework unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is much better if the child communicates directly with the teacher concerned and their homework diary can be used for messages between home and school about homework.

When should I email my child's class teacher?

Change in collection arrangements (e.g. playdate)	✓
I would like advice on how I can support my child during the year	✓
I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss an aspect of my child's learning	✓

To enable teachers to focus on the most important aspect of their work (teaching and inspiring the children), parents are asked to check the school calendar and weekly mailing should they have queries relating to diary dates, events or school activities. As a guide, the table below contains the type of requests which should not be emailed to teachers.

When is my child's English homework due?	X
Where is the Yr 4 football match taking place?	X
What time does my child's class assembly start?	X

Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the staff team, with the class teacher being the first point of contact.

Thereafter, please approach the following members of staff:

- Phase Leader
- Deputy Head (who is the Head of Pastoral Care)
- Headteacher

Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff, although class teachers will accommodate a short meeting with parents at the end of the school day if they are able.

If you urgently need to see someone, for example if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please telephone ahead and we will arrange for a senior member of staff to see you.

Non-urgent meetings will be arranged within 5 working days or as soon as possible if multiple members of staff, including part-time staff, need to attend.

Contacting you

Our preferred method of contacting you is either through email for group communications, or by telephone or email for individual issues.

Social Media

We use our social media channels to provide details of pupil achievements and give parents/carers information about school events and trips, as well as giving a snapshot of life at Weston Green and the activities of the children on a day-to-day basis.

All parents are asked to complete a permission form giving details of permission for children to feature in photographs, newsletters, publicity material and on social media. This can be withheld and may be altered in writing.

Monitoring

Effective communication is very important: this policy will be regularly monitored together with our approach to communication, ensuring early identification and implementation of any further improvements.

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