

## **Communications Policy**

To ensure that Cornholme School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Good communication promotes partnership.

### **Objectives**

All communications at Cornholme Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents and governors 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 methods of communication that are most effective and appropriate.
- Take account of relevant school policies.
- Be compatible with our core values and School Improvement & Development Plan.

### **Senior leadership team (SLT) responsibilities**

- To ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner and via appropriate channels, where practicable face to face.
- To ensure that staff have the relevant information available to communicate with colleagues effectively.
- To maintain open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comment from all staff.
- To keep governors informed of developments and concerns.

### **All staff responsibilities**

- To communicate regularly with each other to ensure information is available and understood.
- To ensure they are informed and have access to information in order to be as effective as possible in their role and to support their work within the school.
- To keep the leadership team and colleagues informed.
- To remain professional and respectful when communicating with parents, staff and pupils.

### **Governors responsibilities**

- To ensure the use of trusted online spaces when communicating between governors or with the school.
- To use a variety of communication methods to promote & explain the work of the governors.
- To be aware of what is being said about the school.

- To ensure the posting of minutes of meetings in appropriate places.
- To remain professional and respectful when communicating with parents, staff and pupils.

### **Internal methods of communication**

- All staff follow the organisation and procedures set out in the school handbook.
- Regular meetings involving all staff, both formal and informal: e.g. teachers' meetings, teaching assistant meetings, MDS meetings, Office meetings, Key Stage meetings, whole staff meetings.
- All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. Minutes will be kept in the staffroom.
- E-mail is a quick, effective way of communicating information but should not replace face to face meetings where discussion is required.
- Teachers' meetings & SLT meetings take place every week. Events are discussed in advance at meetings, but staff also have the responsibility to check future actions.
- Governors' meeting minutes are placed on the VLE.
- The whiteboard in the staffroom is used for day to day notices and should be updated by staff.
- Reminders or letters to individual parents are sent to classes to be given out by the class teachers and must be given to children the same day.
- The school uses Parentmail to communicate with parents by text or e-mail.
- Urgent messages for parents/carers will be sent by text as early as possible and followed up by the office staff to ensure receipt.
- A list of all those not subscribing to Parentmail will be kept by the office & hard copies sent to all those on the list.

### **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. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting school.

- Staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents.
- Staff will ensure that the relationships are professional, and parents are addressed in an appropriate manner.
- Home School Agreements are signed on entry.
- Home visits & pre-school visits take place before the child begins school, in nursery.
- Once a year a questionnaire is sent out to parents and the results are analysed & used to improve the school.
- Teaching staff will not accept friendship requests, from parents of children in their class, on social media.
- Written communication will be as accessible and inclusive as possible.

### **Communication outside of school hours**

- There is no expectation for staff to respond to emails outside of school hours.

- Holidays, weekends and evenings should be respected by all who are involved with school, and consideration should be taken before emails/texts are sent.
- Work emails should not be accessed on personal mobile devices. This is in breach of e-safety regulations and there is no legal cover for staff.

### **Communications with Parents/Carers**

#### Letters:

- Staff will respond to parents' letters within 48 hours (2 school days).
- Any letter of complaint must be referred to the Head Teacher immediately.
- Letters to parents must be approved by SLT before they are sent.
- Correspondence with parents will be noted on CPOMs.
- An electronic copy of general letters will be made available to office staff.

#### 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 SLT.
- If a parent communicates with the school using email with a complaint or a matter that requires an action, staff should forward relevant emails to the Head Teacher.
- All e-mails requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours (2 school days).
- E-mail communications concerning a child are kept for the academic year unless they are required for evidence trailing, in which case a copy should be uploaded to CPOMs/ placed in the Blue folders.

#### Telephone calls:

- Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency.

#### 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, parents are informed of their child's progress via a full written report.
- This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development.
- Pupils are given an opportunity to comment on their own progress.

#### Newsletters:

- Newsletters are e-mailed out weekly.
- Hard copies will be sent out, in the child's book bag, for those parents not signed up to Parentmail.

#### Children with Special Educational Needs:

- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.
- 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.
- We will also make 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 communication.
- Parents of children with an IEP will have the opportunity to review the IEP 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.
- Information is displayed on the website, which is updated regularly.

We recognise that children's protection is a shared responsibility, and that Cornholme Primary 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 Safeguarding Lead for Children Protection, or the Deputy DSL, who may share this information with Social Services.

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.