26 - Home School Communication Charter

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The following assessments have been completed in relation to this policy

Workload impact ✓ Equality impact ☐ Trust virtues ✓

Table of Contents

Context and aims 2

Expectations and facing communication challenges 3

Communicating with school as a parent 3

Guidance for parents 3

Contacting school 3

School communication with home 3

Appendix A : Who should I contact? 6

Context, aims

Minster Trust for Education has a mission.

Together we help every child to flourish, opening doors to fulfilling futures

'Together' includes students, staff and families and we aim to build strong and mutually supportive relationships between schools and communities.

Our mission is underpinned by a set of core virtues that we ask all to consider.

Integrity Wisdom Collaboration Kindness Service

These virtues underpin everything we do and can also be used to define our aims for healthy and effective communication between home and school. These are summarized in our **communications code of conduct:**



Expectations and facing communication challenges

- MITRE schools are committed to community engagement and there is an expectation all communications adhere to our *communications code of conduct* as defined above. This code of conduct applies to staff and equally to parents, other community members and visitors to our settings.
- We thank the overwhelming majority of visitors and parents who consistently demonstrate our virtues through the way they communicate. However, we have a duty of care to our staff as well as to our pupils and students and we are committed to this responsibility. Staff should be able to fulfil their duties without being subjected to rude, abusive, discriminatory, aggressive or threatening language and behaviour, whether this is during a telephone conversation, in an email or in-person. On the rare occasions parents or visitors do not meet these expectations they will be advised to stop their behaviour. If the behaviour persists, we will terminate the call or ask the visitor to leave the premises.
- Communication can present challenges in terms of the number of emails and other communications received each day. Many staff are working directly with pupils and students throughout the school day and so an immediate response is often not possible. We ask for patience to allow requests to be considered. Our schools will endeavour to respond in a reasonable time frame (see further information below).
- Parents and visitors should make an appointment in advance if they wish to see a particular member of staff. Without an appointment it may well not be possible to see that member of staff as they will be fulfilling other duties.

Communicating with school as a parent

Guidance for parents

I. Consider which communication method is best for the situation – some conversations are best face to face, whilst others, given their nature, can be resolved via email or over the phone.

II. The School Office at Halam C of E Primary School is open in term time from 8.30am to 1pm. An answerphone message can be left outside of these hours. Staff are not expected to be available in the evenings or at weekends.

III. We endeavour to respond promptly and effectively to all parental communications and will aim to respond within **2 working days**. We will prioritise communications based on need. There may be times that we are able to respond sooner than this; however, there may also be times when school is exceptionally busy, when this timescale is not achievable.

IV. Appointments with staff should be booked in advance - this is to avoid disappointment. Many of our staff will be teaching or in meetings during a school day. Anyone arriving to reception unannounced will be advised to request a meeting unless the matter is deemed an emergency.

V. All communication should be respectful and adhere to our communication code of conduct.

Contacting school

Staff recognise the importance of responding to parental queries and will always do their best to do so in a timely manner. However, staff have a range of responsibilities during their working day including teaching, planning, preparing for lessons and supporting students, and many staff have responsibilities beyond the classroom. Therefore, staff may not be able to respond to parents on the day that a query is

made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries outside of their working hours.

For day-to-day issues relating to care, welfare and academic progress, the person best placed to respond is their teacher or another member of staff who works closely with them. In the first instance, please approach the members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

• Class Teacher – if the query is of a pastoral nature

• Class Teacher or Curriculum Leader – if the query is relevant to a specific subject

• School Office – if the query is of a more general nature

• Executive Headteacher – if the query is of a confidential nature

There are a number of ways of contacting Halam C of E Primary School, including:

Email - emails can be a useful way of communicating quickly and easily. However, as a school, our first priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning. Teaching staff cannot and are not expected to monitor and manage their inbox during lessons or at other times in the day, when they should be planning and preparing for lessons, assessing student work or carrying out school duties. Support staff also have busy schedules and are not always immediately available. To help manage the expectations of all, please bear in mind the following guidance:

▪ We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and within 48 hours (during the working week).

▪ Part-time staff may take longer to reply.

Telephone – If you do need to contact school via telephone, please call the School Office on 01636 813062. Reception staff will relay messages to staff when they are not available. However, please note that lessons and meetings will not be interrupted for staff to take calls.

School will aim to respond to you within 48 hours (during the working week). If a call is urgent, please inform the member of staff who takes your call, who will arrange a relevant member of staff to speak to you as soon as possible.

Meetings – Meetings with members of staff should always be arranged in advance. If there is an emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and a suitable member of staff will be notified. Non-urgent meetings will be scheduled within five working days.

Communication by letter - letters (sent with your child) to staff can be an easy way to pass on a message promptly and can be used as everyday communication. Letters can be sent in your child's school bag, or a note can be written in their Reading Diary. It is an expectation that children will bring this to the teacher's attention.

See Appendix 1 for summary contact information.

School communication with home

Schools in Minster Trust for Education know it is important to keep you informed regularly regarding your child's experience and progress. At Halam C of E Primary School this information is communicated in a number of ways:

- Annual Reports
- Termly Parents' Evenings
- Termly Class newsletters
- Information evenings (as applicable to the Key Stage and/or subject)
- Weekly Newsletters - sent by e-mail
- Letters for clubs and school visits
- Text messages

Email – the most common method of communication is using email, as it allows us to communicate with parents quickly and cost effectively.

Telephone calls – Staff members will contact parents by telephone when necessary.

Other useful places to find out important information

The **school website** provides information on all aspects of school life, including forthcoming dates, curriculum information, assessment details and other updates about school life. Any emergency information will be announced on the school website and social media.

The **school newsletter** is sent out every half-term electronically. It allows us to keep parents regularly informed of any recent school news, upcoming events, key dates and activities. The newsletters are also uploaded to the school website.

Social media - we use social media channels to share and celebrate what has been happening in school, including student achievements, subject information and generic educational information. You can find the school on Instagram by searching @...

A number of subjects and other areas of school life also have social media channels that you can follow to keep up to date.

Please note, we do not use social media to respond to comments or questions posted.

Please be respectful at all times when using social media.

Appendix A : Who should I contact?

Why you need to contact school	Who you need to talk to/contact information	Contact details
General Enquiry	Mrs Kate Lincoln, Office Administrator	01636 813062 office@halamprimary.org.uk
Attendance and absence	Mrs Kate Lincoln, Office Administrator	01636 813062 office@halamprimary.org.uk
Buses	Buses Mrs Kate Lincoln, Office Administrator	01636 813062 office@halamprimary.org.uk
Careers and work experience	Mrs Aly Speed, Executive Headteacher	01636 813062 head@halamprimary.org.uk
General query	Mrs Kate Lincoln, Office Administrator	01636 813062 office@halamprimary.org.uk
Pastoral matter	Class teachers	For class teacher's e-mails please see class pages on the school website www.halamprimary.org.uk
Safeguarding – for an urgent safeguarding matter. Where school is closed, or a parent cannot make contact, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is the children's referral service and can be contacted directly by parents and members of the public if they feel a child is at risk.	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Tracy Francis Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL): Aly Speed & Lisa Hammond Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	01636 813062 t.francis@halamprimary.org.uk 01636 813062 head@halamprimary.org.uk l.hammond@halamprimary.org.uk Tel: 0300 500 80 90
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	SENCO: Mrs Tracy Francis	01636 813062 t.francis@halamprimary.org.uk
School Trips and Visits	Mrs Kate Lincoln, Office Administrator	01636 813062 office@halamprimary.org.uk
Uniform	Mrs Kate Lincoln, Office Administrator	01636 813062 office@halamprimary.org.uk
Early Years Foundation Stage	Mrs Lo Bue, Class Teacher – Cherry Class	01623 813062 k.lobue@halamprimary.org.uk