



Home-School Communication Policy

September 2020

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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 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
- Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Deputy Headteacher

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring parents can access online learning tools such as Microsoft Teams and Purple Mash
- Liaising with Solihull IT Support Services in regard to pupil logins

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 not** respond to communications outside of school hours (8:30 – 4.00) or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

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

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

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.

3.1 ParentMail

ParentMail is our main form of communication to home. We use ParentMail to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events and any permissions pertaining to them
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for Inset days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Payment
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter

3.2 Staff Email Accounts

All members of staff have an email account which is primarily used within Microsoft Teams for:

- Scheduling and attending meetings/lessons
- Setting assignments
- Responding to questions from children relating to learning

3.3 Office Email Account

The main office email account is used for responding to messages from parents that have come into the school.

3.4 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the academic 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.

3.5 Phone calls

Staff may make phone calls home to parents relating to first aid administration or other welfare related matters. Phone calls will most often come from a member of the Admin team or member of the Senior Leadership Team, depending on the nature of the call.

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
- A report on KS1 and KS2 SATs tests for parents of pupils in Y2 and Y6.

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 2 parents' evenings per academic year. 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
- 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.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Please 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 main office, 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 5 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the main office.

4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you 5 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 5 working days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the appropriate address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your child's home environment, or their wellbeing

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years. The policy will be approved by the trustee board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

For the majority of enquiries, the main office or individual staff member will be the most appropriate person to email. If you have a matter which is not part of routine communication between home and school then please refer to the following options.

Option 1:

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 70office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk or 01564 7721332
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request onto 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 5 working days.

Option 2:

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 5 working 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	Mrs Parkin, Child and Family Support Worker s70cparkin@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk (Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays)
Payments	Mrs Evans, School Business Manager 70office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call the main office If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact Mr Williams, Headteacher, through the office.
Behaviour	(From 19 October 2020) Mrs Webster, SENCo and Pastoral Lead s70gwebster@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk Mr Hawke, Acting Deputy Headteacher s70shawke@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Special educational needs	(From 19 October 2020) Mrs Webster, SENCo and Pastoral Lead s70gwebster@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk
Before and after-school clubs	Mrs Evans, School Business Manager 70office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk
Hiring the school premises	Mrs Evans, School Business Manager 70office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk
The trustee board	Mrs Kinney, Clerk for the Trustees 70office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk
Catering/meals	Mrs Evans, School Business Manager 70office@bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our [complaints procedure](#).