

Meadlands Communication Policy

Status	Non - statutory
Review cycle	Every 3 years
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Date of next review	September 2029
Name of Headteacher	Joanne Wreford
Name of Chair of Governors	Christina Powell
Published on website	Yes

Rationale

The staff and governors of Meadlands understand the need to establish and foster clear lines of communication within the school community. There is a need to ensure that all stakeholders, including parents and carers, staff and governors and the wider community all work together to ensure the very best for every child that attends the school.

We aim to have as many relevant lines of communication as possible between the school and all stakeholders to reinforce the important role that everyone has in supporting the school, as well as ensuring there are clear and well- established ways to feed back and be informed on all elements of school life.

This policy explains the school's commitment to communicating with all stakeholders in the community, the responsibilities of parents, carers and guardians and the expectations of all involved.

Aims

To ensure that Meadlands is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with the children, with our families and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, open, timely, respectful and accurate.

Therefore, 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 parent/carers reach the appropriate member of staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can receive a response as quickly as possible

This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Parent Code of Conduct
For the remainder of this policy the term parents will be used to refer to parents, guardians and carers.

Role and Responsibilities

School

The school are responsible for:

- Providing parents with clear lines of communication with staff and governors
- Clearly communicating with parents on all aspects of school life
- Informing parents of forthcoming events within appropriate timelines
- Ensuring that all parents can access the communication by making reasonable adjustments for those who need it. Please refer to the Inclusion section below.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy.
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they are unable to address a query or send the information themselves).
- Responding to a query, phone call or email within **48 hours (2 working days) of its receipt and during the working day**. If this is not possible, a holding message will be sent. Although staff are able to respond to queries at any point during the working day, for full-time staff, the **working day is classed as between 8.15am – 5pm** and as such parents should not expect a response outside of these hours.

Parents
Parents are encouraged to:

- Read all communications issued by the school. *
- Act on the communication (for example, attending special meetings) when required.
- Raise issues, concerns or feedback at the earliest opportunity with the school, not via a parent WhatsApp group
- Understand the timeframe in which communications can be replied to as set out in this policy
- Abide by the expectations detailed in the Parent Code of Conduct
- Ensure that communication with the school and staff is respectful
- Not expect staff to respond to communication outside of their working day, during the weekend, or the school holidays.
- Not chase any communication that has not been replied to within the 48-hour period or 2 working days.
- Not discuss school business on public forums, which could be to the detriment of the school's purpose, values and perception by the wider community.

* According to the 'methods of communication' section

Governing Board
The governing board commit to:

- The publishing of full board meeting minutes on the School Website, once the minutes have been signed off by the board and confidential elements redacted.
- Being regularly available at pre-advertised activities during the school year.
- Contributing on a termly basis to the school newsletter, with updates on the work of the Governing Board.

Methods of School Communication
It is suggested that parents monitor all of the following regularly to ensure that they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child. However, we will make reasonable adjustments for those who need it.

At drop off and Pick up
Usually, a member of your child's teaching team will be in the playground at drop off and pick up (on the rare occasion this is not the case, a member of SLT will always be visible). This is an ideal time to share any useful information about your child or have a brief informal chat.

Fortnightly Newsletter and Bulletin:
Our Mallard Messenger is shared with parents every other Friday and will be the main established way of communicating the latest news to the school community, with notices and timely reminders of upcoming events, plus updates from individual class teachers, and occasional updates from governors and the PTA.

ParentMail:
Where required the school will use e-mail and ParentMail to send out notifications and more urgent updates from the school.

Website:

Our policies will be available here, as well as all key general information about the school, its staff and its curriculum. Minutes from Governor meetings are available on request.

Letters:
Occasionally letters have to be sent to parents. This will either be by post or placed in the children's book bags as appropriate.

Telephone:
Contact via telephone is for urgent issues where the school needs a response quickly, or needs to inform parents personally.

Home-School Communication Book:
Children in Nursery and Reception have a home-school book, which can be used by the parents as a way of communicating with their child's class teacher.

White Reading Record:
Children in Year 1 and 2 have a White Reading Record. This is a log of your child's reading, and provides the school and the parents with the means to monitor your child's reading. These should be used for this purpose only.

Parent Meetings:
These are appointment based and held termly on dates decided and publicised at the start of each school year. It is hoped that at least 1 parent attends these meetings as they provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss and ask questions around the progress of their child. If a parent is unable to attend this meeting and would instead like a copy of their child's progress report shared via email, then the parent must request this.

In addition to these meetings, parents of children with Special Education Needs, or who have other additional needs, will also be invited to book an additional 10-minutes parent meeting with the SENDCO.

Ad-hoc meetings can be arranged with the class teacher at any point in the school year.

Our preference would always be to conduct meetings face to face, but we can arrange for virtual meetings, phone calls or email exchanges to ensure all parents have fair access to this information.

Annual Teacher Report:
This is a written report on a child's progress completed by the teacher summarising the child's learning journey. These are handed out in July, with children bringing home a hard copy.

Where parents are separated and we have contact details, a duplicate report will be posted to the non-resident parent.

Contacting The School - Who To Contact

School Office:
For any questions or issues not specific to your child's education or progress. This could be around uniform, clubs, payment, lunches, information on trips or classes and school events.

Teaching Staff:

In the first instance, please raise any issues or concerns in person with your class teacher. It may then be escalated to a member of the SLT if necessary. When requesting an appointment please either email or verbally request a meeting with the class teacher. It is always useful to provide a brief description of the reason for the meeting, along with your availability. We will endeavour to meet with parents within 1 week of the request. Due to teaching commitments, meetings of this nature will normally be offered outside of the school day.

Senior Leadership Team:
If you feel there has not been a satisfactory outcome to your enquiry this can be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team via office@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk

Headteacher:
In the vast majority of cases enquiries should go through the Senior Leadership Team and teachers. Unless it is a safeguarding concern, which should go directly to the Headteacher.
Please share your concern or request an appointment via office@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk

The Governing Board:
Governors are there to steer the strategic direction and vision of the school, oversee the management of the school's finances and hold the headteacher to account. Governors do not get involved in the day-to-day running and decision making at the school. However, if a parent feels they have the need to raise an issue with the governors, please email them on chairgb@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk

Ways Of Contacting Meadlands

The School Office:
The School Office is open between the hours of **9.00am and 9.10am and 3.20pm and 3.45pm.**

E-mail:
Whilst we are very happy to meet in person or arrange a call to discuss any concerns, we recommend emails should be used to ask a question, share a concern, general queries or to request a meeting with the relevant staff member, allowing staff to focus fully on teaching and learning during the school day.

Please review Appendix A for staff email addresses

Letters:
The school is happy to receive handwritten letters as an alternative to email. Responses will be made by phone, email or in person.

Telephone:
All calls are received by the School Office Team (0208 940 9207), who will either answer your query, direct your call or take a message. Due to teaching commitments, teaching staff will be unable to receive a call during the school day (8.45am – 3.30pm).

Appointments:
You can make an appointment via any of the methods above with the relevant member of staff who will be able to deal with your request directly. Staff will aim to meet parents **within 1 week of their request.**

Commitment To Staff's Workload and Wellbeing
In line with promoting staff's wellbeing and helping staff to find a suitable work-life balance, staff will respond to communication **within 48 hours/2 working days of its receipt** and will respond during their working hours. Parents are politely asked not to chase a response within a 48-hr period or seek a response from another member of staff.

Staff will respond to communication during of their working school-based hours. Please note that if you email during the school holidays, you may only receive a response on the first day back at school.

Meadlands Staff Who Are Also Parents
Members of staff who are also parents of a child at Meadlands Primary School are expected to adhere to the guidelines set out in this policy. Any discussions about their child need to take place after the school day. Members of staff are not permitted to teach their own children.

Separated Parents
We recognise that children from families whose parents are separated or are undergoing separation, may go through traumatic changes during their time at school. To ensure that separated parents understand their parental responsibility and how we will communicate with separated parents, please review our Separated Parents Communication policy.

Social Media
As well as the official school social media presence, Meadlands welcome the many ways that parents build their own communities around the school using social media and the Class WhatsApp groups. These are useful ways of keeping in touch with school updates, arranging the PTA and other events, and sharing information and notices with each other. This is an important part of our school community. But the school reminds parents of the home school agreement and the parent code of conduct, around discussing school business on public forums, which could be to the detriment of the school's purpose, values and perception by the wider community. Please note that anything posted on social media, even in a private forum or private messenger group, could end up in the public domain.

Confidentiality
The school complies with UK GDPR and does hold information on pupils in our school. From time to time, we are required to pass some of this information to others to support a child's education or for safeguarding reasons. Details have been sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. The school is compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and KCSIE 2024. Parents can view the information we hold by requesting a Single Access Request (SARs). We also have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. Governors oversee processes around confidentiality.

Safeguarding
To report a safeguarding concern, please telephone the school or come in person (in the first instance) and ask to speak urgently with one of our safeguarding team. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Jo Wreford, the Headteacher. There are two Deputy DSLs – Mrs Jolene Gee and Mrs Sue Kelly.

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

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

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages (this will be done via Google Translate).
- Interpreters for meetings and phone calls. Where this is requested, we may not be able to provide a meeting or phone call within 48 hours.
- Communication in a specific format due to a disability

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the School Office to discuss these.

Parental Communication Agreement
We hope parents will be able to work with the aims and processes set out in this policy. However, for those who cannot, the school will work with them to create a personalised communication plan.

Complaints
All formal letters of complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints policy.

Appendix A: school contact list:

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

Query	Who	When and How
Absence Trips Clubs and Events Medicine Uniform Meals	School office	In person: **9.00am and 9.10am** and **3.20pm and 3.45pm.** Phoning the school office on **020 8940 9207** office@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk
Questions or queries that relate to teaching, learning, homework and boosters Pastoral concerns - these need to go through the class teacher Behavioural concerns General concerns or queries	Teaching Staff	Request an appointment by emailing Nursery: j.nicholas@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk s.taunton@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Reception: a.cooper@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Year 1: j.clark@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Year 2: j.hepburn@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Year 3: j.edwards@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Year 4: e.halberstadt@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Year 5: m.warner@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk Year 6 h.stoddart@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk or have an informal chat after school
Finance, payments or admissions	School Business Manager Mrs Gee	Phoning the school office on **020 8940 9207** j.gee@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk
Safeguarding	Designated Safeguarding Lead Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	j.wreford@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk j.gee@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk s.kelly@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk
Query relating to SEN needs	Special Needs Coordinator Mrs Barson	l.tadman@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk
If there has been an unsatisfactory outcome to your enquiry	Headteacher Senior Leadership Team	j.wreford@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk office@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk
Governing Board	Chair of Governors	chairgb@meadlands.richmond.sch.uk