



HOE VALLEY SCHOOL

COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS & CARERS

Person Responsible: Head Teacher
Date Adopted: November 2015
Date of last review: Autumn 2020
Date of next review: Autumn 2023

NB: For the purposes of this policy the word 'parents' will encompass the adult with designated responsibilities for a child.

1. INTRODUCTION & AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidelines regarding communication between parents and staff of Hoe Valley School (HVS).

As a school founded by local parents we are particularly committed to a regular, data-rich and open dialogue with our parents. This policy aims to give a structure to the communication channels available.

Wherever possible the school aims to be 'paper-free'. This is for environmental and efficiency reasons as well as for financial savings. Unless specifically requested by a parent, the main communications between school and parent will be via phone calls and email.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The following list, which is not exhaustive, indicates the main structures in place, initiated by the school, to facilitate communication between the school and parents:

- Behaviour Watch – used to inform parents of rewards, detentions and punctuality issues
- Post Cards home to reward students weekly for excellent effort and progress
- Email communication from the school – this will be from the generic school email address and not from individual staff email accounts. Messages will usually be via group emails rather than specific information on one student. Heads of Year write a Friday newsletter and the Head Teacher writes a half-termly update
- Telephone calls – used by staff where a private conversation is deemed necessary
- Letters by post – used if email is not possible or when deemed necessary by the school

- Letters by school bag - used if email is not possible or where a parent has requested this mode of communication
- Text Messages – used to inform parents when their child is not in school or to share urgent information
- Parental Meetings - wherever possible 24 hours’ notice will be given as a minimum and, where appropriate, written minutes will be shared with all present at the meeting
- School calendar - shared on the HVS website
- Progress Evenings – recorded on the school calendar with parents notified in advance by email
- Parents’ Evenings / Meet the Tutor Evenings / Information Events - Parents’ Information evenings which are specific to each year group – parents are notified in advance by email
- Facebook / Twitter - to communicate important but non-urgent matters such as School events
- MIS portal (SIMs) – allows parents to access the latest data on student’s progress, attendance, behaviour and attainment
- School Charter – update this document annually based on student, staff, parent and Governor input and ensure it is completed with parents before any student joins HVS

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

We expect our students to:

- Pass on any written communication from the school to their parent(s) and return the same, duly completed, where required
- Take responsibility for their Google Calendar to learn their timetable and check when Prep is due
- Participate in the annual school survey

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

We expect our parents to:

- Inform the School via phone call or email with any attendance issues including medical appointments (which should always be outside of the school day wherever possible). 24 hours’ notice should be given for medical appointments unless they are emergency situations
- Develop close links with the school and attend specific pastoral and academic parents’ evenings relevant to the age of their child / children
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children including signing the home / school charter
- Familiarise themselves with relevant school policies and procedures via the website

- Support the Staff and Board of Governors in their implementation of policies and procedures as required
- Become actively involved in the PTA, attend school functions and help build a sense of community
- Participate in the annual School survey

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

- To respond to phone-calls from parents within 24 hours
- To attend meetings with parents and to share minutes with all attendees and the line manager as appropriate
- To share data on students in line with the assessment policy

6. PARENT/TEACHER CONTACT INITIATED BY PARENTS

Communication between parents and teachers is to be encouraged. The school does not believe that email should be used as a means of communication between parents and staff to discuss pastoral or academic matters pertaining to their child; in such instances parents are asked to contact the school by telephone.

Parents can initiate meetings with members of staff by contacting the main office who will liaise with the teacher and respond with suggested times within 24 hours.

As general guidance the following is the agreed system of communication for parents:

- Curriculum enquiry in one subject: ask to speak to or see the Head of Faculty
- Pastoral enquiry or curriculum enquiry in two or more subjects: ask to speak to or see the Head of Year
- Enquiries regarding SEND: ask to speak to or see the SENCO or Deputy SENCO

To be read in conjunction with the complaints policy.