



Watlington Community Primary School

Communication Policy

Signed by:

R. McGlone

Headteacher

20th May 2021

Date:

Chair of

K Samouelle

Governors

Date:

20th May 2021

Background from Mrs R McGlone, Headteacher

In July 2018 the Department for Education published a Workload Reduction Policy Paper. It recognised that Teachers Workload was impacting on the number of staff leaving the profession and published supporting guidance and policies to help.

This policy, adapted from the DFE website, has been developed by asking teachers about the factors that added to their workload. A key finding of this consultation was that the need to communicate with parents and carers placed a significant demand upon our teachers within a busy teaching day. As a school we decided that we had to manage both parental expectations of teachers, and ensure high standards of home-school communications.

As a school, we are also seeking to provide better methods of communication so that parents/carers can gain access to teaching staff as we appreciate not all parents are able to see or speak to staff at the beginning or the end of the day.

Outcomes

- Our policy will lead to a reduction in the demands to respond to parental emails in the evenings and weekends, so that work and home boundaries are clearer.
- Parents and carers better understand the context in which teachers are working, and can modify their expectations of an immediate reply either face to face or through other means.
- Parents have various means by which they can access information about their child.

By signaling the first ports of call, we ensure that communication is distributed and directed more appropriately across the staff team.

Overview

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives.

Contacting the School

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so, however, the majority of teachers' time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time. Please use one of the following methods to make contact with staff rather than discussing matters before or after school as this takes staff away from supervising children on the playground or other commitments that they have.

Contact Me Form (not available at present due to Covid-19)

Please complete a Contact Me Form outside the office and place it in one of the boxes. This will be passed onto the relevant member of staff who will make contact with you within 3 working days.

Telephone

Please use the main office number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Office Staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the office who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will try to respond to you within three working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.
- Teachers are unable to take calls at the start of the day as they are preparing for their lessons.

Email

Please use the class email addresses:

acorn@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

apple@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

rowan@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

poplar@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

beech@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

willow@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

oak@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk

if you wish to contact a class teacher. Please note that class teachers may not be able to respond during the day as they are teaching. They will try to respond at the end of the day if urgent or within three working days. Teaching staff will not respond out of working hours or at weekends / holidays. During this time, they may have an “out of office” message as a return email.

Please use the office email address office@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk if you need to contact staff more urgently or need to inform school of any absences or general information such as lunch requests.

Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them.

- In the first instance, please make an appointment with the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

1) Classroom Teacher in the first instance

- 2) Headteacher – only when your query has already been discussed with the class teacher
 - 3) SENCO – if the matter relates to SEND but has also been discussed with the class teacher first
 - 4) Safeguarding Leads – if your query is about a safeguarding matter, please contact these members of staff without delay
- Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff; at present these are undertaken virtually through Teams.
 - If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the office will do the best to find a senior member of staff to see you.
 - For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

Contacting You

Our preferred method of contacting you is via ParentHub, telephone, text message and email.

No Response

If you have not received a response from the school within three working days please contact the school by emailing office@watlington.norfolk.sch.uk and we will chase up your enquiry. Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.

Courtesy and Respect

Please remember to treat all members of staff with courtesy and respect whether that is via verbal or written communication and we will be courteous and respectful in return. If any member of staff feels that the email, meeting or phone call does not meet these expectations then it will be terminated immediately. If you feel that any meeting or telephone call does not treat you with respect, please discuss this with the Headteacher, or alternatively with the Chair of Governors as part of the Complaints procedure.

Appendix A – copies of these will be available at the front office without the need to ask when we are able to return to normal procedures.

Contact Form

<p>I would like to talk to:</p> <p>Name:</p>
<p>Please call me</p> <p>I would like to arrange an appointment after school</p> <p>When I am available?</p>
<p>What is it about?</p> <p>Parent / Carer Name:</p> <p>Child:</p> <p>Date</p> <p>Contact Number:</p>