



SMARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

'Enjoying, Learning and Achieving Together'

Parent/Carer School Communication Policy

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Parent/carer-school communication policy

Swarden Primary School

Date: March 2022

Next review due by: March 2024

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 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's 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 8am to 6pm or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

Staff should follow safeguarding policy in only communicating with parents via school email addresses and only using school devices for texts and phone calls.

See Acceptable Use Policy for other details

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

Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner

Checking all communications from the school

Staff have the right to be treated with respect all times and reserve the right not to have further face to face contact with the parent following any communication deemed unacceptable by the member of staff concerned. Parents do not have automatic right of access to school premises and may be denied the right to visit the school premises in person as decided by the Headteacher. 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 Class Dojo

We use Class dojo to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Short notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Yellow, Red and Gold cards given that day, in line with the behaviour policy.

3.1 The weekly school newsletter

This is used to communicate upcoming school events, class activities and important dates for your diary.

3.2 Parent Pay

We will text parents about:

- Payments
- School trips

3.3 School calendar

We use the school calendar tool on the school website and communicate with parents about events on Class Dojo.

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.

3.4 Phone calls

- We may call parents if their child is ill or they have forgotten to send something with their child. Parents are expected to call in before nine thirty if their child is absent.
- We will call parents to inform them of short-notice changes to the school day or normal routine

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

Letters about trips and visits

Consent forms

Letters about interventions.

3.6 Home-School communication books

Home-school communication books can be used in certain circumstances when the needs of a student require one (for example, when a student struggles to communicate his needs).

3.7 Homework and Home Reading

We send home reading books regularly.

3.8 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 short data report in December and March each year which includes results of assessments and whether your child is on track to reach age related expectations.

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.9 Parents' Meetings

We hold several parents' evenings per 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, or if a meeting is requested for any reason by parents or carers .

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. See the SEN information report - parents of children on SEN support or with an EHCP would be given at least three meetings per year with the class teacher and/or the Senco.

Where parents' meetings are held online through a service such as google meet or zoom, parents will be given a specific email address to contact rather than individual staff email addresses.

School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

School times and term dates

Important events and announcements

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.

Each class has a parent representative who meets with the Senior Leadership Team of the school at least once per term. The names of parent reps will be published in the weekly newsletter. This gives the parents the opportunity to raise general concerns or give feedback designed to improve the school. Please note that this arrangement is not designed for parents with specific complaints - please read and follow our complaints policy in this instance. Alternatively, please make an appointment to speak directly to the Headteacher who welcomes parents at all times with any issues.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school office about non-urgent issues in the first instance. If your child will be absent from school, will be collected by another of your named adults or you have a query regarding an appointment e.g. dental appointment, you should always contact the office, not the teacher. If you wish to contact your child's class teacher regarding your child's education or welfare, please use class dojo. Staff will no longer communicate via their personal emails. You may email the Headteacher at any time, but she will not necessarily contact any further members of staff, except for in an emergency.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 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 school.

If parents wish to contact governors then they can do so through the email:

governors@smarden-tkat.org.

4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email main school email office@smarden-tkat.org and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 2 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 2 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 01233 770316.

4.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please do so with the teacher or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 2-3 working days of the request.

Teachers are not available to meet with parents at the beginning of the school day as they are busy preparing for the day. If you cannot wait until the end of the school day to speak with a teacher, you may request to speak to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. You may also give any urgent information to the member of SLT on the gate in the morning, or to the school office. 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

4.4 Unacceptable means of communication.

Parents are asked not to communicate with any school staff via social media, including to teachers' personal devices via Whatsapp, messenger or via any other social media platform e.g. Facebook. Teachers must not give out their mobile numbers to parents. See the Acceptable Use Policy for more details.

5. Inclusion

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

We can make whole-school announcements and communications (such as dojo messages and newsletters) available in languages other than English if needed.

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

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages

- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

- Verbal information is available from the school office at any time between 8.30am and 3.30pm.

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 year. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Acceptable Use Policy

- Parent code of conduct

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

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 office - office@smarden-tkat.org

Email the Headteacher - head@smarden-tkat.org

Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 2 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 via Class dojo
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Headteacher - head@smarden-tkat.org or class teacher via Class dojo.
Payments	School office via phone or email office@smarden-tkat.org 01233 770316
School trips	School office via phone or email as above
Uniform/lost and found	School office via phone or email as above
Attendance and absence requests	School office via phone or email above Headteacher - head@smarden-tkat.org

Bullying and behavior	head@smarden-takt.org or class teacher via dojo, preferably both.
School events/the school calendar	School office via phone or email as above
Special educational needs	head@smarden-tkat.org
Before and after-school clubs	School office via phone or email as above
Parent Class representatives	classreps@smarden-tkat.org
The PTA	fosp@smarden-tkat.org
The governing board	governors@smarden-tkat.org

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I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Catering/meals	School office via phone or email as above

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found on our website.

