



Communication Policy

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Policy proposed by Governing Body

Head teacher signature: *A. Corr*

Chair of Governors signature:

J. Murray

Hambledon Primary School Communication Policy November 2024

Introduction

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message but also how that message is communicated.

Good communication promotes partnership.

Aim

To ensure that Hambledon Primary School remains a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively and in a timely manner with each other, with our pupils, parents and with other members of the wider community.

Objectives

All communications at Hambledon Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional.
- Use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all.
- Be actioned within a reasonable time.
- Take account of relevant school policies.
- Be compatible with our learning values and School Improvement & Development Plan.

Communications between the School and Parents/Carers

Letters to Parents/Carers: Letters to parents must be approved by the Leadership Team before they are sent. Copies of all correspondence to individual parents will be placed in pupil files. A copy of general letters will be copied to and sent via the school office.

Letters from Parents/Carers: Staff will respond to parents' letters within 48 hours (2 school days). Any letter of complaint must be referred to the Leadership Team immediately and dealt with in accordance with the school complaints policy.

E-mail/Text to Parents/Carers: The school has an e-mail/text system which it uses to communicate with parents. Any communication that needs to be sent to parents using this system must be approved by the Leadership Team. Class teachers must not communicate with parents directly via their own email accounts, rather emails should be sent via the 'adminoffice@' account.

Emails from Parents/Carers: All e-mails requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours (2 school days). E-mail communications concerning a child are kept for the academic year in a digital folder unless they are required for evidence trailing, in which case a copy should be printed and stored in the individual's paper file.

Telephone calls: Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency.

Newsletters: Newsletters are e-mailed out approximately fortnightly.

Social Media Sites/Blogs: Staff are strongly advised not to communicate with parents via social networking sites or accept them as “friends”. Staff will not accept pupils or ex-pupils as “friends”.

Communication with the Media

If a school event is deemed externally newsworthy or of interest, this will be discussed by the Admin Team and Leadership Team and a press release or press invitation drafted. All press releases and invitations will be approved by the Leadership Team, and the media list agreed before distribution.

School Website

The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. These areas will be updated regularly:

Newsletters: Fortnightly

Curriculum Content: Termly

Support for Learning at Home: as required

Letters for class activities: Uploaded to the Letters section of the school website

Copies of any materials shared at parent events such as Meet the Teacher meetings, curriculum based workshops, SATs information meetings etc will be uploaded to the relevant section of the website so they are available to anyone who is unable to attend.

Hambleton Primary School Social Media Pages

The purpose of the Hambleton Primary Facebook page is to provide information to current parents; create an active promotional tool for the school to the wider community of Hambleton and prospective parents and therefore runs as an open platform.

An open Facebook platform means safeguarding must be at the forefront of every post. Parents must actively consent to their child’s image being used on social media via the appropriate Local Authority paperwork and no child can be identified. The school’s Data protection Policy will also be applied fully.

Types of content for Hambleton Facebook page

- General information posts could include event reminders, school trip updates, house point updates.
- Promotional posts signposting to relevant pages on the school website.
- Posts to illustrate the variety of activities Hambleton pupils do.

- Open Day posts to attract prospective parents to visit the school.
- Sharing of media articles that feature Hambledon School.
- Sharing of relevant and interesting articles from the local media.
- Sharing of local event information, for example Friends of Hambledon events.

Information to Parents

Existing and new parents must be fully informed of the school's social media platforms. This initial communication will include:

- The purpose of this page as a promotional tool for the school and to aid and improve communication platforms with parents.
- To reassure parents that safeguarding is at the forefront of the school's mind and there will be no post photos or information about pupils that may identify them.
- All parents are requested to complete a media authorisation form to either allow or refuse images or videos of their child(ren) to be used on the School's social media platforms. Consent can be changed at any time. However, any historic posts containing images of the child(ren) will not be removed unless specifically requested
- Images of children who have left the school will not be used. However, any historic posts containing images of the child(ren) will not be removed from the social media platforms, unless specifically requested
- That this is not a platform for complaints and issues and remind parents of the procedures should they have an issue or complaint.
- Parents should be mindful about what they post on social networking sites and to be aware of the impact such comments could have on the school community. Parents will be informed that unpleasant or hurtful comments should not be posted online as they may potentially be considered as a criminal offence. Parents should also be aware of the importance of role modelling appropriate behaviour for their children online, much like they should offline.
- If at any time parents wish to make a complaint, then they are advised to follow the school's complaints procedure, which can be found on the school website.
- Parents and carers are asked to refrain from using social networking sites to discuss sensitive issues about the school.

Ongoing Management of the Risks of Social Media

- No individual except those with Administrator rights are able to post on the Hambledon School Facebook page.
- The review section will remain turned off.
- The Facebook page will be monitored 7 days a week by the appointed Administrator.
- Notifications are set so the administrator would be aware of activity on the page.
- The administrator will be in phone contact with the Headteacher when advice is required on how to respond to comments.
- Posts are worded as to not encourage discussion; the aim is for them to be information posts. If a discussion emerges between the page and an individual, the Administrator would

encourage the individual to take the conversation into private messaging or to approach the school in person at the next available time.

- Parents will be given regular reminders about appropriate behaviour on the school's social media platforms.

Ongoing management of Clear Communication through Social media Platforms

A monthly meeting will take place between the Social Media Administrator, Headteacher and Office Staff.

At this meeting the Social Media Administrator would review the school activity calendar for the coming month and draft relevant posts for the forthcoming weeks in line with aims of this policy.

The following aspects should be considered:

- 1) Purpose and audience of the communication
- 2) Timing and method of initial communication. If this is a school activity the initial correspondence is likely to be hardcopy letter followed up with the same information being sent via email.
- 3) Is this information to be included on the Website? If so, where on the website and timing of upload.
- 4) Text alerts: Consider timing and wording of text(s). For example: for a school activity potentially two texts should be sent; initial text 5 days prior to event and final text sent minimum 24 hours before event. If the event occurs on a Monday the final text should be sent the previous Friday.
- 5) Social media – Initial post and reminder post timing to be considered. If the event is for external purposes should the post be boosted?
- 6) Is a press release appropriate? If so, consider the timing of the release and the media to be included.
- 7) Is the event taking place on a Monday or straight after a holiday? Ensure extra measures are in place to reinforce communication over the weekend or during the school holiday.

All posts will be approved by the Leadership Team in advance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

Child Protection Policy

Complaints Policy (including the escalation strategy)

Data Protection Policy

Home School Agreement

End of Document