



## HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

### Contents

1. Introduction and aims .....	1
2. Roles and responsibilities .....	1
3. How we communicate with parents and carers .....	2
4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school .....	3
5. Inclusion.....	4
6. Monitoring and review.....	4
7. Links with other policies.....	4
Appendix 1: school contact list .....	5

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### 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
- › Promotes the importance of strong relationships

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- › Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- › Setting clear standards and expectations 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
- › Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- › 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 ICT and 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 **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours 8.30 – 4.30, or their working hours (if they work part-time). Staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

2.3 Admin Staff are responsible for ensuring login details for Classcharts and Parents Evening system are provided to parents.

## 2.4 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

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8.30 – 4.30 hours or during school holidays.

## 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 Email and School Comms

We use email and School Comms to keep parents informed about the following things:

- › Upcoming school events
- › Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- › School surveys or consultations
- › Important school information and letters from staff

### 3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- › Payments
- › Short-notice changes to the school day
- › Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

### 3.3 School events

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 1 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors). Any such event will be included in the school newsletter or notified by Classcharts.

### 3.4 Phone calls

The school will telephone parents in the event of an unexplained absence from school or if a child becomes unwell in school. Parents may also be contacted by telephone to discuss any significant behaviour or wellbeing issue.

### 3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly via email / School Comms:

- › Letters about trips and visits
- › Consent forms
- › Our bi weekly newsletter, Nidd News

### 3.6 Classcharts

The school uses classcharts to communicate information about:

- › Homework
- › Behaviour: Positive and negative points
- › Attendance
- › Class announcements

### 3.7 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- › Termly progress reports covering progress in the curriculum for each subject, attitude to learning, attendance and classcharts points
- › A report on the results of Y11 mock examinations

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

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening per year for each year group. 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. Most of these meetings are conducted via appointment on the online parents' evening system.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

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, including learning plan reviews and statutory EHCP review meetings.

### 3.9 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 after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

## 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should 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.

### 4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 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 parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

### 4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 3 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 5 days of your request.

If the issue is **urgent**, parents should call the school office. Urgent issues might include things like:

- › Family emergencies
- › Safeguarding or significant welfare issues
- › Issues relating to online behaviour out of school cannot always be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

### 4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers may be available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- › Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- › Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

## 5. Inclusion

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

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- › English

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

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 2 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

## 7. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- › ICT and internet acceptable use
- › Staff code of conduct
- › Complaints
- › Staff wellbeing

## 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 [admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk) or call the school office on 01423 711246. Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails) and we will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff.

We try to respond to all emails within 3 working days.

**Remember:** check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's subject teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Form tutor/KS3 Pastoral Officer / KS 3 Learning manager
Payments	<a href="mailto:bursar@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">bursar@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
School trips	<a href="mailto:sophie.jaques@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">sophie.jaques@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Uniform/lost and found	<a href="mailto:trish.wardell@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">trish.wardell@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01423 711246 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, use the holiday request form and submit by email to <a href="mailto:admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Bullying and behaviour	<a href="mailto:admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a> marked for attention of KS3 Pastoral Officer and KS4 Learning Manager
Special educational needs (SEN)	By email to allocated key worker or to <a href="mailto:SEND@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">SEND@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a> if this information isn't known
After-school clubs	<a href="mailto:trish.wardell@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">trish.wardell@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Hiring the school premises	<a href="mailto:bursar@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">bursar@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
Governing board	<a href="mailto:admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a> marked for the attention of Governors
Catering/meals	<a href="mailto:admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk">admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk</a> marked for the attention of the Catering manager

### Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

**Approved by:** Governing Board

**Date:** 23.1.23

**Next review due by:** January 2025