

John Mayne CEP School Communications Policy



Date Approved by Governors:

John Mayne CEP School Communications Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years

Date written: 12/10/2023

Date of last update:

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: December 2024

Date of next full review: 01/10/2026

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Section 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 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.

Section 2 - Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Head Teacher

Responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- 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)
- Any communication from parents to support staff must be referred to the class teacher

- Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours 8.30am to 3.30pm or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are not expected to do so.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times and adhere to the school vision and values
- Communication should not be directed at staff while in the local community outside of school hours
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance. It is not necessarily efficient to write directly to the headteacher.
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school
- Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with the Dignity and Respect at Work Policy.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8.15am to 3.30pm, or during school holidays.

Section 3 - Appropriate communication

Tenterden Schools Trust engenders and promotes an ethos of mutual respect. There is an expectation that this core value will be upheld by all. Our objective is to promote harmony and dignity throughout the school and we expect any communication or interaction between staff, children, parents/carers, visitors or the local community to be conducted with mutual respect in an open and honest manner.

Both staff and parents are requested to maintain professional standards in their communications, ensuring that proper salutations and appropriate endings are used.

Tenterden Schools Trust is committed to ensuring that all staff and children are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect and are entitled to work and study in an environment that is free from unfair treatment, harassment, discrimination or intimidation.

[Dignity and Respect at Work Policy](#)

3.1 Complaints Policy

Our Complaints Policy aims to ensure that a concern, difficulty or complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently at the appropriate level and resolved as soon as possible. Doing so is good practice and fair to those concerned. It helps to promote parents' and childrens' confidence in the Trust's ability to safeguard and promote positive welfare. The Trust will aim to resolve every concern, difficulty or complaint in a positive way with the aim of putting right a matter which may have gone wrong and, where necessary, reviewing the Trusts systems and procedures in the light of the matters raised.

[Complaints Policy](#)

3.2 Vexatious or repeated complaints

There may be occasions when a parent raises unreasonable, persistent complaints or raises complaints about matters which do not affect them. There may also be occasions when a complaint is made about a matter which is clearly so trivial that it would be a waste of the School's resources to deal with it under the formal stages of the procedure.

In complaints made, Tenterden Schools Trust reserves the right to regard the complaint as vexatious and/or repeated if it meets the above criteria. In this case an investigation under the

Complaints Policy, if it appears reasonable and fair to do so, having regard to the circumstances surrounding the complaint, will not be investigated.

Any concerns should always be addressed to the class teacher in the first instance and a resolution will be discussed.

Section 4 - 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.

4.1 Home-school communications app – Study Bugs

At John Mayne, we use the Study Bugs application to maintain communication with parents via messaging, we send out letters, newsletters, first aid information and parents are able to report absence via Study Bugs too.

Study Bugs also features a messaging system in which parents can directly contact their child's class teacher, classes also have their own dedicated email address, should they need to pass on any non-urgent messages.

In the event of a safeguarding issue or urgent message, please always contact the office on 01580 291424 to speak directly to the school.

Parents will be given full instructions of how to download the app and register for this system.

We use Study Bugs to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

In Early Years children's learning is shared through the Tapestry app. Parents are informed how to log in and add their own observations to support Early Learning Goals in the first term.

SwayLinks

The monthly newsletter is sent via SwayLinks through Study Bugs. The newsletter includes rewards and celebrations.

4.2 School calendar

Our school website includes term dates for the year.

Where possible, we aim 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).

Our school website also gives parents the opportunity to link the school calendar with their personal calendar to assist with keeping up to date.

4.3 Phone calls

Our school contacts parents by telephone if there has been an incident in school that parents need to be aware of such as an accident or medical issue.

4.4 Reports

Mid-year reports are sent to parents annually in March with targets. Results of statutory testing is shared with appropriate parents with an end of year report sent in July.

4.5 Meetings

Parents are invited into school to meet their child's class teacher during the summer transition week and then again in September.

We hold a formal consultation session in November. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or scheme of work, their child's wellbeing and any other area of concern.

Parents are also welcome to make an appointment to see the class teacher following school reports being distributed.

In addition, parents are able to make an appointment with their child's class teacher at any point by speaking to them in person or by contacting them on Study Bugs.

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.

4.6 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.

4.7 Social Media

John Mayne CEP School currently does not use any form of social media or social media platform.

Section 5 - 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.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments (see section 5.3) to discuss:

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

Parents are asked to email the teacher via the class email account and not direct to the teacher's email address.

5.1 Study Bugs

Parents should always use Study Bugs to contact the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues.

We aim to acknowledge all correspondence within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

5.2 Other Platforms

John Mayne also use the following platforms to communicate and share information

- ParentPay
Used to securely take payments and for parents to confirm consent for trips and relevant events
- Caterlink - Parentpay
Used for parents to securely pay and book school dinners

5.3 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should contact the office through Study Bugs/email and the relevant member of staff will contact them within two 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 five working 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 welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

5.4 Meetings

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

We aim to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request.

Section 6 - Monitoring and review

The Head Teacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every three years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

Section 7 - Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Prospectus
- Complaints
- Dignity and Respect at Work Policy

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:

- Use email on office@john-mayne.kent.sch.uk or call the school office on 01580 291424
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line (for emails)

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

We aim to respond to all messages within 5 working days.

I have a question about...	Who you need to talk to...
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's teacher
Payments	School office
School trips	School office/Class Teacher
Purchase uniform	School office
Uniform lost and found	Your child's teacher
Attendance	School office
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's teacher
Special educational needs (SEN)	Your child's teacher/SENCo
Clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	School office
Governing board	Chair of the Governing Body

Complaints

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

Appendix 2

Email Etiquette For Staff

- Is the email necessary?
 - Would a conversation be better / easier?
 - If you have put information on CPOMS and alerted key staff, you do not have to email it also
 - Have you directed it to as few people as necessary? Preferably identify a named person rather than a distribution list to avoid duplication.
 - People who are intended to act on this should be in the top line and only those requiring knowledge should be cc.
- There is no expectation that staff will respond to emails outside of working hours, at weekends or during their holiday periods.
- If a response is not necessary, please state NRN (no response necessary) at the start of your email
- If you are sending an email marked URGENT please consider whether it is really urgent.
- Keep your emails short and to the point - attachments not advised
- Keep emails professional, concise and courteous
- Please don't type in CAPS because it means you are SHOUTING
- Consider the tone of your email; if the topic is sensitive or the content may cause offence if it is not dealt with correctly, arrange a meeting/discussion in person instead
- If sending an email outside of normal working hours we suggest you add the following or something similar to your email:- You may receive emails from me at unsociable hours outside the workday. I choose to send emails at times which are convenient to me, fitting around my other commitments and giving me a suitable work-life balance. I do not expect you to either read or respond to these outside of your directed hours unless you choose to do so during times when you work to suit your own work-life balance.