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# Lanesend Primary School

## Communication Policy 2021

**Signed:** ..... **Date:**  
(Headteacher)

**Signed:** ..... **Date:**  
(Chair of Trustees)

**Review Date:** January 2023 (Every 2 Years)  
**Reviewed By:** Headteacher and Child-Centred Group

# Lanesend Primary School Communication Policy

## **Introduction**

Positive communication is an essential element of the aims and vision of Lanesend Primary School. This enables our children and families to feel valued and listened to. The majority of this communication takes place through the frequent verbal interactions between families and staff as children are brought to and from school as well as Class Dojo, text and email, telephone and video.

## **Aim**

To ensure that Lanesend Primary School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our children, with their families and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are open, honest, respectful, ethical and professional.

## **Contact details**

The school holds emergency contact details for all children on the School Information Management System (SIMs) and families are contacted on an annual basis to ensure that these are up to date. Families are expected to inform the school immediately in the event that contact information needs to be revised. Depending on the nature of the communication, the school will use the most practicable means to contact families.

## **Communications with Families**

*Hereafter the term 'families' will be used to refer to all those individuals who have a role in the up-bringing and care of the child.*

Families are welcome to visit the school to discuss their child's progress, ask questions, and gain support or to have the opportunity to talk about their child/home issues with their child's class teacher first, then Year Leaders or specific Teams within the school. There is a school organogram 'We are here to help', which details these lines of communication.

Outside of teaching their designated class all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school. These duties will include care of children, organisation of extra-curricular activities or whole-school coordination of a curriculum subject. We aim to be able to facilitate requests for an immediate meeting, however for the reasons stated above, when this is not possible, staff may not be able to facilitate an immediate, unscheduled appointment but will aim to do so **within 5 school days**.

Arranging a mutually convenient appointment allows the school time to organise cover to make staff available to speak to the families and to gather any necessary information prior to the meeting. This process will make the meeting much more conducive.

The following list, whilst not exhaustive, covers the main ways in which we will communicate with families. All response times are indicative and where extensions are needed i.e. for further investigation a holding response will be given to the family along with an updated expected response time.

## **Class Newsletters**

Families will receive a termly Year Group Newsletter via email from their child's class teachers. This will identify the focus of the learning taking place during the period indicated and identifies how families can support their child's learning at home.

### **Emails and Electronic Information**

The school subscribes to Teachers2Parents allowing us to email letters to families. Not only is this more environmentally friendly as it decreases paper usage, it also reduces photocopying and other costs in the school. We urge families to provide us with a valid email address.

Families are permitted to use e-mail as a means of providing a quick, effective way of communicating information about their child or to arrange a meeting with their teacher. Families are reminded that teachers have little to no time during their teaching day to check emails and therefore requests which require immediate or quick action should not be sent via email. For example, emailing your child's teacher to inform them you will be collecting them for an appointment or to change pick-up arrangements is not appropriate due to the high-likelihood that the message will not be read in time. It is important that families telephone the school office with this information. Staff, if appropriate, may forward emails to the Headteacher.

All emails requiring an answer should be responded to **within 3 school days**. Staff are not expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to emails outside of their working day. However, staff are encouraged to work flexibly and respond to emails in a way that suits them to balance their working hours. Staff do not expect families to read, respond or action emails outside hours that suit them. Email does not replace face to face meetings where some discussion is required. All staff should seek face to face communications, when email is not the most effective form of communication. Staff and families are discouraged from entering into in-depth discussions about a child's progress or well-being via email.

Where it is not possible to use email, most written correspondence is passed on to families through face to face interaction at the end of the school day. Where this is not appropriate, it is forwarded through the Royal Mail postage service.

### **Home/School Communication**

#### **Text**

The school has a Text system (Teachers2Parents) which is used to communicate with families. Text messages are sent both Primary and Secondary contacts. This is not a reply service.

#### **Telephone calls**

##### **Inbound**

All telephone calls will be answered by staff in the main office. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, we aim to do this **within 3 working days**.

##### **Outbound**

Telephone calls will be made where immediate contact with a family member is required i.e. for injuries or accidents. A member of staff will call the first named emergency contact as listed. Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth. In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will either leave

an answer phone message or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers, where possible.

### **Class Dojo**

Class Dojo connects the school and families through building virtual classroom communities. It enables staff to share photos, videos, announcements and celebrations as well as messaging between school and home. As with emails, staff are not expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to Dojo messages outside of their working day. However, staff are encouraged to work flexibly and respond to Dojo messages in a way that suits them to balance their working hours. Staff do not expect families to read, respond or action Dojo messages outside hours that suit them. Dojo messaging does not replace face to face meetings where some discussion is required. All staff should seek face to face communications, when Dojo is not the most effective form of communication. Staff and families are discouraged from entering into in-depth discussions about a child's progress or well-being via Class Dojo.

### **School Facebook Site**

Staff are advised not to communicate with families via social networking sites or accept them as "friends". Our Facebook feed is designed to highlight positive aspects of our school only. Any negative comments or complaints will be deleted and the school reserves the right to 'block' any user from the school's page. The school office will respond to Facebook messages and we aim to do this **within 3 working days**.

### **Written Reports**

Once a year, we provide a full written report to each child's families on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and next steps. We also provide a half termly progress report throughout the year.

### **Newsletter**

Our Newsletter is emailed out each Thursday by Teachers2Parents and contains important reminders, dates and messages for the week ahead. Families are strongly encouraged to read these.

### **Pupil Progress Meetings**

All families are provided with two, 15-minute meetings each academic year. Families are asked to sign up for an allocated date and time. Should an appointment day not be suitable, families are asked to contact their child's teacher who will make every effort to arrange a more mutually convenient time.

Families are encouraged to request additional meetings should they have a concern regarding their child's progress or well-being. Likewise, staff will arrange additional meetings if necessary.

### **Annual Reviews for Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will have an Annual Review each academic year to discuss their progress in relations to the aims and objectives of their plan and half termly review meetings are held to ensure provision and support is appropriate.

### **Personal Plans**

Children on the Special Educational Needs Register, have an updated Personal Plan every half term which is provided to families. Each Personal Plan offers practical advice to families

on how they can work with school staff to support their child in achieving targets to assist the child's progress.

### **School Website**

The school website <http://www.lanesendprimary.co.uk> provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

### **Complaints**

All formal letters of complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's separate Complaints Policy. All formal letters to families must be approved by the Headteacher before they are sent.

If families communicate with the school using email and letter with a formal complaint or a matter of concern, a copy should be stored digitally for children in Years R and 1 and a printed copy placed in the child's file for Years 2-6. This will change year on year as future Reception intakes will all be digital. Formal correspondence with families will be kept in the child's personal folder in the School Office and held for a period of time in accordance with our Disposal of Records Schedule. The school does **not** accept or act upon anonymous communication unless in relation to matters of serious Child Protection.

### **Requests for Information**

Please refer to our Data Protection and GDPR Policy for copies of children's records, freedom of information and Subject Access Requests. This will detail procedures and protocols, including timings.

When communication becomes inappropriate, aggressive, vexatious, persistent or disproportionate and the school deems it is unacceptable, then actions will be put in place in accordance with our Anti-Violence and Aggression Policy.