

## 1. Aims

The overarching aim of our communication policy is to create effective and open communication, both internally within school and externally with parents, carers and stakeholders. Effective and open communication promotes an awareness of others' interests and needs. Being aware of the necessary skills and tools that encourage open communication is therefore very important.

Good communication builds trust in working relationships. Just as communication skills are important, listening skills are also needed for effective communication. It is very important that we take the time to understand our audience, practise face-to-face communication and listen to feedback and suggestions. Parents consider good communication as vital to increase trust with the school. Parents who receive more consistent information about their child's school performance are likely to have a higher degree of commitment to helping their children improve.

By setting aside time to meet and keep people informed, for example open evenings, staff meetings, parents' evenings and other events, we can establish and maintain open channels of communication with our school community.

At Kibblesworth Academy we encourage parents to contact the school and give them the opportunity to get involved. We do this through ensuring a welcoming reception, helpful office staff and being proactive with phone calls to parents and keeping them informed.

## 2. Internal communication

Methods of internal communication at Kibblesworth Academy:

**The best form of communication is face-to-face.** Although this may appear to be time consuming it is time well spent and worth investing in. Face-to-face communication helps to ensure messages are not misunderstood and it provides the other party with a chance to respond, ask questions and give feedback. Face-to-face communication also helps to build stronger working relationships because the time devoted shows a commitment by within the school to fostering good relationships between colleagues.

**Telephone messages.** When giving the details of a telephone message, the message book **must** be used at all times to ensure a copy is retained by the office. Message slips should be given to appropriate staff as soon as possible, but wherever possible, teaching and learning should not be disturbed

unless the message is vital. Vital messages include communicating changes to the pick up arrangements of a pupil for that day, such as a telephone instruction to remain at after school club. In these cases, the person who has taken the telephone message should stay in the classroom to witness the message being given to the child. Messages should not be relayed verbally without a slip, or in a corridor, to avoid a breakdown in communication and message being forgotten or missed.

**Email** should be used in conjunction with face to face communication. All Kibblesworth Academy staff and governors should have access to an [@kibblesworthacademy.org](mailto:@kibblesworthacademy.org) email address to use for this purpose.

**Googleclassroom** should be used as our main learning platform, both for pupils and staff. As well as having unlimited storage capacity for planning and other resources, googleclassroom should be used to share projects between key groups in school, encouraging collaborative working, both between pupils and teachers, and colleagues.

**Staffroom notice board** will be used to display the main events and activities that will be taking place around the academy over the coming week. This will also show room bookings and external courses where appropriate. This board should be referred to daily.

**School Calendar** is displayed in the staffroom weekly. Where there is a significant change to the events, a new calendar is placed in the staff room by a member of the admin team.

**Weekly briefings** are used to keep all staff informed of developments within school, providing all staff a forum to communicate their views.

**Assemblies** are used to communicate with pupils across the academy. Assemblies occur up to three times per week, and involve visitors, celebrations of achievement, and important SMSC guidance.

### **3. External Communication**

External methods of communication at Kibblesworth Academy:

**The best form of communication is face-to-face.** Although this may appear to be time consuming it is time well spent and worth investing in. Face-to-face communication helps to ensure messages are not misunderstood and it provides the other party with a chance to respond, ask questions and give feedback. Face-to-face communication also helps to build stronger working relationships because the time devoted shows a commitment by the school to its pupils and the school community.

**Telephone** communication is a valuable way of keeping parents informed. Returning a call promptly is **essential** to building trust and relationships. When communicating by telephone, ensure that you give clear and simple messages and use appropriate language that your audience will find easy to relate to and engage with. When dealing with a contentious issue, or a problem that is related to an ongoing behavioural or child protection issue, all calls **must** be logged and minuted for future reference. If you are unsure as to where the information should be stored, consult with the HT, SENCO or line manager.

**Email** is used to communicate with parents and carers who may need updates or find it difficult to visit school in person. Emails should be treated in the same way as any other written communication, remaining factual and professional. Teachers may communicate directly with parents to give updates on pupils' behaviour or achievements. Emails are also used as a means of distributing letters to parents.

Guidance on email communication:

- Keep emails brief and include a clear subject line
- Double check everything you write
- Check who you are sending the email to before doing so
- Make sure the email says clearly what its purpose is
- Only use email to communicate factual information
- Ensure the communication is as positive as possible and do not convey bad news by email
- Ensure that all emails are as professional and formal as possible

**Class Dojo** is used to communicate achievements with parents and to broadcast class activities.

**School Website** is used to communicate key information to parents and stakeholders. The website should contain up to date information and all statutory documents. Roll of Honour and Attendance lists should be kept up to date by class teachers, and blog posts should be updated weekly where used.

**Phone App and messaging** is used primarily by the school office to relay messages to parents.

### Writing to parents:

We try to make written communication as accessible and inclusive as possible in the following ways:

- We use an easy to read font, no smaller than 12 point.
- Seek to avoid bias and stereotyping and any form of racial discrimination.
- We make email and electronic versions of all communications available through a password protected area within our school website and also through group emails to parents.
- As with all written communication, letters should always remain factual and professional.
- Wherever possible, letters should be sent out to parents giving at least **one weeks** notice of an event. This should **always** be the case where a permission slip is required to be returned.
- To maintain quality control and consistency of written communication, **all** letters should be forwarded to the HT and school office **prior** to distribution, where they will be copied and distributed to the relevant children by members of the admin team, as well as being placed on the school website and email lists.
- As most letters are administrative tasks, if teachers would prefer the school office to write letters, they should email the details of the letter over to the SBM with at least **one weeks notice** before the time of distribution. (This would usually mean **two weeks** before an event or trip.)
- When distributing letters to a class, a note should be taken of all children who did not receive the letter, and copies given to them at the earliest opportunity.

## 4. Other methods of communication with parents

At set times of the year, the academy will also communicate with parents through:

- **Annual written report** of achievement and progress.
- **Consultation evenings** - two per year.
- **Parent drop ins** - One per half term to discuss any issues.
- **Newsletter** - featuring key dates and events for the forthcoming term - three per year.
- **School Newspaper** - produced by children to showcase main activities within classes.
- **Homework book** - where feedback is given to homework weekly.
- **SEND reviews** arranged with the SENDCO and class teacher
- **Pupil Premium Reviews** arranged with the class teacher.

- **Assertive Mentoring report** on an agreed format, commenting on academic achievement, behaviour, uniform, attendance, timekeeping and attitudes to learning.
- **Target sheets** for core subjects, distributed by the class teacher twice per half term.
- **Reading records** across all key stages and classes, signed off, where possible, at least weekly by a teacher or teaching assistant.
- **Welcome pack** given to all new parents.
- **Home / School Agreement**, outlining the key expectations of the school and the parents.
- **Postcards** to initiate positive contacts with parents about children's work - All staff **must** make at least three positive contacts per pupil, per term, which should be logged.
- **Awards Assemblies** are used to reward children and create positive contact with parents. Every child should be invited to an awards assembly across the academic year.

## 5. Responding to parents - Timeframes.

Parents are made aware of the following expectations for communications with members of staff.

Communication from parents	Response time
Phone calls	Returned within 24 hours of parent's call
Email / dojo	Returned within 24 hours of parent's call
Written letter	Acknowledge receipt of letter within 72 hours

## 6. Monitoring and review

This policy will be regularly monitored, and will be reviewed Spring Term 2018, or earlier if required.

January 2016