

Home-school communication policy

Approved by:

Date:

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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

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 to 4pm or their working hours (if they work part-time) within 48 hours. 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
- Using the correct channels for communication - via Dojo to the school office or via email to the school office: admin@croftlandsinf.cumbria.sch.uk and office@croftlands-jun.cumbria.sch.uk
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Abusive or aggressive behaviour - in person, by phone or email - will not be tolerated. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours nor 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

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

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

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 Dojo

We use the Dojo platform to share news, events and celebrations of our children.

3.4 Phone calls

Sometimes, phone calls are used by staff to inform families of worries and to find ways to work together to best support children.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home and post them on Dojo in relation to:

- › Trips and visits
- › Consent forms
- › Our monthly newsletter.

3.7 Reports

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

- › An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- › Termly progress reports are provided face-to-face via Parent & Carer Meetings, held in our school hall.
- › A report on Phonics Results (year 1) and KS2 SATs tests

3.8 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening per term. 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.

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.

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 before and after-school provision

3.10 Home-school communications app

Our Dojo platform keeps our families up to date with the current events and news going on in school. Our office staff will use Dojo to communicate via Dojo messages directly to families.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

4.1 Email

Parents should always Dojo message or email message the office staff about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 2 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 outside of their teaching hours. In the vast majority of cases, our office staff will be able to answer your query.

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 24 hours 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.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email admin@croftlandsinf.cumbria.sch.uk or office@croftlands-jun.cumbria.sch.uk or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request, unless it is an urgent issue as above: family emergency, safeguarding or welfare issues.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day, they are very busy preparing the day's learning. This is why we ask parents to direct their queries to the school office in the first instance. 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.

4.4 Home-school communications app

Our Dojo platform is a quick way of contacting the office staff in the first instance. Our office staff will help to answer your queries or feedback information or requests to the relevant member of staff, e.g. the class teacher or SENDCos, Pastoral Lead or Headteacher.

5. Accessibility

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

5.1 Parents with additional communication needs

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Sign language interpreters for meetings

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

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 year.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT acceptable use policy
- Parent/Carer code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Staff wellbeing
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Child Protection Policy

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 or call the school office on admin@croftlandsinf.cumbria.sch.uk or office@croftlands-jun.cumbria.sch.uk
- Dojo the school office via the Dojo messaging platform
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will answer your query and/or forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days.

Complaints

If your communication is in respect of a complaint and you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

This can be obtained from our website or from the school office as a hard copy.