Home-School Communication Policy and Strategy

Approved by:	Governing Body	**Date:**	March 2025
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1. Introduction and aims

The purpose of this communication policy is to foster effective, transparent and consistent communication between Bramber Primary School, parents, pupils and the community. This strategy aims to enhance partnerships, support pupil learning and ensure all stakeholders are informed and engaged.

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 (8am – 4pm) or their working hours (if they do not work the full school day). 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
- 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

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct. A copy of which can be found on our website: www.bramberprimary.co.uk

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

In line with our complaints procedure, we will not respond to anonymous correspondence as this negates our open-door policy and transparent dialogue.

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)
- Individual texts to inform parents about non-emergency incidents that pertain to their child during the school day. (eg first aid administration, uneaten lunch etc)
- Our text messages are limited to 160 characters and may have to be brief and direct to communicate key information.

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a school calendar of key dates.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions.

3.4 Phone calls

Phone calls may be made instead of email correspondence if requested by parents or teachers to discuss a pupil.

They will be received/made during school core hours (8am-4pm) and during times when teachers do not have teaching commitments.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly via email:

- Letters about trips, visits and events in school
- Consent forms
- Our half termly newsletter

3.6 Reports

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

- An annual report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing and their attendance
- A report on statutory assessments: Early Learning Goals (EYFS), Phonic Screening Check (Key Stage1), Multiplication Tables Check (Year 4) and KS2 SATs (Year 6)

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

3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' consultations per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievements and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing or any other area.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' consultation 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.

We hold a Curriculum Open Day termly to celebrate the children's learning over that term. During this event, children and parents share their children's learning together and there is an opportunity to leave feedback about learning and the curriculum.

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
- Class pages that offer year group specific information and share current learning

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.10 Home-school communications platforms (Tapestry)

In Reception and Year 1, teachers and parents can communicate via Tapestry.

Tapestry is a platform to share and celebrate learning, both at home and school.

Teachers will regularly upload to Tapestry. There is no expectation for the number of posts, however, in Reception Class, staff aim to upload approximately 10 individual or group observations per term for each child and during the Autumn Term in Year 1, we aim to upload approximately one observation per child per week. From then on, Year 1 class teachers use it for group of whole class observations and for parents to share their home learning.

Other communication channels need to be used for messages and general communication with 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.

To maintain a respectful and constructive environment, parents are encouraged to avoid discussing sensitive or personal matters regarding pupils or staff in public settings, including social networking and social media platforms. This ensures that the dignity and privacy of all individuals are respected. If parents have concerns about another pupil or staff member, they should address these directly with the school. This helps prevent misunderstandings and promotes a more effective resolution process.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school 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 5 working days.

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

If a response has not been received within the given number of days, the sender should call the school as this email may have been missed.

4.2 Phone calls

There is an answer phone that is always on during non-core hours. This facility can be used to inform us of absence.

Urgent issues will always take priority. If the issue is **urgent**, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Family emergencies
- Delay or change in home time collection that day

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should **email** the school office and a member of staff will contact them within 2 working days.

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 7 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, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

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

4.4 Home-school communications platforms (Tapestry)

In Reception and Year 1, teachers and parents can communicate via Tapestry.

Tapestry is a platform to share and celebrate learning, both at home and school.

There is no limit or expectation to the number of uploads parents make about learning at home.

Other communication channels need to be used for messages and general communication with school.

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
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website
- 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)

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. Tone and Style

- We ensure that the tone of all communication is respectful, positive and inclusive. We expect the same from our community.
- We use clear, concise language and avoid jargon so that information is easy to understand

7. Crisis Communication Plan

- Emergency protocols: Text is used for quick and effective communication in case of emergencies (e.g. severe weather, security incidents).
- Where possible, school will keep lines of communication open with parents in the event of a crisis

8. Parental Engagement Strategy

- We encourage parents to participate in school activities (e.g. volunteering, attending events, participating in workshops or committees)
- We provide parents with resources to support their children's learning at home (e.g. parenting workshops, learning guides, school website)
- We regularly collect feedback from parents on their communication preferences and satisfaction levels

9. Branding and Consistency

- We ensure all communication (emails, newsletters, website, etc.) uses the same branding (school logo, colours etc) to create a unified, professional appearance
- Consistent school-wide messages always align with our overall vision and values.

10. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing body.

11. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement

Bramber Primary School is committed to fostering a welcoming environment where communication supports pupil success and community involvement. By all stakeholders adhering to this policy, we aim to build strong partnerships with parents and the community.

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who to Contact at Bramber

There will be times when you need to contact school. Should you have an issue or concern that relates to your child, please do not hesitate to approach the school directly. The first point of contact will usually be your child's class teacher. It is in everybody's best interests that any issues are resolved as quickly as possible. This guidance is designed to help you handle concerns quickly and confidently by directing you to the person in school who is best-placed to help. This document is designed to be an 'at a glance' contact list.

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 office@bramberprimary.com or 01903219277
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

- We aim to respond to all emails within 2 days.
- Emails will be checked within our office hours – 8am – 4pm.

If you have not had a response to your email with 2 days, please phone the school office to follow up as the email may have been missed.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT…	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO AND HOW
• My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework/behaviour • My child's wellbeing/pastoral support • Bullying and behaviour	**Your child's class teacher** This can be sent via email: office@bramberprimary.com Or by phone: 01903 219277
Special educational needs (SEN)	**SENCO** SENCO@bramberprimary.com **First contact should be made with the class teacher via the contact details above.**
Admin Payments • School trips • Uniform/lost and found • Attendance and absence requests • Hiring the school premises • Catering/meals	**School Office** office@bramberprimary.com 01903 219277

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT…	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO AND HOW
School events/the school calendar	**Website** www.bramberprimary.co.uk If you cannot find the relevant information on the school website: School Office office@bramberprimary.com 01903 219277
Before and after-school club Early Birds and Night Owls.	**Activity Club Leader:** activityclub@bramberprimary.com
• Safeguarding and Child Protection • Any ongoing concerns or queries that you have raised via the above channels of communication but you believe have not yet been resolved successfully or you are dissatisfied with the outcome. • Matters regarding members of staff. • Feedback about the school: positive and areas for improvement. • Serious and urgent queries	**Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** head@bramberprimary.com 01903 219277
PTA	**Friends of Bramber** FOB@bramberprimary.com
Governing board	**Chair of Governors** kjones@bramberprimary.com

Complaints **If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the stages set out in our complaints procedure which can be found on our school website: www.bramberprimary.co.uk**