



# School Communication Policy

Developed : Term 2 2023-23

Ratified by Board of Governors (date) 11.10.23

Signature: Chairperson, Board of Governors

A handwritten signature in brown ink, reading "L. Simps", written in a cursive style.

## **Introduction & Aims**

The purpose of this statement is to provide information and guidelines regarding communication between parents and staff of Phoenix Integrated Primary & Nursery Unit.

We acknowledge the home as central to the development of each child and it is our intention that the school and the parent(s)/carer(s) of the child strive to be mutually supportive of each other so that the child can maximise their potential.

## **Responsibilities of the School**

The following list, which is not exhaustive, indicates the main structures in place, initiated by the school, to facilitate communication between the school and parents:

- School Website – The school website [www.Phoenixips.org](http://www.Phoenixips.org) is a hub of information relating to governance, school policies, admissions information, school newsletters etc and some class information.
- Seesaw APP –an online learning platform which keeps parents up to date with learning progress in school in a secure environment. Teachers also use this to send messages relating to individual children. We ask that parents do not message in the evening as staff have been directed to switch off the app. The app should only be active between the hours of 8.30am and 4.30pm.
- School money APP. We are currently using this to allow parents to pay online for dinner money, school trips and after school clubs. We also send reminders to parents via the app. We may develop this further in future.
- Telephone calls – Teachers may contact you to discuss a particular issue with you, or to follow up on a written or online message.
- ‘Schoolbag’ post – written communication for parents passed via their child which they may or may not be required to return. As an Eco School we intentionally limit the amount of paper copies being sent home via schoolbags. We ask parents to check bags regularly.
- Letters by post – where deemed necessary by the school. Please ensure your address is up to date with the school office.
- Attendance/punctuality – As part of our statutory duty to monitor attendance we may have to contact parents by mail or telephone to discuss attendance and/or punctuality.

- Parental interview – likely to be requested by a class teacher or a Senior Member of Staff (e.g. Designated Teacher for Child Protection, SENCO, Principal or Vice Principal). All staff members must seek permission from the principal when arranging meetings with parents to ensure clear lines of communication. This does not include routine telephone call or face to face conversations to discuss minor issues.
- Annual Review meetings – These are for children with a Statement of Educational Need and are coordinated by the SENCO. The meeting may involve outside agencies where appropriate. Parents will be notified of all attendees.
- Social media posts – The school has a Facebook account which we update regularly to keep the school community informed of what is happening in school. This is a good way of extending communication into the local community. In line with our safeguarding and GDPR procedure we request that parents do not mention individual children by name, as posts will be deleted. The school also has a TWITTER/X page which helps with wider profile of the school. As with other Facebook, we will never mention a child's name on posts.
- Parent/teacher interviews (currently 2 per year group) – parents will be notified in advance of their allocated dates and times. There will be a statutory meeting in Term 1 and an additional meeting in Term 2 at the school's discretion. Parents will have the option of requesting a telephone interview if this helps with working arrangements.
- Nursery transition and settling routines will be coordinated by Mrs Henry, Nursery Teacher.
- Year 1 transition and settling routines will be coordinated by Mrs McCrea, Year 1 teacher.
- Primary 7 Transfer to Secondary Level – Parents can contact the Mr Kelly, Year 7 teacher to discuss post primary school options and any issues/advice around the completing the online application to post primary school.
- An annual written Pupil Report.
- Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Governors will be produced annually; shared with parents via SEESAW and published on the school website.

The school uses the school website to communicate important but non-urgent matters to the general public and parents are encouraged to use these regularly to keep updated on school events and successes.

## **Responsibilities of Pupils**

We expect our pupils to:

- pass on any written communication from the school to their parent(s) and return the same, duly completed, where appropriate and required.

## **Responsibilities of Parents**

We encourage our parents to:

- understand that by accepting a place at the Nursery Unit or school that you are accepting Policies and procedure set out by the Board of Governors.
- engage with the school and attend meetings relevant to their child/children;
- work with the school in developing the full potential of their children;
- familiarise themselves with school policy and procedure (hard copies available on request from the principal);
- support the Staff and Governors in their implementation of policy and procedure;
- become actively involved in Parents' Council, attend school events and help build a sense of community and
- participate in any surveys or policy review.
- Whilst we encourage the independence of our children, school bags should be checked regularly.
- Engage with staff of the school in a respectful way which is mutually beneficial for both parents and staff.
- We ask parents to be responsible when using social media, which includes any online website/social media app/online groups. Any behaviour that is deemed unacceptable as set out in our Acceptable Use of the Internet and associated policies, will be addressed directly with parents. If necessary, the school will report to the Board of Governors and seek legal advice to help resolve issues.

## **Parent/Teacher contact initiated by parents**

Communication between parents and teachers will be encouraged by the school. It is our aim to work in partnership with parents to ensure that all children progress well in school.

The school does not believe that email should be used as a means of communication between parents and staff to discuss pastoral or academic matters pertaining to their child; in such instances parents are asked to contact the school directly.

Arranging meetings with staff within the school day can be difficult. However, parents are welcome to contact the school office to raise a concern or query. The office staff will direct the enquiry to the appropriate member of staff.

A parent may wish to request a meeting with a class teacher or a senior member of staff. To do so they should contact the office staff who will liaise with the member of staff. Meetings cannot be arranged via email. Every attempt will be made to arrange a telephone conversation on the same day or a meeting within 5 working days.

It is our aim to keep all communication positive and resolve issues quickly. However, we do understand that there may be times that more support is needed. In this instance parents are encouraged to speak to the Principal or Vice Principal.

If a matter remains unresolved following contact, then the School's Complaints Procedure should be followed in respect of the next line of communication.

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