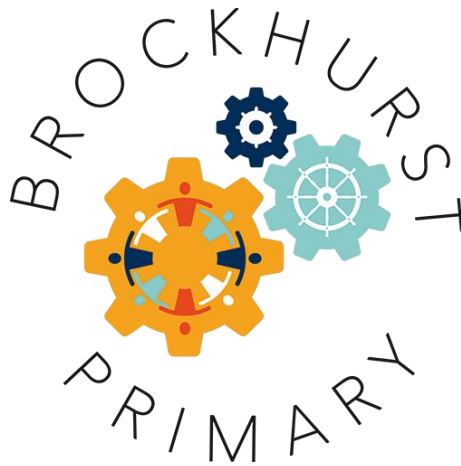


Brockhurst Primary School

Dive into learning, set sail for success!

Courage Ownership Respect Excellence

Communications Policy



Name of School	Brockhurst Primary School
Date of Policy Issue/Review	Issued April 2025 to be reviewed April 2026
Name of Responsible Manager/Headteacher	Mrs. Shobana Kohli
Chair of Governors	<i>L.M. Lees</i>
Signature of Responsible Manager/Headteacher	<i>S. Kohli</i>

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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
- Being positive and practical, for example, to seek information, ask a question, clear up a misunderstanding, or draw attention to a matter. Sometimes there is a need to resolve an issue or misunderstanding.

2. Terms

2.1 Definition of Parents

We use the term 'parents' in this policy to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

2.2 Definition of Staff

The term member of staff as referred to in this policy includes:

- Anyone employed by the school
- Anyone training in a professional capacity at the school
- Governors (when acting in this capacity)
- Volunteers at the school (when acting in this capacity)
- Anyone employed through an external agency, who are acting in a professional capacity on the school site

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 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

3.2 Staff (Teaching and Admin Staff)

All teaching and admin 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 am – 3:30 pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time). 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.

3.3 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

We acknowledge that sometimes there can be situations that can be emotional and challenging for parents and staff to work through. Nonetheless, we expect all our community to show mutual respect. We have clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the Staff Code of conduct) and pupils (through our CORE Behaviour Policy). We also expect parents to engage constructively with school staff and to work together with them in the best interests of our children.

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 8:30 am - 3:30 pm, on weekends, or during school holidays.

We will only communicate with parents in respect of their own child at the school. Requests to raise a concern on behalf of another parent will be declined, as will requests for information on another child. Should any correspondence be received from legal advisers, then this will be shared with the school's legal advisers.

If parents are considering making a formal complaint, our complaints policy can be found on the school website. However, Stage 1 of our policy suggests that other forms of communication can often help in resolving issues, and we encourage parents to use this route. However, this is not compulsory and does not prevent the use of the complaints policy either straight away or after other forms of communication have been tried.

4. 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.

4.1 Email (Arbor)

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

- Parents are welcome to email the school at adminoffice@brockhurst.hants.sch.uk about non-urgent issues in the first instance.
- Upcoming school events (extra-curricular activities)
- Attendance
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Any other important information (Parents evening, appointments, signposting to relevant support, advice, and external agencies for support)

4.2 Text Messages (Arbor), Including Class Dojo

We will text parents about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Estimated time of arrival of trips or any delays
- First Aid (Class Dojo)
- Attendance (communication from our Attendance Champion and HSLW, Mrs. Cook)
- Weekly celebration assembly invites
- Reminders (For .e.g. child's packed lunch, uniform item, swimming costume, etc)

4.3 Phone Calls

We may contact you by telephone for the following:

- Anything we deem important regarding your child (their health, first aid)
- To celebrate your child's achievements
- Supporting your child to settle in (after exhausting all other de-escalation strategies in line with our CORE Behaviour Policy)
- Regarding your child's attendance, including making attendance appointments (celebrating good attendance or concerns)
- Share information about your child regarding upcoming external agency reviews (Primary Behaviour Support, Children's Services, SEN information)

4.4 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our termly newsletter
- Any upcoming whole school events
- Any information relevant to share with parents and carers, including reminders and external agency support (MHST, School Nursing Team)

4.5 Reports

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

- An annual Pupil Progress report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum and how well they are progressing (in summer term 1)
- An end-of-year report covering English, Maths, and Reading (at the end of Summer 2)
- Results of KS2 SATs tests, Phonics Screening Check (PSC), and Multiplication Times Table Check (MTC), Year R GLD

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

4.6 Meetings

We hold two parents' evenings per year. 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, behaviour, or wellbeing.

When a member of staff is not able to speak to you immediately face-to-face due to school commitments, or a longer conversation is deemed necessary or appropriate, then a request for an appointment can be made to discuss the matter either in person or by telephone, at a later date. (The school will aim to arrange that meeting within **5 working days**. If a meeting cannot be organised within 5 working days, the school will inform parent(s)/carers and arrange a suitable day).

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 with the SENCo (Mrs. Emma Gladman).

4.7 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
- Parent letters and newsletters

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4.8 Home-School Communications App (Class Dojo)

Teaching and admin staff use Class Dojo to send out useful information to parents, including class updates, photos of events, and any reminders. Teaching and admin staff use the Class Dojo messaging facility to communicate with parents, and parents can communicate with staff.

Teaching and admin staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time). 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.

5. How Parents and Carers Can Communicate with the School

5.1 Email

Parents should always email the school about non-urgent issues in the first instance. The email is: adminoffice@brockhurst.hants.sch.uk. The school will acknowledge the email within **24 hours** and aim to respond to the query within **3 working days**. If a response is unable to be provided within this timeline, which can be to ensure a full and considered response, then a revised timeline will be provided and communicated. We ask that parents await a response from the school and that further emails are not sent pending that response unless the new deadline has passed. If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Emails will be most helpful if they are concise, explaining concerns in a clear way. Lengthy and overly detailed accounts can make it more difficult to understand what is being explained and to respond in a timely or clear way.

Use of AI

Parents and carers may choose to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to help draft emails or messages to the school. While these tools can be helpful, they do not always produce accurate or context-specific information and may misinterpret school policies or situations. Messages generated using AI can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or delay the resolution of an issue if additional clarification is required. Parents and carers are therefore encouraged to ensure that any communication sent to the school clearly reflects their own views and the specific circumstances of their concern so that staff can respond promptly and effectively.

For complaints, parents should refer to the complaints policy which can be found on the school website or a copy can be requested from the school office.

5.2 Phone Calls

If a query or concern is time-sensitive and urgent, the parent should call the school office, who will liaise as necessary at the earliest opportunity. In most circumstances, teaching and leadership staff are unlikely to be available to receive calls due to teaching and other commitments.

If the query or concern is not time-sensitive and urgent, then parents should email or call the school office, and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them within **3 working days**. If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time.

For general enquiries, or communication with the Headteacher, please call or email the school office. If an 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.

5.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the school office on adminoffice@brockhurst.hants.sch.uk, do so to the relevant member of staff or call the school to book an appointment with a clear overview of what the appointment is for. We try to schedule all meetings within **5 working days** of the request. Should a meeting be requested, the decision of which staff member will attend will rest with the Headteacher.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day, 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

5.4 Social Media

- The school will not respond to concerns raised via social media.
- Where the social media site is run by the school, comments will be removed if they do not meet the criteria of the social media site.

Should the school be made aware of any physical threats or abusive behaviour towards staff members on social media (including the sharing of conversations intended between the parent and the teacher), then the school will consider reporting this to the Police and seeking the removal of this content from the site/social media platform where appropriate.

5.5 Home-School Communications App (Class Dojo)

- Parents are able to message their child's class teacher via Class Dojo. However, there is no expectation that staff are able to respond straight away due to their teaching commitments and other responsibilities, including at break and lunchtimes. If your issue is urgent, please call or email the admin office.

- Any threats, intimidation, or verbal abuse on Class Dojo are not acceptable, including sharing of messages that are intended to be between the member of staff and parent. The school may consider banning parents and carers from using the platform. In this instance, the parent or carer will only communicate through the admin office email. Further threats, intimidating behaviour, or verbal abuse will lead to the school informing the police or their legal advisors.

6. Communication During School Hours/Working Days

- Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours (8:30 am - 3:30 pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). For communication over Class Dojo, parents should be aware that staff are with children during the school day and so will endeavour to respond within **48 hours**. If your message is urgent, please contact the school office.
- Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.
- Staff may choose to work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

7. Accessibility

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

7.1 Parents with Additional Communication Needs

- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible.
- Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:
 - A hard copy in a bigger font
 - Clarification on any aspects of communication with the admin team, who will be happy to assist

7.2 Parents with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- An EMTAS representative via phone or in person to support translation
- The use of Class Dojo to interpret messages in a variety of languages

8. Types of Unacceptable Behaviour and Communication

There are some types of behaviour/communication that the school considers unacceptable. These are as follows:

- Any physical aggression (e.g., slapping, hitting, punching, and kicking)
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, pupils, or parents (e.g., standing very close to her/him)

- The use of aggressive hand gestures including finger pointing towards a member of staff, pupil, or other parent
- Spitting at a member of staff, pupil, or parent
- Shaking or holding a fist towards a member of staff, pupil, or parent
- Shouting at members of staff, parents or pupils (either in person on school grounds, over the telephone or over video conferencing)
- Swearing, or using offensive language including derogatory language about a protected group or characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- Threatening or offensive comments about a member of staff, parent or pupil of the school; this can include verbally, via texts, emails, social media, etc.
- Sending abusive messages to a member of staff, including via text, email, or social media
- A large volume of emails and messages in respect of the same matter over a short period of time
- Continuing to raise the same issue despite it having already been addressed by the school
- Posting defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, on social media platforms
- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds, themed days and sports team matches)
- Breaching or not conforming to the school's security procedures
- Covertly recording phone calls or meetings with members of staff
- Sharing screenshots of conversations intended to be between school and parents (the member of staff and parent), on social media platforms or any other platform, including WhatsApp and messaging.
- Any other behaviour that is disrespectful, threatening, or offensive

This list is not exhaustive but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour which has no place in our school community.

9. Actions That May Be Taken by the School as a Result of Unacceptable Behaviour and Communication

- In the first instance, (if the unacceptable behaviour has occurred on site) the school will ask the parents/carers to desist and/or leave the site. If the behaviour is of a serious nature, then the police will be contacted.
- Thereafter, the school (Headteacher/Member of School Leadership team) will gather information on allegations of unacceptable behaviour. This may include talking to the parties concerned or others as witnesses to the behaviour.

If unacceptable behaviour is considered to have occurred, the following actions may be taken by the school, dependent on the severity/gravity of the behaviour:

- The parent(s)/carer will be told verbally that his/her behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and, if it is not modified, the school will take further action.
- The parent(s)/carer will be told in writing that his/her behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and, if it is not modified, the school will take further action.

- Advising the parent(s)/carer that all future meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and will be minuted.
- Putting in place a contact plan to deal with any communication between the individual and school. For example, except in emergencies, communication to the school must be in writing only to a named individual and the school can set out timescales for school responses.
- A warning letter or an immediate ban from the school site.
- A warning letter or an immediate ban from the use of Class Dojo.
- Contacting the Police where behaviour is criminal in nature.
- Seeking advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action.

The school will always seek to respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to the unacceptable behaviour and communication rests with the headteacher and, where necessary, the Governing Body.

10. 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 Policy
- Unacceptable Actions by Parents and Customers
- Home-school agreement
- Staff Wellbeing Policy
- Social Media Policy