

Communications Policy

Holland Park School | 2024-2025

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Reviewed by	Billy Egleton Assistant Headteacher			
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Approved by	Headteacher		Governing Board	
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Location	TEAMS	✓	Website	✓

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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 Principal

The Principal 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 08:15-15:30 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.

You can find a copy of our ICT and internet acceptable use policy here:

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.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (08:15-15:30) or during school holidays.

You can find a copy of our parent code of conduct here:

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:

- The school newsletter
- If your child is removed from a lesson
- If your child is awarded an achievement point
- Bi-weekly pastoral update
- Communication from your child's classroom teachers and / or Head of Year.

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Updates in the unlikely event of an emergency
- If your child has a detention
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3 Phone calls

All parents will receive a phone call from their child's form tutor during the first term of the academic year. Teachers or pastoral staff may also make phone calls to parents if students are involved in poor behaviour, excel academically, present as vulnerable or raise concerns with the schools safeguarding team.

3.4 Letters

Holland Park School will send letters for the following reasons, although often they will be sent via email and attached as a PDF document:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Activities Week (KS3 only)
- Sports Day (Year 7-10 only)
- Work Experience
- Serious behaviour sanctions (including permanent exclusion)

3.5 Reports

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

- Academic reports twice a year following examinations. These outline the effort students have put in since their last report, their percentage in that subject, the average percentage in the year group and also a rank order in each subject and also overall (Math's, English and Science are double weighted)
- Bi-Weekly pastoral update
- Half-termly attendance report

3.6 Meetings

We hold one parent evening for years 7-10 and two parents' evenings for year 11. 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.

3.7 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
- Information about before and after-school provision
- Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.8 Arbor App

The Arbor app is the best way to get up to date information on your child's progress. It will provide you with:

- their attendance to each lesson
- whether or not they were on time
- any achievement points they are awarded
- any behaviour incidents logged against them
- any detentions issued

The link can be downloaded from both the apple and android app store and is called "Arbor Parent App".

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, including the school office number and email address.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five 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 within five 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. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within five days 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

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 five working days of the request.

Teachers are required to be on duty 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

Parents who turn up to school without a booking will not be seen by staff (exceptions will be made in light of significant safeguarding or wellbeing concerns)

5. Abusive & Inappropriate communication

If parents contact the school, or any employee of the school in an abusive and / or threatening manner then the school shall not respond to the communication and communication ban with the school is likely to be enforced. Parents must adhere to the parental code of conduct when communicating with any member of staff.

6. Accessibility

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

6.1 Parents with additional communication needs

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

- 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.

7. Monitoring and review

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

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

8. 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
- Staff wellbeing
- Social media policy

Appendix 1: school contact list

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 the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line
- We will acknowledge your email within two working days and aim to respond fully within 5 working days to all requests.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher (all HPS email addresses are: firstname.surname@hollandparkschool.co.uk If you are still unsure of a teachers email address, please contact the school office (info@hollandparkschool.co.uk)
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support (Heads of Year)	Year 7: anna.boden@hollandparkschool.co.uk Year 8: chloe.wedlake@hollandparkschool.co.uk Year 9: zoe.thompson@hollandparkschool.co.uk Year 10: joe.clarke@hollandparkschool.co.uk Year 11: amarachi.ogidi@hollandparkschool.co.uk 6 th Form: elizabeth.ashcroft@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Payments	info@hollandparkschool.co.uk
School trips	Robert.mccarthy@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Uniform/lost and found	Olivia.hill@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, email attendance@hollandparkschool.co.uk please provide your child's name, year group, tutor group, the reason for their absence and how long you expect them to be off for. More information can be found in the school's attendance policy.
Safeguarding	Designated Safeguarding Lead billy.egleton@hollandparkschool.co.uk Operational Safeguarding Lead Catherine.boyle@hollandparkschool.co.uk Safeguarding Manager joe.clarke@hollandparkschool.co.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Bullying and behaviour	<p>In the first instance please contact your child's Head of Year, details of which can be found at the top of this table.</p> <p>For more serious incidents please contact your child's Head of Key Stage who is also a member of the school's senior leadership team.</p> <p>Key Stage 3: Alexandra.bott@hollandparkschool.co.uk Key Stage 4: Victoria.webb@hollandparkschool.co.uk Key Stage 5: Benjamin.arnold@hollandparkschool.co.uk</p>
School events/the school calendar	Faye.mulholland@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Special educational needs (SEN)	<p>In the first instance please speak to your child's Head of Year (information provided at the top of this table).</p> <p>The school's SENDCo is Ms. Hill and her email address is below:</p> <p>Catherine.hill@hollandparkschool.co.uk</p>
Before and after-school clubs	Olivia.hill@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Hiring the school premises	Tanya.wilkins@unitedlearning.org.uk
PTA	Alexandra.pugh@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Governing board	clerk@hollandparkschool.co.uk
Catering/meals	Tommy.wilson@taylorshaw.com

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.