

Elmhurst School

School Communication Policy

Approved by: Elmhurst School Local Governing Board

Approval period: Spring Term 2024 – Spring Term 2027

Review cycle: Annual

Policy Source: The Key Model Policy

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	3
2. Roles and responsibilities	3
3. How we communicate with parents and carers	4
4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school	6
5. Inclusion.....	7
6. Monitoring and review	7
7. Links with other policies.....	7
Appendix 1: school contact list	8

1. Introduction and aims

Our aim is to promote partnership working between parents/carers and school through effective communication. We are committed to developing understanding, respecting confidentiality and building trust.

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on children's 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 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 Co-Headteachers

The co-headteachers are 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 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 – 3:30 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.

Our Online safety policy can be found [here](#) and Acceptable Use Policy can be found [here](#).

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Downloading the apps used in school; Arbor, Class Dojo, Schools Food United and Boom Reader

- 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 8:30 – 3:30, or during school holidays.

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.

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
- Pupil attendance
- Free School Meals and Holiday Vouchers

3.2 Class Dojo app

We will message parents on Class Dojo about:

- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Event reminders
- Parent courses run by external providers

3.3 School calendar

Our school website and parent newsletter include a full school calendar for the term and year ahead.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Phone calls

Phone calls to parents may be made for any of the following reasons:

- First aid when a head bump has occurred
- Missing lunch bookings, forgotten glasses/PE Kit etc
- Trip contributions
- Pupil behaviour
- Praise phone calls
- Discussions specific to a child's SEND needs
- Medication or if a child feels unwell

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly via email:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter

3.6 Home learning books/school planners

All reading, whether completed at home or in school, should be recorded on the Boom Reader app.

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
- A report on KS1 and KS2 SATs tests

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

3.8 Meetings

We hold 1 parents' evening(s) 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, attendance or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs or disability (SEND), 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

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Please 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 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 you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

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

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 5 days of your request.

If your issue is **urgent**, please call the school office and ask to speak to a Family Support Worker.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Urgent medical appointments
- End of day collection needs

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the appropriate address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your child's home environment, or their wellbeing

Family Support Workers can also offer advice and support regarding well-being and pastoral matters.

4.4 Home-school communications app – Class Dojo

Elmhurst School uses the app, Class Dojo, so that parents can communicate with class teachers. Class teachers will aim to respond to parents during normal working hours. Class Dojo is not to be used to log pupil absence.

5. Inclusion

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

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

Translation tools are built-in to Class Dojo and the school website.

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 or Family Support Workers to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher will monitor the implementation of this policy throughout the year.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the local governing board. The next scheduled review date for this policy is spring term 2027.

7. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints and Resolutions
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy

Appendix 1: school contact list

Whom 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:

Who To Contact

Elmhurst School is a large primary school with just over 480 pupils. To make it easier to get your queries answered quickly we have created this guide. We **always** promote speaking to your child's class teacher first as they know your child best.

To discuss...	Who should I speak to?
Reading books, learning, home learning, behaviour, personal wellbeing, friendships or any general concerns.	Class Teacher via the office 01296 481380 or via a message on Class Dojo to ask them to call you at a convenient time.
Special education needs, EHCP, additional support for pupils.	SENDCO Mrs Bunce on 01296 481380 ext 2 or sendco@esglt.co.uk
Safeguarding concerns. Attendance/lateness, exceptional leave of absence, family support, home difficulties, worries, emotional difficulties, confidential information, wellbeing/mental health.	Family Support Workers (FSWs) Mrs Wright or Miss Cawley on 01296 481380 ext 1 or familysupportworker@esglt.co.uk
Medical concerns, injuries, medicines, diabetes, return to school after an illness.	Parental Engagement Officer Mrs Khan on 01296 481380 ext 3 or office@esglt.co.uk
Lunches, messages, change of information, trips, school events, appointments with staff, clubs, admissions, pupil premium enquiries.	School Receptionists Mrs Harris or Mrs Khan on 01296 481380 ext 3 or office@esglt.co.uk
Breakfast, After School or Holiday club enquiries.	Ourspace Childcare on 07434 849151 or info@ourspacechildcare.co.uk
Ongoing behaviour, wellbeing or mental health of your child.	Miss Miller or Mrs Baldwin via learninglounge@esglt.co.uk

One of our Assistant Headteachers **Mrs Lewis**, **Miss Anderson**, **Mrs Woon**, our Deputy Headteacher, **Mrs Bunce** and our Co-Headteachers **Miss Needham** and **Mrs Lee** are available on a daily basis on the school gates to also support with any queries.



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

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our Complaints and Resolutions Policy. https://glt-trust.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/key_information/Complaints-Policy-GLT-2024.pdf?t=1723047322