



Elmhurst School

Home / School Communication Policy

Approved by:	Local Governing Board	Date: March 2021
---------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------

Last reviewed on:	February 2021
--------------------------	---------------

Next review due by:	February 2024
----------------------------	---------------

Contents

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

1. Introduction and aims

Our vision at Elmhurst School is to be forward thinking and continuously improving as a school. We want to enable our children to achieve their full potential, be successful citizens of the world we live in and be prepared for the next stage of their education.

Our Values at Elmhurst School are: Aspire, Create and Think.

Our aim is to promote partnership 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 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- 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 E-safety 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 not** respond to communications outside of office hours 8:00am – 5:00pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

Our E-safety and Acceptable Use Policy can be found on the school website:

<https://www.elmhurstschool.org/policies/>

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 GLT Policy Covering Incidents Involving Abusive, Threatening or Violent Visitors.

This policy can be found on the GLT website: <https://www.greatlearnerstrust.co.uk/policies/>

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)

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the academic year.

<https://www.elmhurstschool.org/term-dates/>

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

We will use phone calls to discuss behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and pastoral matters. Staff record minutes from these conversations and log them onto the school's online management system, Behaviour Watch.

3.5 Letters

We send the following electronic letters home regularly:

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

3.6 Home/school planners

Communication made directly between parents and teachers can be done so via the Home/School Planner.

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 parents' evening(s) in the autumn and spring terms and an optional one in the summer term once reports have been written. 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 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/Class Dojo

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.

More informal, daily updates and reminders are posted on Class Dojo.

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 1 working day, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 2 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 2 days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please contact 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 2 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

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

School posts made on Class Dojo can be translated into other languages.

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. 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 local governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- E-safety and acceptable use
- Incidents Involving Abusive, Threatening or Violent Visitors Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints and Resolutions

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:

- Email or call the school office on office@esglt.co.uk or 01296 481380
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

We try to respond to all emails within 1 working day.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT ...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/home learning	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher, in the first instance
Payments	School Office
School trips	School Office
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's class teacher/School Office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01296 481380, Option 1 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the School Office for a Leave of Absence form.
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's class teacher, in the first instance
School events/the school calendar	School Office
Special educational needs	Your child's class teacher/School SENDCo
Before and after-school clubs	School Office
Hiring the school premises	School Office

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
The PTA	School Office
The Governing Board	School Office
Catering/meals	School Office

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our Complaints and Resolutions Policy.

<https://www.greatlearnerstrust.co.uk/policies/>