



Communication Policy

Committee	Curriculum and Attainment
Date Approved by Governing Body	1-11-17
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Next Review Date by Committee	October 2019

'Celebrate Learning, Achievement and Friendship in God's Love'

Core Christian Values: Love, Hope, Trust, Respect

Background

At Waterhouses CE Primary Academy we aim to create a caring environment in which every member of the school community is valued as an individual and is encouraged to develop his/her full potential in all aspects of their life. We are a caring community with strong Christian values which reflect the ethos of the school.

We firmly believe that strong, effective communication must underpin all that we do and is much more than an exchange of information. Through effective communication, information is shared, understanding is enhanced, trust is built, confidentiality respected and actions co-ordinated. We believe that communication encompasses not just the message but, more importantly, *how* the message is communicated. Strong, effective communication promotes partnership.

Aim

To ensure Waterhouses CE Primary Academy remains a thriving and successful school, we commit to communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents/carers and with other members of the wider community. We must ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Objectives

All communications at Waterhouses CE Primary Academy should:

- keep staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and all other stakeholders well informed;
- be open, honest, ethical and professional;
- use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all;
- be actioned within a reasonable timeframe;
- use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience;
- take account of all relevant school policies;
- be aligned with our core values;
- be compatible with the School Improvement Plan.

Responsibilities

Every member of staff has a responsibility to support strong and effective communication and needs to recognise that the quality of their communication reflects on the school's reputation. This qualitative approach to communication is embraced by the Governing Body.

Methods of Communication

Internal Methods of Communication

Governing Body

Governors meet regularly, both at Full Governing Body and sub-committee levels. Meetings are structured, follow an Agenda and are minuted. All approved Meeting Minutes are available at the request of the Head Teacher.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Senior Leadership Team provides support and guidance to the Head Teacher which, in turn, facilitates effective two-way communication between staff and the Governing Body.

Subject Leaders

Subject Co-ordinators take responsibility for the dissemination of subject specific information to the teaching team.

Staff Briefings

Staff briefings are held weekly, with all staff having the opportunity to contribute. Information is disseminated to those unable to attend, i.e lunch time staff.

Communication of Expectations

All children have clarity on what is expected of them whilst at School. These are highlighted within the Waterhouses Six Golden Rules, the Class Rules and the Code of Conduct. (See Behaviour Policy for further details).

Mobile Phones

Staff are not permitted to use mobile phones during lessons or whilst in contact with the children. No children are allowed mobile phones in school. (See Mobile Phone Policy).

Social Media

Communication is not permitted between staff and parents/carers via social media. The only exception to this is where the School has a specific purpose i.e. PTFA Facebook page.

External Methods of Communication

School Website

The School website provides information about the School, a calendar, all Policies, and is an opportunity to communicate with the wider community.

Policies

All approved Policies are available to view of the School's website <http://www.waterhouses.staffs.sch.uk/about-us/policies>.

Newsletter

A weekly Newsletter informs on forthcoming diary events, recent activities and other newsworthy items. It is available in hard copy or e-mail and is also posted on the School website.

Other Letters

In addition to the weekly Newsletter, other letters may be sent as and when required. Typically these would contain details of educational trips and events.

E-mail

Some parents prefer to communicate by e-mail and this can be accommodated by prior notification to the School Office.

Text Messages

The School uses a text messaging service (Text2Parents) to communicate with parents.

Focus for Learning

To further enhance home-school links, a weekly Focus for Learning is circulated to parents/carers and informs on the focus for learning for each class, by subject.

Home/School Agreement

A Home/School Agreement is discussed and signed by both parents/carers and children, upon entry to the School. Detailing the School's vision and values, it also clearly illustrates the commitment being made to the children as well as clarity on responsibilities of parents/carers and expectations of all children.

Open Door Policy

The School prides itself in having an 'open door policy' where the Head Teacher is visible at the start and end of the teaching days. It is also possible to speak directly with the Head and class teachers, either informally on a daily basis or more formally, by appointment.

Celebration Worship

The School believes celebrating children's achievements is crucial to their well-being and self-esteem. Fortnightly celebration assemblies are held and parents/carers are encouraged to attend.

Tea/coffee mornings

A tea/coffee morning is held after each Celebration Worship and is seen as an opportunity for parents/carers to have an informal chat with staff.

'Special' Worships

Families are integral to the way in which the School supports its children. As such, every opportunity is sought to strengthen these ties. Father's Day Worships, Mother's Day Worships and Grandparents lunches, amongst others, are very popular and always well attended.

Workshops

Regular parental/carer workshops are held to inform on any topical issues or events, i.e. Year 1 Phonics Assessments, SATS, transition, educational visits.

Written Reports

Written reports are sent home three times per year. Christmas and Easter reports are a 'light' version focussing on reading, writing, maths and behaviour. At the end of the academic year, a more detailed report is produced and this focusses on the full curriculum. Pupils are also given the opportunity to comment on their own progress and parents are invited to make a similar comment.

Passports to Success

All children from Key Stage 1 onwards, strive to complete their Passports to Success. This Scheme promotes positive attitudes to learning and enables the children to understand what is required to develop learn to learn skills, behaviours and life skills pertinent to the School community. There are 3 levels to achieve: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Upon achievement of each level, successes are celebrated at Celebration Worship.

Superstar Certificates

The contribution of all children is recognized. Superstar Certificates are awarded to 1 or 2 children at the Celebration Worships. Parents/carers receive a special invitation to attend the presentation.

Parents Evenings

Parents/carers meet with their child's teacher formally, on 2 occasions during the academic year for a private discussion, at Parents' Evening (October/February). This provides the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes, support their child in areas of specific needs and/or discuss any other aspects of their child's education. Parents are also invited to attend an optional Parents' Evening in the summer, by request.

These discussions are in addition to the 'open door policy' which further supports parental communication.

Parental Views

The views of parents/carers are of paramount importance to us. These views are pro-actively sought on an annual basis via a questionnaire. The results are analysed, discussed and published at staff and Governor meetings and are used to improve School life.

Church Links

As a Christian School, we have strong links with all Churches within the local community. Worships are held at a range of 4 local Churches on a termly basis.

PTFA

The School is lucky enough to have a thriving Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA). This group provides invaluable support to the School through activities and additional funding.

Community Links

The School fosters strong links with the wider Community. These relationships range from older children attending the local pensioners' lunch, to Fun Days, Sports Days and Goblin Car Racing.

Additionally, strong links exist with local companies, i.e. LaFarge which sees sponsorship of many School events/activities.

Breakfast/After School Club

The School prides itself on having a thriving Breakfast and After School Club, their existence being as a direct result of parental feedback and necessity.

Noticeboard

A noticeboard for parents is located at the School entrance and is kept up to date with all activities/events.

Dyslexia Friendly Statement

As a dyslexia friendly school, our teaching and learning strategies support *all* children and reflect our positive inclusive culture. It is recognised that the difficulties some children with dyslexic tendencies face, may result in low confidence and self-esteem which in turn may result in unwanted behaviours. Through our dyslexia friendly teaching and learning strategies we enable all children to make progress and achieve success. For these children, it is also recognised that communication with parents/carers may need to occur more frequently. This minimises pupil frustrations in learning and feelings of 'failure'. Please see our [Dyslexia Friendly Policy](#) for more information.