

Harvey Road Primary School Communication Practices

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve.

In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values, through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting the school.

Aims

Our school aims are to ensure all communications are:

- Clear
- Comprehensive
- Two-way
- Timely
- Respective Responsibilities - this explains the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities towards the children, the responsibilities of parents, and what the school expects of the children.

School

The school will undertake to ensure that:

- Parents and children have clear lines of communication
- The curriculum is clearly communicated to parents
- Parents are informed of forthcoming events within appropriate timelines
- All communications will be treated as confidential within the school context

Parent/Guardians/Carers

Parents will undertake to:

- Read all communications issued by the school
- Raise issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity with the school in the appropriate manner. Contact should first be made with the class teacher, the issue may be escalated to the Deputy Headteacher and then Headteacher if necessary.
- Act on the communication (for example, attending special meetings)
- Not discuss school issues on Social Media

Methods of Communication

Playground

Class teachers will be available on the playground at the start and end of every day for short, urgent messages.

Teacher Appointments

We have an open door policy and encourage parents to come into school to ask questions, gain support or to have the opportunity to talk about your child/home issues with their class teacher. This can be arranged by writing in the link book/homework diary or by phoning the school office. Such appointments are preferred before the school day starts or between 3.15-4pm. It is not appropriate to speak to teachers or other school staff outside of school hours to discuss your child or other school related issues unless there has been a prior agreement made under special circumstances. An example of this may include when your child is away on a residential school journey.

Link books / homework diaries

These are the most effective way of communicating short messages to your child's teacher. If you do write in them, please place them in the basket or ensure your child hands them to the teacher so the messages are read. These books are also the means by which you can let the teacher know someone different is collecting your child from school.

Email

If you wish to send an email to any member of staff please use the email address office@harveyroad.herts.sch.uk. For the purposes of administration we require all emails to go to this central email address, which is managed by the PA to the Headteacher. All emails will be treated with full confidentiality and forwarded to the appropriate members of staff. Please note all emails should specify the member of staff to whom the query is addressed. General queries and questions about school life can also be sent to this email address.

We will respond to emails within 5 working days (during term time).

The exception to this is those parents wishing to contact the after school club or breakfast club. These can contact directly via afterschoolclub@harveyroad.herts.sch.uk or breakfastclub@harveyroad.herts.sch.uk.

Website

School information e.g. policies, dates, uniform suppliers, after-school clubs etc are all on our school website. Parents are expected to use the website to access information they may need.

Letter

Letters can be posted in the school office letterbox. As with emails all letters will be treated with full confidentiality and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please let the office staff know if the letter contains information about your child which you would like the class teacher to receive urgently.

We will respond to letters within 5 working days (during term time).

Telephone

If you have a more urgent enquiry, such as communicating particular information about the child to the school, please do call the school office on 01923 773801.

If your child is absent through illness or medical appointment we ask that you inform the school office every morning that your child will be absent. A short messages can be left on the absence answerphone stating your child's name, class and reason for absence.

Headteacher appointments

Appointments with Mr Rowlands can be made through his PA, Nicola Boichat. You will be asked to outline the reason you want to speak with him and you may be referred back to the class teacher if that is more appropriate. Requests to the Headteacher for absence from school, should in the first instance be outlined in an email or letter.

Home–School Communication

At the end of the summer term, parents receive a written report with details of their child's attainment and progress in all areas of the curriculum and their attitude to learning.

In addition, parents are invited to meet their child's teacher twice during the year for parent consultations. To support parents attending, a variety of afternoon and evening times are offered across two days.

A calendar of school events will be produced at the start of each term and communicated via the school Newsletter and on the website. The school Newsletter is sent to parents bi-weekly. It contains general details of school events and activities.

When starting at Harvey Road School, parents will be asked to sign and return a Home/School agreement. Parents will also receive an induction pack which contains detailed information parents will need to ensure that their child has a smooth transition into school.

Parentmail

Parentmail is a quick and efficient method for the school to communicate with parents and for you to make online payments for school trips and activities. We do not accept cash or cheques for any payments.

Parentmail is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted group, or to all parents via email. The newsletter, information about whole school events and all letters relevant to the whole school are sent out to all parents on Parentmail. In addition, some specific communications regarding trips and events are sent out to the relevant groups of parents.

We also use parentmail to let you know that your child has received first aid treatment during the day. You will be informed of more serious injuries and bumps to the head via a telephone call.

Should the decision be made to close the school in the event of severe weather or other emergency events, a Parentmail will be sent to all parents and a notice placed on our website. Parents can also register for the Hertfordshire emergency communication system called Everbridge. Details of how to sign up for this are sent home annually in the Autumn term.

Governors

A list of the names of school governors is on the school website and on a notice board in the school foyer. Minutes of governors meetings are available from the school office. Governors should be contacted by email to the school office or written communications left at the school office, which will be forwarded to the Chair of Governors. As governors support the school in a strategic role, if parents contact them on a matter to do with the management of the school, governors will be unable to respond and will direct them to take their concern to the school. At Harvey Road School we have a named governor whose role it is to provide support to parents and staff. Currently, this Support Governor is Rupinder Ahluwalia.

Three times a year, we hold Governor Open days, where the Governors come into school and spend time in class with the children.

Communication with the Community

Members of the local community are invited to school events such as assemblies, Harvest, Christmas Fairs, Christmas Carol services, school productions and curriculum days.

Guest speakers from local faith groups, community organisations and charities come into school regularly to speak to the children. If you would be interested in speaking to the children in assembly about your faith, charity work or interests, please speak with Nicola Boichat in the school office.

Parents are regularly invited to special events, e.g. Celebrating progress, sports events, help with D&T and cooking, library sessions, stay and play, class assemblies. There are also many opportunities for parents to help on a regular basis in class, if you would like to do this please speak with your class teacher. Regular volunteering in school is subject to a DBS check which can be arranged through the school office.

Communication with Other Schools

The school regularly communicates with staff from other primary schools. Such communication may be by means of personal contact with specific staff or through more formal contact such as cluster groups and by means of sports fixtures and other inter-school events.

The school is a member of The Headteacher's Consortium, a cluster of 16 primary schools in the local area. The Headteacher attends regular meetings for the development and sharing of best practice.

We have strong links with Rickmansworth Secondary School which supports the transition of our year 6 pupils where historically, over two thirds of our pupils have attended. We also have opportunity to use their specialist facilities for D&T and PE as well as receiving input for their specialist teachers in subjects like Modern Foreign Languages in a variety of different secondary schools.

To be read alongside this document:

Complaints Procedures, Anti-bullying policy, Data protection policy and privacy notices.

N Rowlands
Headteacher
February 2019