



Communications Guidance for Parents

A Clear Approach to Building Effective School-Home Partnerships

Introduction

Strong communication between home and school forms the foundation for a thriving educational community. It fosters a shared sense of purpose in supporting every child's growth and well-being. A clear communications strategy not only enables smoother, more responsive interactions, but also fosters trust and transparency.

This document provides a comprehensive strategy for parents, outlining the methods and timing for contacting staff. It establishes protocols for effective two-way communication and sets expectations to maximise respect for both parents' and teacher's time and responsibilities.

Objectives of the Communications Strategy

- To provide parents with clear information about how to contact staff.
- To establish expectations for response times and appropriate channels of communication.
- To ensure sensitive matters are handled with discretion and professionalism.
- To promote positive, constructive communication between parents and staff.
- To support the academic, social, and emotional development of students.

Guiding Principles

- Transparency: All communication processes are clearly explained and accessible.
- Respect: All parties respect each other's time, privacy, and roles.
- Responsiveness: Staff commit to timely, considerate responses.
- Appropriateness: Channels and timings are matched to the nature of the communication.
- Confidentiality: Sensitive matters are handled appropriately and discreetly.

Communication Channels

Effective communication relies on using the right channel for the right purpose. The following outlines the main methods available for contacting staff:

Email

Emailing the school office office@dsatleighfield.org is the preferred channel for non-urgent enquiries, sharing information, scheduling meetings, or administrative questions. Our office staff will then ensure the relevant staff members are informed. **We respectfully request that parents refrain from emailing staff directly and send any correspondence via the office.**

Parents should expect a response within 48 working hours, excluding weekends and holidays. Please note that emails received during the school holidays may not be actioned until school resumes. **Please note that staff will not be expected to reply to emails outside of the hours of 8am and 6pm.**

We expect staff and parents to consider the wording in emails carefully to avoid any unnecessary misunderstanding. Emails can easily be misinterpreted due to the lack of emotional cues present in face-to-face interactions and misunderstanding the tone of an email can lead to unnecessary upset or strained relationships.





For any safeguarding concerns that occur during the holidays, please contact Rutland Children's Social Care on 01572 758407 or email childrensreferrals@rutland.gov.uk If you have a safeguarding concern requiring the attention of a designated safeguarding lead at school, please email dsl@dsatleighfield.org

Phone






Phone contact is suitable for urgent matters, when a conversation is necessary to clarify complex or sensitive issues, to communicate a change to end of day arrangements or to report an absence.

- The telephone number for the school office is 01572 823489.
- Staff will endeavour to return calls as soon as possible, ideally on the same day but certainly within 24 - 48 hours

Additional forms of communication

| | Method of communication | Reason for communication | Considerations |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | Telephone: 01572 823489 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To inform us about important circumstances relating to your child e.g. collections, medical information• To report an absence• To make an appointment to see a specific member of staff | Please note that staff may not immediately be available and an appointment may need to be arranged at a mutually convenient time |
|  | Email: office@dsatleighfield.org | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To make an appointment to see a specific member of staff• For non-urgent communications with school | The school aims to respond to emails within 48 hours. Emails received during the school holidays will not be actioned until school resumes. Please note that staff will not be expected to reply to emails outside of the hours of 8am and 6pm. |
|  | Face-to-face appointment with a member of staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To discuss concerns you may have about your child• To discuss a safeguarding matter• To discuss a personal matter relating to your child/family | Staff will try to accommodate meetings as soon as possible, based on their diaries. Please note this will generally take longer to arrange than a phone call. |
|  | Arbor (Our school Management Information System) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To communicate any school/home correspondence• To report an absence• Parents' evening booking• Booking school trips and clubs• Ensure all child details are up to date• In-app messaging• Send messages to the office | The school aims to respond to any communication via Arbor within 48hours. School staff are unlikely to respond out of school hours (8.30am – 4.30pm). |

School to Parent Communications

| <p>Key dates, notices & school news</p>  | <p>Curriculum</p>  | <p>Progress, attainment & statutory tests</p>  | <p>Extra-curricular/educational visits</p>  | <p>Policies & Procedures</p>  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dates for the term Sunday evening email (via Arbor email) updates detailing information for the week ahead Half termly newsletter Social media updates Class Dojo (EYFS and KS1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half termly class overviews Showcase events e.g. Art Galleries, Storytelling Festival Information events for parents e.g. phonics, Year 4 Timestable check Reading diaries Information on the website Teams (Year 3-6) Class Dojo (EYFS & KS1) Social media updates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental Consultation evenings (October & February) Formal written end of year report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential trip meetings Education visit letters sent to parents prior to a trip Extra-curricular club information sent at the beginning of each term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please see the school website |