

# Heart of the Forest Community Special School

## Home School Communication Policy



<b>Approved by:</b>	HoF Governing Body	<b>Date:</b>	14/4/2024
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	March 2023	<b>Next review date:</b>	April 2025
<b>Website:</b>	Yes	<b>Type:</b>	Non-Statutory

## 1. Introduction and Aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/ carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/ carers the information 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 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

### Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Regularly reviewing this policy

### Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send information themselves)

Staff **will not** respond to communications outside of school hours or their working hours (if they work part time), or during school holidays.

## **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
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be treated in line with our dignity and respect policy.

### **3. How we communicate with parents and carers**

#### **Parent App**

Parent App is the tool we use to communicate information to parents. This is an app used on a mobile device and you will receive a notification indicating what has been sent or added. If you do not have access to a mobile device, please make the admin team aware and paper correspondence will be given.

We use Parent App to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures ( for instance, staff training days)
- School surveys/ consultations
- Short notice changes to the school day
- Emergency closures ( for instance, due to bad weather)

We use Parent App to request information about the following things:

- Personal Information
- Medical information and medication consent
- Social media consent
- Consent for additional activities

We use Parent App to enable bookings for the following things:

- Parents evenings – Oct & June/July
- After school clubs

We use Parent App to share the following things:

- Curriculum newsletters – start of each school term
- Personalised curriculum plans – Oct, Jan & April
- Termly newsletters – Dec, April & July

### **Phone calls**

We will call home to:

- Inform you if your child is ill
- To gain information about non attendance when required
- To inform you of incidents that may have occurred during the school day
- For general enquiries and information we may need
- To discuss referrals that school wish to make

### **Home/ School Diaries**

Each pupil has a home school diary which class staff write in each day. Class staff will provide a brief over-view of the day. These are sent home and parents have the opportunity to write in each evening/ morning to let the class know what the pupils have been doing and how their time at home has been.

### **School Calendar**

Parent App includes a full school calendar for the term.

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 special items or materials)

Any such event will be included in the calendar.

## **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.
- Personalised Curriculum Plans which show targets being worked on each term.
- EHCP reviews once a year.

## **Meetings**

We hold two parents' evenings a year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's well-being or any other area of concern.

Meetings between parents evenings can be arranged if there are concerns about a child's achievements, progress, behavior or well-being.

## **School Website**

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Curriculum information
- Policies and procedures
- Contact information

Parents should check the website prior to contacting school.

## **Curriculum Newsletters and Personalised Curriculum Plans**

These two documents detail the educational targets your child will be working towards achieving and which curriculum areas are planned for each term.

The personalised curriculum plan (PCP) links the pathway curriculum provision to the individual pupil EHCP.

A curriculum letter is shared with parents at the beginning of each term, informing parents of intended class learning.

## **Accidents and Injuries**

If your child has an accident or sustains an injury during the school day, that requires first aid, you will receive a phone call from the first aider and a copy of the first aid form on the same day.

If your child has an accident that doesn't require first aid, this will be communicated to you via the home school diary, the same day.

If a child receives a bump to the head, a 'bumped head' letter will be sent home on the same day as the incident.

For further information, please see First Aid Policy.

## **Behaviour incidents**

Significant behaviour incidents will be shared with parents on the same day they happened via the method agreed on the pupil Regulation support plan, on the same day, by the class teacher or a member of the pastoral team. If the pupil doesn't have a regulation support plan a phone call will be made by the class teacher.

Any physical interventions used will be shared with parents on the same day they happened via the method agreed on the Pupil regulation plan, on the same day, by the member of staff involved in the hold.

For further information, please see Behaviour Policy.

### **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.

#### **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 5 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.

### **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 3 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 working 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
- Difficulties collecting that day

### **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 and end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book an appointment to discuss:

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

### **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 available in English.

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.



## Appendix 1: school contact list

### Who 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 01594 822175/  
[admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk)
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line (for emails)

I have a question about.....	Who you need to talk to
My child's learning / class activities	Child's class teacher Assistant Headteacher – <a href="mailto:Imansfield@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">Imansfield@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:lchandler@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">lchandler@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
My child's wellbeing / pastoral support	Child's class teacher Pastoral Lead – <a href="mailto:flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Safeguarding of your child or any child at Heart of the Forest School	DSL – <a href="mailto:flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Conduct of any staff member or visitor to Heart of the Forest	Head – <a href="mailto:head@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">head@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Concerns regarding the health and safety of school site	Head – <a href="mailto:head@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">head@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Payments / school trips	School office
Attendance and absence requests	To report absence use Parent App or call school office. To request approval for absence use the form on Parent App

	Other attendance related enquiries – Pastoral Lead – <a href="mailto:flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Bully and behaviour	Assistant Headteacher - <a href="mailto:cashby@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">cashby@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a> or Pastoral Lead – <a href="mailto:flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">flw@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
School events / calendar	School office
PTA	See website for info
The Governing Board	<a href="mailto:chair@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">chair@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:clerk@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">clerk@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>