



Hazel Wood
High School

Respect Responsibility Aspiration

Communication Policy



Part of the

Oak 
Learning Partnership

Document control table	
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1	December 2024	TSP	New policy created.
2	January 2025	TSP	Reviewed by new Headteacher.

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 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

All communications at Hazel Wood High School should:

- Keep staff, students, parents/carers and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon-free English and be easily understood by all
- Be conducted in a timely manner
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, method and audience

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations 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.

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The headteacher is 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:

- Establishing open and friendly professional relationships with parents, where parents are addressed in a formal manner.
- Responding to communication from parents 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 the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours 8:30am – 3:30pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

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 parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8:30am – 3:30pm, or during school holidays.

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.

Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events (applicable to their child)
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Text messages

We will text parents about:

- After school corrections
- Attendance expectations and issues

- Short notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

School calendar

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

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 1 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.

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- End of term newsletters
- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

School planners

Each student has a planner for noting down homework and the date for completion. Students also record their weekly attendance figure, rewards and sanctions. It is also an important tool for communication between parents and teachers.

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
- Termly progress reports

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

Meetings

We hold annual parents' evenings for each individual year group. 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 (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

School website

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 after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

Home-school communications app (Arbor App/Desktop Portal)

The first port of call for parents is the Arbor App or Desktop Portal that enables parents to access live information about their child, their education and the School. The app was developed specifically to ease the burden for parents in managing the information coming from the School and to access up to date information about their child and their education.

For details of how to access and use Arbor please visit: https://support.arbor-education.com/hc/en-us/articles/212097029-A-quick-introduction-to-Arbor-for-guardians-and-parents#h_01HAPC98YPK9K3K74K0CT3M9PH

Paperless communication

We aim to have 100% of parents signed up to email to achieve paperless communication wherever possible. Where this is not appropriate, the parent must contact the school and a hard copy of communication is provided.

Preference of communication

It is vital that parents update their contact details: phone number, email and address in a timely manner. This is done via the Arbor Parent Portal or Parent App.

Estranged/separated parents

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the same information to both parents, provided that contact details have been furnished. Copies of communications can be sent via the student if both parents are in agreement.

Student Planners

Each student has a planner for noting down homework and the date for completion. It is also an important tool for communication between parents and teachers.

Information Booklet

All prospective parents will receive a school information booklet upon request, via their child's primary school, at the school's annual transition evening or by coming to the school's Reception. The school's information booklet is also available on the school's website.

Open events

Prospective parents are invited to the school's annual open evening. New parents are invited, along with their child, to an Induction Evening in July where the main channels of communication are outlined, essential information is given and the school's expectations are explained.

How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should 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.

Communication from parents should be polite and civil at all times. Rudeness, inappropriate language, verbal abuse or threatening behaviour will result in the communication being ended immediately. Should the Headteacher deem it necessary for safeguarding and security reasons, action will be taken and restrictions may be put in place for future communication.

Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Admin staff will forward any communication to the appropriate staff member for whom the message relates. All email communication will be treated in the same way as a letter.

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 5 school days.

Staff set aside time each school day to check communications. However, commitments, illness and part-time working may restrict an immediate response. We therefore ask for patience and understanding from our parents when awaiting a response

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Phone calls

All telephone enquiries will pass through the main school office, who will direct the call to the relevant member of staff. Due to commitments within the school day, it is often the case that a member of staff will not be available to answer the call. If this is the case, a message should be left and a return call will be placed at the earliest appropriate time.

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 5 school days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 10 school days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

Meetings

At times, at the request of the school or parent, a meeting may take place if either party feel that this would be the most appropriate communication method. Meetings are conducted to discuss, formally, points or concerns pertaining to a student's welfare or well-being. All meetings must be agreed in advance.

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1) or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 10 school days of the request.

Any notes taken from telephone calls/meetings/email content will be saved electronically into the student's file.

All visitors to school must report to Reception, sign in and wait to be collected by the staff member they are seeing.

Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

Parents with additional communication needs

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats (on request)
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website
- Staff will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Interpreters for meetings

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) 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.

Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy annually.

Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing charter
- Social media policy



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:

- Call the school office on 0161 797 6543
- Email the main school office: enquiries@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk
 - Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line
 - Include your child's full name and year group in the body of your email
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

We try to respond to all emails within 5 school days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's Form Tutor
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's Pastoral Year Lead
Payments/Parent Pay Queries	Pupil Services Administrator Tel: 0161 797 6543 Email: enquiries@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk
School trips	Main School Office Tel: 0161 797 6543 Email: enquiries@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk
Uniform/lost and found	Main School Office Tel: 0161 797 6543 Email: enquiries@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 0161 797 6543 and select option 1. If you want to request approval for term-time absence, please contact our Attendance Officer.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's Pastoral Year Lead
School events/the school calendar	Main School Office Tel: 0161 797 6543 Email: enquiries@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk
Special educational needs (SEN)	Our SENCO Tel: 0161 797 6543 Email: senco@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk
Hiring the school premises	Edulettings Bookings Email: bookings@edu-lettings.org Bookings phone number: 0333 102 0303 Further details on how to book our facilities can also be found on the Edu-Lettings website: https://bookings.edu-lettings.org/bury/edu-hazel-wood-high-school
Governing board	Via post: Chair of Governors, Hazel Wood High School, Hazel Avenue, Bury, BL9 7QT. Via email: this can be done via the Clerk to the Quality Education Board - clerk@oaklp.co.uk
Catering/meals	Main School Office Tel: 0161 797 6543 Email: enquiries@hazelwood.oaklp.co.uk Aspens Catering Email: hazel.wood@aspens-services.com

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy, which can be found on our website here: [Complaints \(hazelwoodhigh.co.uk\)](https://hazelwoodhigh.co.uk)