



Ombersley Endowed First School

Policy on Communications

(see also GDPR Policy)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 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.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 At Ombersley 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.
- 2.2 We have various strategies for communicating with parents. Some of our communications are in accordance with a statutory requirement, while others simply reflect what we believe is important for our school.
- 2.3 We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We use an easy-to-read font, and add pictures wherever appropriate. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our school. Upon request, information could be translated or recorded electronically.

3 Home-school agreement

- 3.1 Our home-school agreement is a requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It 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. We ask parents and pupils to sign this agreement when their child starts at our school, and to renew it each year.
- 3.2 The agreement covers the standard of education in our school, the ethos of the school, and our expectations regarding attendance, behaviour, and homework. Our governors review the agreement bi-annually.

4 Annual written report to parents: children's achievements

- 4.1 Every year, we provide a written report to each child's parents on the child's progress in the various National Curriculum subjects. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. In our school, we ask the children to comment on their own progress, and we ask parents to make a similar comment. We also give children in Year 2 the details of their performance through teacher assessment that has been supported by SATs, and details of national comparisons.
- 4.2 As well as receiving the annual written report, parents meet their child's teacher in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms for a consultation. This gives them the opportunity to

celebrate their child's successes, and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement. Parents are able to see their child's work during these meetings and targets are shared. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

4.3 When children have special educational needs we find it helpful to meet with parents more regularly.

4.4 We welcome the presence of any other adult the parent wishes to invite to a school meeting to act as interpreter. We will also make any reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand a communication.

5 Governors' newsletters

5.1 During each school year, the governing body publishes newsletters for parents. The newsletter may contain information relating to:

- details of the membership of the governing body, and of any vacancies;
- information on pupils' attendance;
- a statement on the progress of the action plan, following the last Ofsted inspection;
- budget details;
- school health and safety information;
- admission arrangements for children with disabilities, and arrangements to ensure that these children are not treated less favourably than others;
- information about the progress of the school's SEN policy;
- a summary of the school's national test results;
- information on the professional development of staff and activities and opportunities;
- information relating to the school's monitoring of its data on bullying and racial equality.

6 School prospectus

6.1 The school prospectus contains a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school. We update this for each school year. This is published on the school website.

7 Public access to documents

7.1 The school makes a range of documentation available to parents. We keep a master set in the school office, and we make a copy of this available on request. It contains minutes of governors' meetings, and all school policies, including those that the governing body are required to draw up in relation to the following matters: charging and remissions, sex education, health and safety, curriculum, performance management, admissions, and action planning following an inspection. It also contains a range of national and LA documentation. These policies and others will be available on the Website.

8 Home-school communication

8.1 We send a newsletter to parents once a fortnight either by email or in the book bag. It contains general details of school events and activities and all dates. We send other letters of a specific nature when necessary. In addition we keep families fully informed through our school website, Facebook page and Twitter page. Staff send messages home via 'Marvellous Me' and 'Text2Parents'.

8.2 At the beginning of each term, all teachers write to the parents of the children in their classes with details of the work to be covered during the forthcoming term. We invite parents to support their child's work through a range of suggested activities to be shared

with the child at home. We also invite parents to take part in many educational activities that are linked to the work.

- 8.3 Children in all classes have a home–school reading diary. This enables parents to record a wide range of information that they wish to share regularly with the teacher. Teachers and parents use the home–school diary to record reading.
- 8.4 The school encourages parents to share any issues about their child at the earliest opportunity. Teachers see parents immediately, if at all possible. Where this is not possible, the parent makes an appointment. We allow many parents the opportunity to have a word with the teacher when they bring their children to school, or when they collect them after school.
- 8.5 We arrange curriculum meetings for parents as necessary. These are evening meetings to explain areas of our curriculum. We hold a meeting for new parents each June, and a meeting for Year 2 parents each March, concerning the national SATs. The residential visit that Year 4 children make to the Pioneer Centre involves a number of meetings with parents regarding the planning and content of the visit. There is a meeting in March for parents of Year One pupils to discuss the Year One Phonics screening.
- 8.6 We ask parents to inform schools by 10am if a child is absent from school, but if we have had no communication, we contact a parent (by telephone, if possible) to find out the reason for the absence.

9 Communication with other schools and outside agencies

- 9.1 Toward the end of their final term in Year 4, we pass on information about the children to their intended next schools. We try to give a view of the whole child, and we include their achievements, their strengths and weaknesses, their interests and responsibilities (e.g. school council representative, playground buddy, etc.). There is also an electronic transfer of further information about the child, organised by the LA. We may also send on several items of work.
- 9.2 We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on better ways to meet these needs, so that children may participate more fully. Support comes from medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), from child development centres, from local doctors and specialists, and from school nurses. It also comes from various welfare-focused services, such as Educational Welfare, Social Services and Behaviour Intervention units.
- 9.3 We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help abused children. When any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the headteacher or two Deputy DSLs who may share this information with Children’s Social Care.
- 9.4 We hold information on pupils in our school, and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details have been sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed.

10 Communication within our school

- 10.1 There is a timetable in the staff room of the next fortnight’s activities.
- 10.2 A weekly Staff Meeting keeps staff up to date with latest events and information.

- 10.3 Staff members' personal details are held securely by the headteacher and will not be shared with other members of staff.

11 Electronic communication

- 11.1 We use e-mail, school website, Facebook, Twitter, Marvellous Me and Text2Parents.
- 11.2 All school members may communicate with others through the Internet. There are many benefits, but also a number of possible dangers. Rules for the use of the Internet are contained in our Safe Use of the Internet policy. Safeguards in our school include constant adult supervision, sites being filtered by our service provider, controlled links, and the use of child-friendly search engines.
- 11.3 The Internet may be used in lessons 'live' for lesson content and for interactive teaching programs.
- 11.4 Our school website provides information about the school, and an opportunity to celebrate children's work with the worldwide learning community and will allow for information to be shared between school communities.
- 11.5 Members of staff, classes as a whole, and individual older children will all have their own school-provided global IDs and e-mail accounts.
- 11.6 Parents are required to sign permission slips for their child to use the Internet in school. A record of those who do not have permission is held by each class teacher, and by the school office.

12 Use of photographs and names

- 12.1 Photographs are used in and around the school for many purposes, including About Me and other displays, records of practical work (e.g. art or technology projects), and records of important school events.
- 12.2 We may use photographs of children or their work when communicating with parents and the wider community, in newsletters, in the school prospectus, on the school website, Twitter and Facebook page. Permission is sought from all parents before photographs are used. The local or national press may on occasion publish photographs of children participating in events at school.
- 12.3 Parental permission must be obtained before using photographs of children or their work as detailed in 12.2 above. Parents may want to know the policy of the press about name disclosure before giving permission for a photo to be used. Lists of those children for whom permission has NOT been given will be held by each class teacher, and by the school office.
- 12.4 Photographs will be checked to ensure that they are suitable.
- 12.5 Photographs used will not be captioned with children's names unless agreed. Even on the school website, only children's first names will be used.

13 Monitoring and review

- 13.1 This policy will be regularly monitored, and will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if required.

Signed: *C Moore*

Date: April 2020

Date of Review: Summer 2022