

# Home-school communication policy



## Queensway School

Approved by: Queensway Governing Body

Date: January 2026

Next review due by: January 2028

### Contents

- 1. Introduction and aims ..... 2
- 2. Roles and responsibilities ..... 2
- 3. How we communicate with parents and carers ..... 3
- 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school ..... 4
- 5. Accessibility ..... 5
- 6. Conduct ..... 6
- 7. Complaints ..... 7
- 8. Monitoring and review ..... 7
- 9. Links with other policies ..... 7
  - Appendix 1: school contact list ..... 9

## 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 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

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.

All timeframes stated in this policy refer to working days, term time only. They do not include Bank Holidays or school holiday periods.

All communication between home and school should reflect our core values of **respect, kindness, and resilience**. These values underpin positive relationships and ensure that dialogue remains constructive and solution-focused

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.1 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
- Delegating the staff member to address the communication. The member of staff will be appropriate with the stage and scale of the enquiry, and we will not accept demands to communicate with a particular individual.

### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy, the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy, Social Media Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- 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 (8am-4pm), 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.

### 2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times, enacting our school values of respect, kindness and resilience.

- 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

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours of 8am-4pm, or during school holidays. In the event of an urgent safeguarding matter, the appropriate telephone number for the MASH will be provided.

### 3. 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.

#### 3.1 Email

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

- Upcoming school events
- Trips and visits
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Termly newsletters
- Parents evening appointments
- Clubs

#### 3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Quick reminders about topics which have already been communicated originally via email

#### 3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the year which is updated regularly. 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 in special items or materials). Any such event will be included in the school calendar, as well as more detailed information being emailed to parents.

#### 3.4 Phone calls

- Staff will call parents if their child presents as unwell during the school day.
- Staff may call parents if they know they won't get to see the parent at home time or if the member of staff wants to talk to them privately away from other parents.
- We will call parents if their child has had a head injury, even if minor (see First Aid Policy).
- If the child hasn't been collected on time.

#### 3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home via the child:

- Letters that contain a consent form which needs to be returned to school
- PTA flyers/letters
- Accident slips

### 3.6 Bookbags

All children need a bookbag so that they can transfer their reading book between school and home. These are also used to put accident slips in, Repair Time letters or the occasional letter. Parents and staff are expected to check these regularly.

### 3.7 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in reading, writing and maths, how well they are progressing, and their attendance. The annual report also contains Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception, Year 1 Phonics screening results, Year 4 multiplication check results and KS2 SATs tests
- Child's attendance record 3 times a year

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

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' evenings, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term. 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, wellbeing or attendance.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings as part of the Graduated cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review.'

### 3.9 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 before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

Each class also has a password protected blog which parents can access. The school has set this up so that parents and children can not post comments.

### 3.10 Evidence Me

This is an app for parents of children in Nursery and Reception. Parents are issued with a password once their child starts school. Photos can be uploaded from school and home, as well as brief descriptions of achievements. It is not a service that replaces communicating with staff and parents in the channels outlined in this policy.

## 4. 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. To foster timely, collaborative support for children, we encourage parents to speak directly with their child's class teacher wherever possible in the first instance. Face to face conversations often allow for quicker reduction of queries and a more personal understanding of the child's needs.

#### 4.1 Email

- Parents are encouraged to email the school, office.2057@queensway.oxon.sch.uk about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Emails will be most helpful if they are concise, explaining concerns in a clear way. Lengthy and overly detailed accounts can make it more difficult to understand what is being explained and to respond in a timely or clear way.
- Staff's direct email addresses are not given to parents. All emails come through the main office. Emails sent to the office are dealt with confidentially.
- We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days. We ask that parents await a response from the school and that further emails are not sent pending that response, unless the deadline has passed.
- If any email is rude or disrespectful in tone, we reserve the right not to reply, or we may choose to take the action outlined within this policy, (see section 6.)
- To protect staff well-being and ensure communication remains purposeful and productive, the school reserves the right to limit or cease email correspondence when it is deemed excessive, repetitive or no longer constructive. In such cases, the school may respond only with a reiteration of key messages previously shared or invite the parent to arrange a face to face meeting where appropriate.

#### 4.2 Phone calls

- Parents are expected to call or email the school office before 9am if their child is absent.
- If a query or concern is time sensitive and urgent the parent should call the school office, who will liaise as necessary at the earliest opportunity. Urgent issues might include things like family emergencies or safeguarding or welfare issues.
- If the query or concern is not time sensitive and urgent then parents should email or call the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them within 3 working days. If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time.
- If parents/carers are rude, abusive or speak in an inappropriate tone over the telephone, our staff will end the call, (see section 6.)

#### 4.3 Meetings

- Face-to-face conversations are the best way of communicating with the school at drop off or pick up for quick, short messages.
- When a member of staff is not able to speak to you immediately face-to-face due to school commitments, or a longer conversation is deemed necessary or appropriate, then a request for an appointment can be made to discuss the matter either in person or by telephone, later. Parents must email the school office to request an appointment and the school will aim to arrange that meeting within 5 working days.
- Outside of teaching hours, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school so availability of staff outside of teaching hours should not be assumed.
- Should a meeting be requested the decision of which staff member will attend will rest with the Headteacher.
- If parents/carers are rude, abusive or speak in an inappropriate tone during a face-to-face or a virtual meeting, our staff will terminate the meeting immediately, (see section 6)

### 5. Accessibility

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

#### 5.1 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.
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website
- Staff will try 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, e.g. large print, simplified language, visuals and translated materials.
- Sign language interpreters for meetings
- The option to be accompanied by an advocate during meetings or key communications.
- Allowing extra time for processing or responding during conversations.
- Holding meetings in quiet spaces.

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## 5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

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

## 6. Conduct

This is aligned to our Parent Code of Conduct.

### 6.1 Unacceptable conduct

There are some types of behaviour / communication that the school considers unacceptable. These are as follows:

- Any physical aggression e.g. slapping, hitting, punching, and kicking;
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, or pupils e.g., standing close to her/him;
- The use of aggressive hand gestures including finger pointing towards a member of staff or pupil;
- Spitting at a member of staff or pupil;
- Shaking or holding a fist towards a member of staff or pupil;
- Shouting at members of staff or pupils (either in person on school grounds, over the telephone or over video conferencing);
- Swearing, or using offensive language including derogatory language about a protected group or characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010;
- Threatening or offensive comments about a member of staff or pupil of the school; this can include verbally, via texts, emails, social media, etc.;
- Sending abusive messages to a member of staff, including via text, email, or social media
- A large volume of emails in respect of the same matter over a short period of time.
- Continuing to raise the same issue despite it having been already addressed by the school.
- Posting defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments about the school, or its staff, on social media platforms
- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)

- Breaching or not conforming to the school's security procedures
- Covertly recording phone calls or meetings with a member of staff
- Any other behaviour that is disrespectful, threatening, or offensive

This list is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour which has no place in our school community.

## 6.2 Actions resulting from misconduct

The school will always seek to respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to the unacceptable behaviour and communication rests with the headteacher and, where necessary, the Governing Body.

Where a phone call or meeting is ended because of unacceptable conduct, the school will always follow up in writing. This will confirm the reason for ending the communication and set out any next steps or conditions for future contact.

- In the first instance, (if the unacceptable behaviour has occurred on site) the school will ask the parent to desist and/or leave the site. If the behaviour is of a serious nature, then the police will be contacted.
- Then the school (Headteacher/Member of School Leadership team) will gather information on allegations of unacceptable behaviour. This may include talking to the parties concerned or others as witnesses to the behaviour.
- If unacceptable behaviour is considered to have occurred the following actions may be taken by the school, dependent on the severity/gravity of the behaviour:
  - The parent will be told verbally that his / her behaviour is unacceptable and, if it is not modified, the school will take further action.
  - The parent will be told in writing that his / her behaviour is unacceptable and, if it is not modified, the school will take further action.
  - Advising the parent that all future meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and will be minuted;
- Putting in place a contact plan to deal with any communication between the individual and school. For example, except in emergencies, communication to the school must be in writing only to a named individual and the school can set out timescales for school responses
- A warning letter or an immediate ban from the school site;
- Contacting the Police where behaviour is criminal in nature.
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action.

## 7. Complaints

This policy does not impact on the right of parents and carers to make formal complaints in line with the school's complaints policy which can be found on our website. Once the school has received notice of a formal complaint, the issues around the complaint can no longer be discussed outside of the Complaints Procedure unless it is in a way to find an informal or early resolution that the school is in agreement with.

## 8. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

➤ ICT and internet acceptable use policy

- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints procedure, inc. Serial complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Social media policy
- Attendance policy
- Equality policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Data Protection
- Accessibility Policy and Plan

## 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 01295251631, [office.2057@queensway.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.2057@queensway.oxon.sch.uk). The office will respond within the hours of 8am-4pm, term time only.
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- 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 3 days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher or our Home School Community Link Worker, Debbie Taylor: <a href="mailto:hscw@queensway.oxon.sch.uk">hscw@queensway.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's class teacher. Lost property is located in the entrance to Year 3.
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01295251631 selecting option 1 or email the office account. If you want to request approval for a planned term-time absence, contact the school office.
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's class teacher in the first instance then the relevant phase leader: Early Years Phase Leader- Mrs Guntrip Years 1 & 2 Phase Leader- Mrs Hawkins Years 3 & 4 Phase Leader- Mrs Lawrence Years 5 & 6 Phase Leader- Mrs Roe
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Inclusion Manager, Emily Brown: <a href="mailto:ebro0109@queensway.oxon.sch.uk">ebro0109@queensway.oxon.sch.uk</a> or 01295252631, selecting option 2
Before and after-school clubs	Email: <a href="mailto:childcare@queensway.oxon.sch.uk">childcare@queensway.oxon.sch.uk</a> or call the school office for urgent change of plans
PTA	Email: <a href="mailto:pta@queensway.oxon.sch.uk">pta@queensway.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Governing board	Email the school office, your email will be sent to the Chair Of Governors, or hand deliver a letter to the school office.
Catering/meals	Fresh Start: <a href="mailto:support@feshstartcatering.uk">support@feshstartcatering.uk</a>