



Home-School Communication Policy

September 2024

Review date September 2026

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.

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

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- › 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 between 8am and 5:30pm on weekdays, or on the days that they work if they are part time. Staff are not expected to respond outside of these hours, nor at weekends or school holidays.

2.3 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
- › Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of 8am and 5:30pm or during weekends and school holidays.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated seriously and appropriate action taken if necessary eg. Removal of Class Dojo, limiting access to site.

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
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Letters

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

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

3.3 School calendar

Our school website www.falcon.norfolk.sch.uk includes a full school calendar on a half termly basis.

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.

3.4 Phone calls

Staff will contact parents by phone on request or if staff need to share important information regarding their child eg. Illness, behaviour, progress etc.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

3.6 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
- A report on KS2 SATs tests

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

3.7 Meetings

We hold two parents' evening(s) per year: Autumn and Spring. 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.

3.8 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

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.9 Home-school communications app - Class Dojo

Class Dojo is a positive communication tool for teachers and parents.

Class Story – teachers will share news, information and reminders on their class story.

Direct messages – teachers will respond within 48 hours to direct messages on Class Dojo.

School Story – the school will share important information about events, news and dates through the School Story. Information on School Story will be shared on a weekly basis to replace the half termly newsletter to ensure information is up to date and relevant.

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.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school at office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk marking the subject FAO the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

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 3 working days.

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

4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office (office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk) and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 2 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. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 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.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 2 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- › Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- › Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

4.4 Home-school communications app – Class Dojo

Communication on Class Dojo should be respectful at all times. Any messages that are disrespectful or inappropriate may lead to access being withdrawn. Disrespectful and inappropriate messages can harm staff wellbeing.

Dojo should be used to discuss a parent's individual child only.

Messages should remain in a professional capacity regarding a child's education and wellbeing. It is not a social platform for teachers/parents. Messages considered by school staff as personal/social may lead to access being withdrawn.

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 – we use eschools for this purpose.
- › Staff are trained on accessibility and 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
- › Sign language interpreters for meetings

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

Class Dojo translates messages into a number of different languages.

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. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every two years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- › Staff code of conduct
- › Complaints
- › Home-school agreement
- › 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:

- Email or call the school office on office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk and 01603 441417
- 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 48 hours.

Office hours are 8am – 4pm Monday – Friday.

| 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 |
| Payments | Finance Officer – Mrs Ninova finance@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |
| School trips | School Office - Mrs Toomer, Mrs Wright and Mrs Halstead office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |
| Uniform/lost and found | School Office - Mrs Toomer, Mrs Wright and Mrs Halstead office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |
| Attendance and absence requests | If you need to report your child's absence, call:01603 441417 |
| School events/the school calendar | School Office - Mrs Toomer, Mrs Wright and Mrs Halstead office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |
| Special educational needs (SEN) | Sendco – FAO Mrs Wagstaff office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |
| PTFA | fofptfa@gmail.com |
| Governing board | Chair of Governors – FAO Mr McAnulty office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |
| Catering/meals | FAO Norse catering office@falcon.norfolk.sch.uk |

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

The school complaints procedure is available online at www.falcon.norfolk.sch.uk or through the school office.