



# Hardy Mill Primary

## Home - School

# Communication Policy

<b>Adopted by:</b>	Full Governing Board	<b>Date:</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2026
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<b>Last reviewed on</b>	
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### **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 during core school hours (8.30am to 4.00pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time), but due to the nature of their roles, they might not be free to respond until after school. 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
- 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
- Signing up for and checking all communications systems from the school

Any unreasonable and/or persistent requests for updates or calls from the teacher will be referred to the school's leadership team to arrange a meeting. Abusive or aggressive behaviour – in person, by phone or email – will not be tolerated. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent /carer partnership agreement.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30am to 4.00pm), or during school holidays.

## 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.

School is best placed to consider which communication method is most appropriate when conveying information clearly and professionally.

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 Parent App messages and email

Parent App is our primary means of communication between home and school. We keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Community notices
- Payments

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

### **3.2 School calendar**

Our monthly newsletter is sent out via Parent App and 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 in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

### **3.3 Phone calls**

Staff may contact you by telephone for a number of reasons including (but not limited to):

- to check information
- if a child does not have the correct equipment (e.g., packed lunch, PE kit, musical instruments)
- regarding payments
- attendance
- behaviour

Telephone calls are not recorded. If any party wishes for a call to be recorded, prior consent must be sought and approved by all parties.

### **3.4 Letters**

Most letters (wherever possible) are now sent electronically via ParentApp. If this is not possible, then letters will be sent home with children or posted directly to the home address.

### **3.5 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
- A report on KS2 SATs

### **3.6 Meetings**

We hold two parents' evening(s) per 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 wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings in 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.

### **3.7 School website**

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

- School times and term dates
- 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.

### **3.8 Social Media**

We are committed to using social media platforms responsibly, ensuring that all content shared aligns with our educational values and promotes a positive and respectful environment. This includes sharing updates, announcements and celebrating pupils' achievements in a manner that adheres to our school's policies on privacy, inclusivity and safety. We also expect parents to use social media responsibly when engaging with the school community. This includes refraining from sharing personal information about pupils, staff or the school without consent and maintaining respectful and constructive communication in online discussions related to school matters.

Key information and highlights from the school day are posted regularly on our Facebook page. Whilst we welcome positive comments from parents, our Facebook page is not regularly monitored and responses will not be given.

### **3.9 Seesaw Learning Platform**

Class teachers share children's learning experiences in school and expectations for home learning via this app.

## **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, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days wherever reasonably possible.

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

We are aware that AI is being used increasingly to draft communication between home and school. Although this may have benefits, if AI has been used to draft any correspondence with school, please ensure that it is factually correct and that the tone of the correspondence is respectful and appropriate. Often a short meeting or telephone call with a member of staff is more beneficial than a lengthy AI generated email.

## **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 and the relevant member of staff will contact them to inform them of your request.

We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within two days of your request wherever reasonably possible.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For all general enquiries, parents should call the school office.

## **4.3 Meetings**

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 five working days of the request. Meetings can be held face to face or virtually through Microsoft Teams.

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

Please note that conversations at the gate or on the playground in the morning/afternoon should not be used to discuss confidential issues as they could be overheard by other adults or children. In these cases, a meeting should be arranged via the school office.

## **5. Accessibility**

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. If there are additional communication needs it is the parent's responsibility to inform 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 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)**

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. Recording of Communications**

### **6.1 No recording Without Consent**

**Parents cannot audio record, video record, photograph or otherwise capture** any meeting, conversation, or interaction with, whether conducted:

- In person
- By telephone
- By video call
- Through any digital or electronic platform

unless **explicit prior written consent** has been given by all participants.

### **6.2 Staff Right Not to Be Recorded**

All School staff have the **right not to be recorded**. This right applies to all meetings and communications, regardless of format.

### **6.3 Termination of Meeting**

If school reasonably believes that a meeting or call is being recorded without consent:

- The staff member will request that the recording stop immediately.
- If the recording continues or consent is not confirmed, **the meeting or call will be terminated immediately**.
- School is under no obligation to continue the meeting at that time.

### **6.4 Consequence of Breach**

Failure to comply with no recording without consent may result in:

- Meetings being restricted to written communication only, and/or

- Meetings being conducted with additional School representatives present, and/or
- Any other reasonable measures school deems necessary to protect staff and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

### **7. 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.

### **8. Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent/Carer Partnership agreement
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Mental health and wellbeing

## 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 the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

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

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher – see class page on website for email address
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher – see class page on website for email address
Payments	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
School trips	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
Uniform/lost and found	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
Attendance and absence requests	<b>If you need to report your child's absence, call:</b> 01204 333770 Or Complete the absence notice on ParentApp  <b>If you want to request approval for term-time absence,</b> contact the school office: <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
Bullying and behaviour	Mrs Briggs – Head teacher <a href="mailto:briggsj@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">briggsj@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
School events/the school calendar	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
Special educational needs (SEN)	Mrs Hamblet or Mrs Briggs <a href="mailto:senco@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">senco@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a>
Before and after-school clubs	Kool Kidz <a href="mailto:kool-kidz@btconnect.com">kool-kidz@btconnect.com</a> 07584 423063
Hiring the school premises	Mrs Julie Boaler – School Business Manager <a href="mailto:boalerj@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">boalerj@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
PTA	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
Governing board	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770
Catering/meals	School office <a href="mailto:office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk">office@hardymill.bolton.sch.uk</a> 01204 333770

## Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure as set out in our complaints policy. A copy of the complaints policy is available on the school website or a paper copy can be requested from the school office.