



Pirton Hill Primary School Communication Policy (September 2024)

Originated by: Glenn Booth
Ratified by Governors: Spring 2023 Review date: Spring 2026

1. Overarching Values Expect:

*We all **expect** to work hard, and meet our own high expectations, in a safe environment with access to high quality resources and opportunities that broaden our horizons.*

Believe:

*We all **believe** in ourselves, and each other, and know that everyone has something special to contribute.*

Achieve:

*We all have the opportunity to **achieve**, and fulfil our potential, regardless of our backgrounds.*

Enjoy:

*We all strive to develop passionate and determined life-long learners who **enjoy** learning, understand how to progress and take pleasure in succeeding.*

2. Introduction

2.1 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.

2.2 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.

2.3 In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 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

3.2 All staff are responsible for:

- Providing parents with clear, accurate and timely information that relates to their child.
- 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).

3.2.2 Staff are not expected to check or respond to messages in the evenings, at weekends or during school holidays. Staff are expected to respond as soon as they can and as soon as they have the information that they need to answer the query. This might be during lunchtime, at the end of the day or on the morning of the next school day.

In line with promoting staff wellbeing, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are not expected to do so.

3.2.3 In addition, the Office Staff are responsible for, Providing parents with log-ins and log-in information for Weduc (our parent communication app) on admission, providing any initial support in using the app and ensuring that parents have accessed it.

3.3 In line with the Home / School Agreement, parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Checking all communications from the school
- Attending parent consultation meetings, parent workshops and any other meetings related to their child's learning, behaviour, attendance or pastoral needs.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the school in a timely manner and by any deadlines

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with the relevant LBC Policy.

4. How we communicate with parents / 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.

4.1 Weduc (Parent Communication App)

4.1.1 Weduc Newsfeed

We use the Weduc Newsfeed to keep parents / carers informed about whole school, year group or class information. This may include things like:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upcoming school events | <input type="checkbox"/> School news / updates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class or year group reminders | <input type="checkbox"/> Information about trips / clubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class activities or teacher requests | <input type="checkbox"/> School surveys or consultations |

4.1.2 Weduc Messages

We use the Weduc Messages to keep parents / carers informed about their individual child or provide important class, year group or school information. This may include things like:

- Change of class routine □ Weekly “green”, well done message
- Payments / Trip Information □ Behaviour Incidents
- Incomplete homework □ Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency club cancellations or school closures (for instance, due to illness or bad weather)

We provide consistency in our communication with parents by using standard Weduc message templates, where possible.

4.1.3 Weduc is also used for a range of other functions, including:

- Signing up for extra-curricular clubs □ Paying for Hot School Meals (KS2 only)
- Giving consent for school visits □ Booking a parents’ consultation time

4.2 School calendar

The Weduc Calendar and our school website includes a full school calendar for the academic year.

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 and parent events*).

4.3 Phone calls

The school will phone a parent if the issue is urgent. This could include:

- Child is unwell or had an accident □ Required medication not in school
- Wearing incorrect uniform □ Significant behaviour incident

A member of staff will also phone if a parent has been sent an important Weduc message (*for example linked to behaviour or attendance concerns*) but has not read it.

Calls will not be made at a pupil’s request.

4.4 Reports

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

- A mid-year report covering their achievement in English and Maths, how well they are progressing, their behaviour / effort and their attendance
- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, their behaviour / effort and their attendance
- Statutory assessment results, including Year 1 Phonics assessment, Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 SATs tests and Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check.

Reports are only available via Weduc (see 4.1).

4.5 Meetings

4.5.1 We hold two parents’ consultations evenings per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child’s achievement and progress, the curriculum, their child’s wellbeing or any other area of concern.

4.5.2 The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour, attendance or wellbeing.

4.5.3 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.

4.6 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
- Behaviour/ Attendance Information □ Homework Expectations
- Information about before and after-school childcare (Early Birds / Night Owls)

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4.7 Letters

Whilst we aim to primarily communicate via Weduc, there is still an occasional need to send home some letters in paper form. This is targeted for a specific purpose and also includes communication from other agencies, for example Luton Council, local secondary schools and the NHS.

4.8 Social Media (e.g. Facebook / Twitter)

The school has an official Facebook page and Twitter account. These are primarily for celebrating school news beyond our school community and, therefore, are only accessed by designated school staff when posting. Any negative comments or complaints will be deleted and the school reserves the right to 'block' any user from the school's page.

All staff are strongly advised by Luton Council not to communicate with parents via personal social networking accounts or accept them as their "friends". Staff must not communicate directly with children via any social networking site.

5. How parents / carers can communicate with school

Parents should use the contact list (Appendix 1) to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

5.1 Weduc (Parent Communication App)

Parents should always message the school (using Weduc), or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Pupil absence can also be reported by messaging using Weduc.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need an urgent response, they should phone the school.

If a concern is raised about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour, attendance or wellbeing, then a copy of the message (and the response from the member of staff) must be added to CPOMs.

5.2 Phone calls

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office. Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies ☐ Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Change of adult collecting child ☐ Pupil absence (this can be done via Weduc)

For non-urgent, general enquiries, please message or visit the school office.

5.3 Meetings

While teachers are available at the 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.

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should message the appropriate member of staff (see Appendix 1), or call the school office to request an appointment. We try to schedule all meetings as soon as practical. *Please bear in mind that some staff are part-time and some leaders have timetabled release time on specific days.*

Following a meeting, a summary of the key discussion points must be added to CPOMs.

6. Inclusion

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

6.2 We aim to ensure that all communication is clear and accessible by all parents (*see Appendix 2 for Staff Guidance on Written Communication*)

6.3 Digital communication (e.g. Weduc) is translatable through the app itself or via Google Translate. In some instances, for crucial information (e.g. during the pandemic) written digital communication is provided in a translated form; however, the limitations and inaccuracies of online translations are acknowledged.

6.4 Parents who need help communicating with the school can request interpreters for meetings or phone calls. This may include asking a member of staff who shares the same language as the parents to help translate key messages or seeking to use a translation and interpreting service.

6.5 We can make further arrangements if required. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Staff are also encouraged to refer to the Bell Foundation "Working with parents to support the Learning of Pupils with EAL"

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/app/uploads/2020/09/Working-with-parents-to-support-learning-of-pupils-who-use-EAL.pdf>

Who should I contact?

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

In most cases the best person to speak to about your child is the **class teacher**. They know your child best and spend most of the day with him/her!

The **Class teacher** is the best person to contact to discuss your child's:

• learning	• homework	• progress
• behaviour	• friendships	• learning needs

If the class teacher is unable to resolve your query, you should contact the following leaders:

- Early Years Phase Leader – Mrs C Ruscan
- Year 1, 2 & 3 Assistant Headteacher – Mrs E Collis
- Year 4, 5 & 6 Assistant Headteacher – Mr P Simmonds

If the Phase Leader is still unable to resolve your query, then you should contact the **Deputy Headteacher** (Mrs C Ellis) and then the Headteacher (Mr G Booth).

However, if your query relates to something else, please use the table below to identify the best person to contact:

I HAVE A QUERY ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Safeguarding / Child Protection	Deputy Headteacher (Mrs C Ellis) or Pastoral Worker (Mrs T Burton)
Pupil wellbeing/pastoral support	Pastoral Worker (Mrs T Burton)
Payments	School Finance Assistant (Mrs L Butterfield)
Report an absence	Report via Reach More Parents or call: 01582 507924
Attendance queries or absence requests	School Admin Assistant (Mr I Baig)
Medication or Allergies	School Admin and Welfare Assistant (Mrs R Katechia)
Special educational needs (SEN)	SEND Leader (Miss C Keane)
Before and after-school clubs	Early Birds / Night Owls (Mrs Letsou)
Hiring the school premises	School Business Manager (Mrs N Rahman)

9. Avoid idioms

An idiom is a phrase or expression that typically presents a figurative, non-literal meaning attached to the phrase. For example, “copycat”, “pass with flying colours”, “bite the bullet” or “call it a day”.

10. Avoid nominalisations

Nominalisation is the process of changing a verb to a noun (or noun phrase). They can make writing heavy because they hide the ‘action’. For example, use “apply for” rather than “make an application for” or “we will investigation” rather than “we will complete an investigation”.

Reminders:

- Before positing / sending a message, you should double check the spelling / grammar of the message and that you are positing / sending it to the intended person.
- If you are posting / sending a message to a class, year group or the whole school that requires either (a) a change to the children’s routine or (b) the parent carer to action something, you should copy in the office so that they are aware and can respond to parental queries correctly.