



POLICY: Home-School Communication Policy

STATUTORY: No

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RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF STAFF: A Osbourn

GOVERNOR COMMITTEE: FGB

SIGNED HEADTEACHER: J Holmes

SIGNED CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: R Whitehouse

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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
- Supporting the wellbeing of JMHS staff
- 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

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Regularly reviewing this policy

Line managers

Line managers are responsible for:

- Supporting colleagues they line manager to successfully apply the expectations of this policy
- Monitor the impact of communication on wellbeing and ensure appropriate action is taken, if required, to support colleagues.

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)
- Ensuring that wellbeing concerns around communication are raised with line manager

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

3. Reasonable, professional and timely communication

The wellbeing of JMHS staff is a priority for the school. We do not mandate working hours as we appreciate that the individual situation of each member of staff will vary. We appreciate that JMHS staff work exceptionally hard, monitor the wellbeing of staff and expect parents to understand the significant range of demands on staff time.

We will try our best to respond to parent communications within three working days. Every reasonable effort will be made to respond in the quickest time. This will often be on the same working day that the communication is received.

It is important that parents understand that meetings are arranged in advance with staff. This is because staff are extremely busy and will be involved in a one of their range of jobs. It is also because we want meetings to be productive therefore prepared in advance and with the appropriate time and space to do this.

If a parent does attend the school site without an appointment then it is extremely likely that they will instead be asked to make an appointment and will not be seen at that time.

In the event of an emergency, such as safeguarding, we will do all that we can to ensure that we accommodate requests.

Parents should expect all communication from staff to be courteous as well as in a timely manner. Our staff should, in turn, expect all communication from parents to be courteous. If, at any time, communication from parents does not meet our reasonable expectation for courtesy, then we have asked staff to not immediately respond, or to end a phone call or meeting.

Some examples of how parents will be in breach of the school's reasonable expectations regarding communication would be:

- Offensive or threatening communication, including the use of swear words
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Breach of equalities
- Use of libelous, insulting or defamatory comments about a member of the school community
- Threatening a member of the school community
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media

- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult

If a parent is in breach of this we will in the first instance we will explain why their communication is in breach and will identify with the parent how this can be rectified. If this does not bring about the required change then the parent will be prevented from communicating with the member of staff and instead will communicate with their Line Manager.

JMHS reserves the right to cease communication with a parent and ban from JMHS premises in the most extreme cases.

4. 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.

Email

- We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:
- Sharing information specific to a class or teacher
- Trying to arrange a telephone or face-to-face meeting
- Responding to a routine email enquiry
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

School calendar

JMHS website includes a full school calendar for the academic year. The calendar is regularly updated as required.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least two 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.

Phone calls

We will use telephone calls typically to:

- Share information specific to a class or teacher
- Clarify absence
- Discuss concerns
- Set up a face to face meeting
- Discuss a concern that has been raised that cannot best be resolved through email

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- If a parent requests a letter rather than using ParentPayConsent forms
- Where we may need to send a paper copy of something relevant
- Where a partner agency has asked us to send a paper copy of something relevant

Epraise

All students and parents have an Epraise account. Epraise is the system that is used to electronically show student timetables, set homework, show achievement points and show behaviour points.

Newsletters

Newsletters are sent electronically on a regular cycle. Paper copies are available upon request. Newsletters are typically used to:

- Update parents on key information
- Share news about future school developments
- Celebrate achievements of the school and members of the community

Reports and progress checks

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning in two main formats. Reports are the comprehensive summaries of your child's performance towards the end of the academic year. Progress checks are overviews of your child's progress and attitudes to learning.

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

Meetings

We hold one parents' evening for each year group 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 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.

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.

5. 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.

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 three working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within ten working days.

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

Phone calls

All calls should be made to reception.

If the issue is urgent, please ensure you explain this to the receptionist. Urgent issues might include things like family emergencies, safeguarding or welfare issues.

Meetings

Parents are able to ask for a meeting to talk about an issue in person. In the first instance, they should make this request via email or phone call and give information about why they would like the meeting so that it can be as productive as possible.

6. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. We can make additional arrangements if necessary. If you have a specific communication method preference that we have not included here, please get in touch and we will discuss and support your preferences if we can'.

7. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every three years, or sooner if an important learning episode occurs.

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
- Staff code of conduct
- Concerns and complaints
- Staff wellbeing

9. Complaints

Complaints about this, or any JMHS policy, should be resolved through the JMHS Concerns and Complaints Policy.

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

The table below is not exhaustive but we hope will help signpost you to the correct member of staff.

The main school telephone is 01531631012. Our address is Mabel's Furlong, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 2HF

The main school email is admin@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk Our website address is www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk .

To email a specific member of staff you need to use their first name followed by a full stop, followed by their surname. The email address always ends @jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. For example, Matthew Holland would be matthew.holland@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO COMMUNICATE WITH
General enquires	Reception
Lessons or homework	Subject teacher
Wellbeing/pastoral support	Form Tutor or Year Leader
Payments	School Finance
Uniform/lost and found	Student Services Centre
Absence	Student Services Centre
Bullying/behaviour	Year Leader
School events/the school calendar	School Business Manager
Special educational needs	SENDCO
Clubs, trips and activities	Member of staff running the activity
Hiring the school premises	School Business Manager
The governing board	Clerk to the Governing Body
Catering/meals/transport	School Business Manager
Safeguarding	Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence a member of the safeguarding team.

Communication policy version log

Version	Date	Completed by	Comment	Approval