



John Masefield High School Communications Policy

Approved by: Full Governing Board

Date: 22/03/22

Last reviewed on: N/A

Next review due by: March 2025

Every 3 years or in the case of a significant learning event.

1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on students' 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 for responding to communication from parents/carers.
- › Supporting 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 staff understand JMHS expectations surrounding communication.
- › Regularly reviewing this policy.

Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for:

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

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 if required to obtain the necessary information for parents.
- › Ensuring that wellbeing concerns around communication are raised with line managers

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
- › Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner

- › Checking all communications from the school

Students

Students are responsible for:

- › Ensuring that communication with the school community is respectful at all times
- › Using the relevant school communication systems in a timely manner
- › Alerting relevant staff at the earliest opportunity in the event of any barriers or questions about using school systems to communicate

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. Whilst 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.

Staff will communicate in the most appropriate format and will do so in a courteous and timely manner. JMHS staff are expected to:

- › Display professional courtesy at all times in communication.
- › We will try our best to respond to parent communications within 3 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.

Parents at JMHS are extremely supportive of the school and this relationship forms a key part of our success. Staff work extremely hard therefore it is important that parents are clear about our requirements, which are listed below:

- › Parents must be courteous in their communication with all members of the school community.
- › If a parent is in breach of this, 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.
- › Some examples of how parents will be in breach of the school's reasonable expectations with communication would be if they:

Use offensive or threatening communication, breach of equalities, use libellous, insulting or defamatory comments or they place unreasonable demands with communication on staff.

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.

4. How we communicate with parents

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 will use Email typically to inform parents about:

- 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

School calendar

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

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.

Phone calls

We will use telephone calls typically to:

- 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

Whilst typically we use ParentPay, there may be occasions where we might send a letter home. These could include:

- If a parent requests a letter rather than using ParentPay
- 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 school 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

Parents Evenings are conducted virtually using the Schoolcloud platform. Parents can book their appointments in advance using the booking system. These can be followed up by face to face meetings or phone calls if additional time is required or if parents have any difficulties accessing Schoolcloud.

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 (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be invited 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

Please 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.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you would like a response sooner than this, please call the reception and inform us of your concern so that it can be passed to the relevant member of staff.

Phone calls

For general enquiries, please call reception.

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

Meetings

If a member of staff has scheduled a face to face meeting with you they will make every effort to do this in a time and place that is mutually convenient for both parties. If you would like any special arrangements for the meeting do please give us as much notice as possible so that we can facilitate this.

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. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

7. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years, or sooner if a n 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

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.