

Great Barford Church of England Primary Academy Communication Policy



'Growing together through learning, friendship and worship'

Introduction

Positive communication is an essential element of the aims and vision of Great Barford Church of England Primary Academy (GBPA). This enables our staff, our children and our families to feel valued and listened to.

Aims

To ensure that GBPA is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other; with our children, with their families and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are open, honest, respectful, ethical and professional.

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with parents/carers is effective, timely and appropriate.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Regularly reviewing this policy.

Staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents/carers in line with this policy.
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents/carers get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves).

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times.
- Checking communications from school and responding to communications from school in a timely manner.

How school communicates with families

E-mails

The school subscribes to e-schools, allowing us to e-mail letters to families. We aim to have 100% of parents signed up to email to achieve paperless communication wherever possible. Where this is not appropriate, the parent must contact the school and a hard copy of communication will be provided.

E-mails sent from school will have the following subject headings:

- URGENT: for e-mails which need to be read/and or actioned immediately.
- INFORMATION: for e-mails which share information such as dates for an event.
- FOR ACTION: for e-mails which require an action to be completed such as a form to be completed.
- REMINDER: for e-mails where a reminder is issued such as a mufti day or trip taking place.

Text messages sent from school will be marked URGENT if necessary.

In the event of emergency closure, communication will be made to parents/carers via e-mail or text. A notification will also be placed on the banner on the school website.

Telephone calls

The school office will make immediate contact with a family member as required i.e. for injuries or accidents. A member of office staff will call the first named contact as listed. Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth. In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will

either leave an answer phone message/and or a text message, or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers, where possible.

A member of the teaching staff will phone the parent/carer if they wish to discuss a non-urgent matter regarding their child. If they are unable to contact them, they will leave a message or e-mail them asking them to contact the school.

Contact details

The school holds emergency contact details for all children on the School Information Management System (SIMs) and families are contacted on an annual basis to ensure that these are up to date.

Parents/carers identify the order of preference for communication on entry to the school. This remains, unless amended, throughout the child's education. It is vital that parents/carers update their contact details: phone number, e-mail and address in a timely manner.

Estranged/separated parents

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the same information to both parents, provided that contact details have been given.

Families are expected to inform the school immediately in the event that contact information needs to be revised. The school may ask for legal evidence for changes depending on the situation.

Information sharing

The following list, whilst not exhaustive, covers the main ways in which we will provide information for families:

- The school website includes a wide range of information.
- Curriculum letters are sent out each half term highlighting the focus of the learning during the half term (sent via e-mail).
- Termly dates list is sent out at the beginning of each term (sent via e-mail). Dates are also on our website.
- A weekly newsletter (sent via e-mail).
- Parent/carer consultation in the Autumn & Spring terms.
- Written report in the Summer term.
- Class dojo to show a snippet of what the children are doing at school during their week.
- EYFS use an electronic app to communicate and share photos regarding an individual child's learning.

Class Dojo

Class Dojo connects the school and families through building virtual classroom communities. It enables staff to share photos, videos, announcements and celebrations with families.

Reporting on progress

All families with children in YN to Y6 receive progress information on their child three times each academic year.

In Nursery, each family receives either a face to face or phone check-in chat with the child's teacher each term. A written 2-year old check report is completed before the child turns three years old and if a child transitions to a different school.

For children in YR to Y6 we provide two, 10-minute meetings face to face each year; and families are asked to sign up for an allocated date and time. Should an appointment day not be suitable, families are asked to contact their child's teacher who will make every effort to arrange a more mutually convenient time.

Families are encouraged to request additional meetings should they have a concern regarding their child's progress or well-being. Likewise, staff will arrange additional meetings if necessary.

In the summer term, we provide a written report for each child in YR to Y6. This report identifies attainment as well as next steps.

For children on the Special Educational Needs & Disability Register (SEND), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for children will be reviewed termly and parents/carers will receive a review of their child's current ILP and a new updated plan. This will be sent via e-mail from the class teacher. For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the plan is reviewed yearly and is coordinated by the school SENDCo. The school's SENDCo will be in contact with families to arrange the review meeting. Further information can be found on the SEND policy and SEND Offer on the school website.

Data protection

We hold information on all children in our school and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to other professional partners for educational purposes. All personal data is held and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (for full details see our Data Protection Policy).

How families can communicate with the school

E-mails

E-mail is a quick, effective way of communicating necessary information and is the school's preferred method of communication. Families are welcome to visit the school to discuss their child's progress, ask questions or to have the opportunity to talk about their child/home issues with their child's class teacher, but should e-mail in the first instance. Contact can be made by e-mailing the school at admin@gbpa.org.uk E-mails received will be acknowledged and/or responded to within 2 working days. If further communication is required, a timescale will be agreed.

Telephone calls

All telephone calls will be answered by administrative staff between 8.15am and 4pm. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching to give messages, unless urgent. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person via e-mail. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, this will happen within 2 working days. Telephone calls for Wrap-around school care club will be manned until all children are picked up.

Reporting absence

There is a separate e-mail for reporting a child's absence. Absences must be reported before 9.30am to attendance@gbpa.org.uk stating the specific reason for the absence. If no message is received, the school will contact families by phone to enquire about the absence. If a child is off for more than 2 days, a family member should contact the school again. Families can look at the website or contact the school for guidance on particular recommendations if required.

Dojo

Positive comments on the posts and photos put on by the school are encouraged and warmly welcomed.

Opportunities for families to come into school

These are a selection of the opportunities offered throughout the school year for families to come in to school;

- Attending Friday Celebration worship half-termly
- EYFS stay and play
- Meet the teacher/see the classroom at the beginning of the year
- Open House
- Toddler mornings
- Information sessions (such as phonic/reading presentations & workshops)
- Seasonal productions & events
- New starter meetings
- Sports Day

Parent/Carer views

The school values the views of our families. Throughout the year, parents and carers are offered opportunities to attend half-termly Parent/Carer forum meetings, and to complete questionnaires to share their views.

Complaints

All formal letters of complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's separate Complaints Policy which can be found on the school web-site or collected from the school office.

The school does not accept or act upon anonymous communication unless in relation to matters of serious Child Protection.

When communication becomes inappropriate, aggressive, vexatious, persistent or disproportionate and the school deems it is unacceptable, then actions will be put in place in accordance with our Anti-Violence and Aggression Policy

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Parents and carers who require help communicating with the school can request an interpreter for meetings and phone calls.