

Working Together: How We Communicate

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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 Senior Leaders, Administrators and the Pastoral Team.

Senior Leaders, administrators and the pastoral team 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 8:45-3:45 Monday-Friday or their working hours (if they work part-time). 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.

A copy of the Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy can be found here

<https://morningside.hackney.sch.uk/primary-advantage-policies/>

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
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours 8:45-15:45 Monday-Friday 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.

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 Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events or trips
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Organisation of clubs
- The weekly school newsletter
- For payments/invoicing of wrap around care or nursery provision
- Accidents and incidents via Medical Tracker
- Annual reports (see 3.7 below)

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the year and key dates are shared in the newsletter.

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 newsletter or via SeeSaw

3.4 Phone calls

We will call you if we need to:

- Ask why your child has not attended school unless you have already informed us
- Inform you about a head injury or significant accident
- To inform you that your child is unwell and should be collected from school
- In line with our behaviour policy, inform you about incidents relating to your child

- Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be called to arrange mutually convenient times for meetings or other matters relating to your child's provision in school.

3.5 SeeSaw

We send the following information regularly:

- pictures and videos of your child learning
- Reminders
- Class celebrations

3.6 Google Classroom

- Homework is set on Google classroom

3.7 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
- A report on Early Years Foundation stage Profile results, Y1 Phonics screening results and KS2 SATs tests

3.8 Meetings

We hold 2 parents' evenings per year with the additional opportunity to discuss your child's school report in summer term if requested. 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.

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. For children with EHCPs, this is 1 meeting per term, per year.

3.9 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.

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 office (admin@morningside.hackney.sch.uk), about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days.

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 within 3 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 days of your request.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please 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.

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

5. Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the 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)

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are all sent via email and the website to allow for easy translation.

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. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies which can be viewed here:

<https://morningside.hackney.sch.uk/about-us/school-policy/school-policies/>

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

Option 1:

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the school office on admin@morningside.hackney.sch.uk or 020 8985 5382
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

We try to respond to all emails within 3 working days

Option 2:

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

We try to respond to all emails within 3 working days

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	The Pastoral Manager
Payments	The school office
School trips	The school office
Uniform/lost and found	The school office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 020 8985 5382 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact admin@morningside.hackney.sch.uk
Bullying and behaviour	The Pastoral Manager or SLT
School events/the school calendar	The school office
Special educational needs (SEN)	The SENCo
Before and after-school clubs	The school office
Hiring the school premises	The school office
PTA	The school office
Governing board	The school office
Catering/meals	The school office

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found here: <https://morningside.hackney.sch.uk/primary-advantage-policies/>