



BENSHAM MANOR School

Home School Communication Policy

Last reviewed: October 2020



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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 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

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

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

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)

Staff **will not** respond to communications outside of school hours which are 8.30am-3.15pm, or their working hours if they work part time or during school holidays.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers 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
- Not sharing concerns about staff members/pupils/the school on social media sites

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

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/the website/the kidwizz app to keep families informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Kidwizz

We will use Kidwizz for:

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

School website

Our school website includes the latest and most up to date information.

Where possible, we try to give families 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 on the website.

Phone calls

Families are encouraged to call the school office on 020 86840116 in the first instance with any queries.

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

Homework books/school planners

School planners contain information on your child's homework.

Reports

Families receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- An annual report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- An annual report from child's therapist if your child receives therapy as part of their EHCP provision.

We also arrange an annual review of your child's Education, Health and Care Plan.

Meetings

We hold 2 parent/carer evenings per term. During these meetings, families can talk with teachers or the form tutor about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The October parent/carer evening is a meeting with your child's form tutor only.

The school may also contact families to arrange meetings between parent/carer evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour or wellbeing.

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

Parent and carers should check the website before contacting the school.

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 call or email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 1 working day, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 2 working days. If arranging a meeting, the date for the meeting will be arranged where possible within two working days to take place within 5 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 2 working days.

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

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

Urgent issues are acknowledged on the day they are received.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the office.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your child's home environment, or their wellbeing

INCLUSION

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

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

We do provide a translator for key meetings.

Families 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.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

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 theoffice@benshammanor.com or 02086840116
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff 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 one day.

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

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's form tutor – you will have been given their email address at the start of the school year.
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	matthewkeane@benshammanor.com
Payments	Alison Haynes theoffice@benshammanor.com
School trips	Alison Haynes theoffice@benshammanor.com
Uniform/lost and found	theoffice@benshammanor.com
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 02086840116 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact matthewkeane@benshammanor.com
Bullying and behavior	Beverley Carabache

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
	theoffice@benshammanor.com
School events/the school calendar	theoffice@benshammanor.com
Before and after-school clubs	Sean Fitzgerald theoffice@benshammanor.com
Hiring the school premises	Nikita Rajagopal nikitarajagopal@benshammanor.com
The governing board	Beverley Carabache theoffice@benshammanor.com
Catering/meals	Beverley Carabache theoffice@benshammanor.com

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy, available on the website.

Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

Please also refer to the code of conduct document which is located on the website