



Hopelands Preparatory School

38/40 Regent Street, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 2AD

Parent/Staff Communications Policy

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to the school including the EYFS & Nursery School.

1. Information for Parents Pack

Welcome Information for Parents Packs are given to parents of children entering the school. The packs contain important information for parents and should be read carefully.

2. Permission for Absence

Parents wishing their child to be absent from school should write to the Head well in advance. The office will inform the form teacher if permission is granted. Any letters sent to the form teacher requesting absence should be redirected to the office.

3. Absence

Parents are encouraged to contact the school office at the beginning of every day of the child's absence. This information will be passed on to the form teacher by the office. If a pupil is absent because of illness, a phone call to the office or email to the office/form teacher or head will be expected.

4. Parents' Evenings

These take place twice a year – Winter and Spring Terms. The meetings are designed for parents to visit school to discuss their child's progress with their teacher. Appointments are made in advance; the times of the evenings are arranged by form teachers and parents ad-hoc, generally between 8.00am to 6.00pm.

Any 'problems' relating to, or arising from, these evenings should be relayed back to the Head at the end of the evening or the next morning.

Hopelands operates an open-door policy so informal chats/talks with parents are encouraged/allowed at any time convenient for both parties.

5. Other Meetings/Discussions with Parents

File notes should be written whenever a member of staff has:

- a) requested an interview with a parent other than on the scheduled Parents' Evenings

- b) been approached by a parent who is concerned about any aspect of his/her child's education, welfare etc.
- c) had communication with a parent over the telephone concerning the child.

Notes may be brief; only salient points need to be recorded. Notes should be shared with the Head who will then pass them on to the office for filing. File notes and letters received from parents should always be signed and dated (including year).

All letters sent home to parents on headed notepaper must be approved by the Head prior to distribution.

NB: If a member of staff considers the contents of a File Note to be of a 'delicate' or 'sensitive' nature it should be labelled 'CONFIDENTIAL'.

6. Home School Link Book

Each child in the Nursery School, Year 1 and 2 has a home-link book. This is a useful means of communication between staff and parents, particularly working parents. The book does not have to have something written in it each day but it should be checked on a daily basis.

7. Homework Diaries

Every child in Years 3 to 6 will have a Homework Diary which, for Years 3 and 4 must be signed by parents on a daily basis and for Years 5 and 6, once a week. These diaries are a useful tool to enable parents to see at a glance what work has been completed and communicate any issues with the work to the teacher.

8. E-mail and SMS text message

The school has an e-mail and SMS text message system to communicate with parents. This system is used to announce parents of issues around school including school closures and notices. Parents may contact members of staff directly by e-mail should they wish to communicate about their child(ren).

9. Newsletters

Regular newsletters are produced, giving staff and parents information and full details of the coming events, together with general news and reports of our successes. Staff can use the newsletter, if they wish, to communicate in any way with parents.

10. Calendar

A provisional yearly calendar is produced, giving staff, pupils and parents information about events being organised for the coming academic year. The calendar also shows the holiday dates. The holiday dates are also issued separately at least one full year in advance.

11. Website

The school website is the main hub of information for parents. It contains information on policies, up and coming events and important calendar dates. Staff, parents and governors are all able to access portals from the school website to staff informed about recent events.

12. Use of telephone, E-mail and Internet

See *Acceptable Use Policy*

13. Use of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter

The Hopelands School Social Media Pages such as Facebook and Twitter (known as the page from here-on) is run by the school. It is managed by the Leadership team of the school which falls under the responsibility of the Governing Board.

The page is designed to:

- Inform, engage and communicate with parents, carers and other interested parties.
- Recognise, celebrate and promote the work of the school and its students.
- Communicate and reinforce school policies and good practice.

Postings will include updates on everyday school life, activities, clubs, events, useful information and websites, advice, suggestions, songs, books and photos of activities.

• **Posts and Comments**

The Head will decide on and authorise page updates on a regular basis. The Head and Marketing Manager will have sole responsibility for posting comments and will communicate in a positive, accurate, respectful and responsible manner. They will uphold and promote the values of the school at all times.

All teachers, parents, and carers are also welcome to post their thoughts and ideas on the page, and to like, share and comment on postings. We request that they do so in a similarly positive, respectful and constructive manner.

If followers have any specific concerns, particularly related to their own or other child/children, we ask that they do not post these on the page timeline and encourage them to speak directly to the Head/Bursar/Class teacher.

Under no circumstances, without parental permission, should any child/children be named or described on the page. This is due to data protection and the legal responsibility we have to keep the children safe. In the event where the Head would like to celebrate an exceptional achievement of one of the pupils by naming them on the page, express written parental permission will be obtained prior to the posting.

• **Photographs and videos**

Parents are asked to fill in a permission form for the school to use their child's photograph on school publicity materials including the school's social media pages.

Only the Head and Marketing Manager have permission to upload photographs and videos on to the page. This is because they are aware of the parental permissions held by the school. The setting allowing people to post or tag photos will be turned off.

No children will be tagged or named in relation to a photo directly on the page. However, there may be links to the school website or to third party articles where children may be photographed and named.

• **Site moderation**

The page will be moderated regularly by the Marketing Manager who is authorised by the Head Teacher.

All visitors to the page are asked to inform the Head of any inappropriate comments, behaviour or concerns they have relating to the page. The page profanity filter will be set to 'strong'.

We encourage parents and carers to post regularly on the page. The Facebook private message facility will be turned off.

- **Misuse**

In the event that an inappropriate or offensive comment is made it will be recorded by the Marketing Manager (screen shot) and brought to the urgent attention of the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will speak to the individual(s) involved and explain the purpose and ethos of the page, and why their comment / behaviour is inappropriate or offensive. We will ask the individual to remove the posting. Ultimately, the Head Teacher reserve the right to remove any comments that are deemed inappropriate.

In the event that a child is described or named (whether in the main post or within comments), it will be recorded by the Marketing Manager (screen shot), immediately deleted and brought to the urgent attention of the Head Teacher.

In the event that an inappropriate or offensive comment is made by someone who is unconnected to the school, the Head Teacher will respond accordingly. The response will depend on the content of the post but may include contacting the user via private message, deleting the comment and banning the user, or reporting the post to relevant external bodies.


If any individual repeatedly makes inappropriate comments (two times or more), the Management of the School has the discretion to ban the offending individual from the page and (where appropriate) report the offender to relevant external bodies.

- **Restrictions**

The page is designed as a communication tool to engage with parents and carers. It is therefore restricted to people over 18 years of age.

Where a parent is under 18 years old, permission will be granted at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

The Head Teacher also has the discretion to remove or ban any followers that are known to be under 18 years old.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Hopelands Preparatory School
Held on	Nov 2022
Date to be reviewed	Nov 2024
Signed on behalf of the senior management team	<i>Sonja Jones</i>
Name of signatory	Sonja Jones
Role of signatory	Joint Head
Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	
Name of signatory	Richard James
Role of signatory	Chair of Governors