



Kings Langley School

Unlocking Potential for Life

Communication Policy

Date Agreed – November 2024

Review Date – September 2025



CONTENTS

1. Introduction	Page 3
2. Purpose	Page 3
3. Definition of communication	Page 3
4. Principles	Page 3
5. Communication with parents and carers	Page 4
6. Meeting with parents and carers	Page 5
7. Social networking	Page 5
8. Accessibility	Page 5
9. Supporting parents/carers of students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND)	Page 6
10. Communication with other schools and outside agencies	Page 6
11. Incidents at school	Page 6



Introduction

This policy document has an accompanying “handbook” which provides further information and guidelines to enable the efficient application of all aspects of school communication.

Purpose

To promote partnerships between the school, parents and carers, students and the wider community through efficient, effective and sensitive communication.

Definition of communication

Efficient communication through any available medium promotes co-operative working, trust and efficient execution of the school’s stated aims. Every member of staff has a responsibility to support high quality communication and understand that their actions reflect on the school’s reputation and culture. Parents and carers, governors and students have a responsibility to engage in positive communication with clear and attainable objectives, which value the role of each individual within our community. We strive to ensure that communications between all stakeholders are clear, professional, courteous, timely and effective in their purpose. Parents and carers have a key role to play in their child’s education and the school will actively encourage arrangements for parents and carers to contribute to creating a shared view of their child’s needs.

Principles

Kings Langley School uses a number of different methods to maintain effective communication with all stakeholders and others interacting with our community.

Communication on issues that affect the safety and wellbeing of a student will always be treated as a priority. The school retains emergency contact details for all students and families are asked to inform the school immediately if contact information needs to be altered.

Staff will always seek to establish relationships with parents and carers which are mutually courteous, but which remain professional and focused at all times.

The Communications Policy embraces the defined principles of our school in supporting the development of “strong character” and will equally embrace the principles and objectives of our published Equality Statement and promote student safety and personal flourishing at every turn.

Aims of the policy

The aims of this policy are to ensure effective communication between the school, parents, carers, students and other stakeholders and that there are robust and clear processes in place to support our objectives. Parents and carers are offered multiple opportunities throughout the year to convey to us what they expect from and think of the school. Our wish is to involve as many parents and carers in their child’s education as possible.

Our aims include the following:

- To make the school as welcoming and inclusive as possible
- Signage will be clear, informative and positive



- All written and telephone enquiries will be dealt with promptly and parents and carers can expect a response within 3 working days or a full explanation as to why a response may take longer.
- To facilitate a variety of forms of communication with parents and carers including, telephone contact, e-mail, post and text messages.
- A reduction in the demands to respond to parental emails and other communications outside of normal school hours
- To ensure parents and carers better understand the context in which teachers are working and can modify their expectations of responses. Parents and carers will be contacted for positive as well as negative reasons and information will be provided on what students will be taught, including tips for helping children with study and assessment.
- By outlining a clear structure for communication across the organisation we aim to ensure that communication is distributed and directed more appropriately across the staff body
- To provide guidance and related training to ensure that all communications follow a defined protocol, which ensures objectivity, brevity, and reflect well on the school's defined ethos and culture, ensuring the respect and well-being of all members of our community.

Communication with parents and carers

Staff will always reply to a letter from a parent or carer as quickly as possible and in case, within 3 working days. Any letters of concern or complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints procedures.

Where possible the school will use standard templates and format for clarity and consistency, including consistent use of salutations and sign off (for example, name, position in school (in bold font) and general working hours). Parents will understand not to expect communications outside of these hours.

Where possible, our preferred mode of written communication is via email although there will be occasions where it is more appropriate that the communication is in "hard copy". Emails should be short and clear and the objectives or subject of the communication very apparent.

Parents and Carers may wish to contact the school via email as an alternative to telephone or letter. The school's administration address should be used for such enquiries and parents should keep communications as brief as reasonably possible with the subject of the enquiry clear at the outset of the communication

Telephone Calls

Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem for our school. Teachers have a full teaching workload and frequently engaged at other times dealing with pastoral or subject matters. Experience has shown that parents can occasionally become frustrated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been limited opportunity for the member of staff to make the responding call.

In a non-emergency, a call will be responded to within 3 working days with any follow up action or necessary response highlighted. Staff will always make a record of a telephone conversation with a parent or carer using the school's proforma.



Text Messages

Automated texts are sent to parents or carers (including in the event of an emergency closure) but are not used for general communications from members of staff. Similarly, staff should not respond by text to a text message received from a parent or carer but should use other approved communication methods such as email or telephone (if appropriate).

Absence

Parents and carers should report student absence as soon as possible on the morning of the absence. For full details, please refer to the Attendance Policy (copy on website).

Meeting with parents and carers

Parents and carers wishing to meet a member of staff should contact the school to make an appointment, stating clearly the reason for the request and which member(s) of staff they would like present. The school will assess this request and make a response within 3 working days. However, the school might determine that other colleagues are better placed to deal with the query but would provide an explanation as to why an alternate interview was suggested. On many occasions, it will be appropriate that another member of staff is present during an interview.

Social networking

The school has a Twitter account, which is used to provide updates to parents, and students who wish to subscribe to this service. However, key messages will always be provided through other approved means such a group email, website update or text message.

The school does not host a Facebook account but is aware of the fact that many parents and other groups use this medium regularly as a source of communication and sharing of information. Experience over many years has suggested that information and communication shared over such platforms can be highly subjective, frequently inaccurate and occasionally driven by personal agendas. Generally, the school is unlikely to respond to such groups but is aware that misunderstandings and genuine harm can arise from poor or inaccurate information or comment shared on these platforms. The school will seek to monitor activity on some local community groups and the Headteacher may decide to respond or intervene if he thinks it is in the best of interests of the school.

Accessibility

We will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary to enable a parent or carer with a disability or other need to participate fully in a meeting or to receive and understand any written communication. Levels of adjustment to determine what is reasonable will be determined by the Headteacher. The default font used by the school is Calibri 11 but it may be appropriate for a larger font size to be used in certain circumstances.

If a translation of a document is required and parents or carers are unable to use an on-line service such as “google translate”, the school will endeavour to provide an appropriate translation. A sign language interpreter can be requested but again the school will determine the “reasonableness” of the request and whether it can be accommodated.



Supporting parents and carers with SEND needs

Our SEND code of practice emphasises the importance of positive, supportive attitudes to parents and carers and the use of easily accessible information and procedures. When students who have special educational needs are experiencing behavioural problems or are making less than expected progress, we would expect to meet with parents or carers more regularly. Parents and carers are encouraged to communicate immediately where that have a concern about their child's needs being met and should also refer to the inclusion section of the website.

Communication with other schools and outside agencies

Prior to students joining Year 7, visits are made by specific staff to their primary schools to gain further information to help and support their transition to Kings Langley School. We recognise that children have diverse needs, and where necessary we are supported by various agencies and other groups of professionals including medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), educational psychologists, health professionals and specialists and various welfare-focused services, such as School Family Workers and the local authority Children's Services Single Point of Access. We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school must provide a safe and secure environment (see the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy copy available on the school website).

We hold information on all pupils in our school and on occasions, we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. All personal data is held and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (for full details see our Data Protection Policy)

Incidents at school

It is inevitable that children will experience difficulties with social interaction, friendship patterns or behavioural issues that may have a variety of causes. Our Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policies define in some detail how we respond to such incidents. However, parents should be aware that staff will always investigate an incident with care and impartiality and will attempt to determine an accurate account of an incident via interviews, written personal statements or reference to CCTV. The school will not share information that would run counter to our data protection procedures, particularly where students might be identified. Parents will not be permitted access to such investigative material and they will not have the opportunity to communicate directly with other students or families involved in any incident.