



OFG
Education



PARENT/CARER -SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

The Holden School



PARENT/CARER SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

CONTENTS

1.0	POLICY STATEMENT.....	2
2.0	HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS AND CARERS.....	4
3.0	WHAT WE ASK OF PARENTS/CARERS.....	
	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
4.0	EXPECTATIONS FOR RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION.....	
	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
5.0	PARENTS WITH ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS	
	Error! Bookmark not defined.	

Terminology

Please note that the terms:

“Our teams” and “team members” include everyone working in Outcomes First Group’s settings and services in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, consultants, agency staff, trainees and contractors, (including volunteers for Blenheim Schools).

“Parents and carers” refer to the person or people with legal parental responsibility for the child/young person

“Students” refers to all children and young people being educated and supported at the setting or service

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction and Purpose

- At The Holden School, we believe that strong, trusting partnerships between home and school are fundamental to helping every child and young person thrive. We are committed to maintaining open, honest and effective communication with parents and carers, ensuring that important information relating to their child's education, wellbeing, safety and personal development is shared in a timely, respectful and supportive manner.
- We recognise that many of the children and young people who attend The Holden School, along with their families, may have experienced challenges within previous educational settings. We understand that these experiences



can influence how families engage with schools and professionals. As a result, we place relationships at the heart of everything we do and strive to meet families where they are, recognising their individual experiences, strengths and aspirations for their child.

- Our approach is rooted in the school's values of compassion, collaboration, inclusion and respect. Through an inclusive, person-centred, trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming culture, we seek to create an environment in which parents and carers feel welcomed, listened to and valued as equal partners in their child's educational journey. We recognise that parents and carers are experts in their children, and we encourage open dialogue so that we can work together to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- We actively encourage parents and carers to share information, ask questions and raise concerns at the earliest opportunity. By working collaboratively and maintaining positive relationships, we can provide consistent support and ensure that children and young people experience a joined-up approach between home and school.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Explain how The Holden School communicates with parents and carers to keep them informed about their child's progress, achievements, wellbeing and school experience.
- Provide clear guidance on how parents and carers can contact the school and individual staff members to receive timely and informed responses.
- Establish supportive and transparent expectations for communication between home and school.
- Outline the support available where additional communication needs or barriers are identified.
- Promote a culture of mutual respect, collaboration and partnership that reflects The Holden School's ethos and values.
- Ensure communication supports the safety, wellbeing and educational progress of all pupils.
- This policy applies to all forms of communication between the school and parents/carers, including face-to-face meetings, telephone calls, written correspondence, email communication, online platforms and visits to the school.
- A copy of this policy is available on the school website and can also be provided in alternative formats upon request.

1.1 Policy Framework



This policy has been developed in line with the following legislation and guidance:

Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004

Education Act 2002

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

Independent school standards guidance

The School Information (England) Regulations 2008

Keeping children safe in education

Working together to safeguard children

And the following policies:

- School Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Mobile and Smart Technology Policy
- Relational and Inclusive Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Code of Conduct & Ethics (for team members)

The school publishes policies and key information on the school or can be provided by the school office on request (Please see Section 6.0 for school contact details).

2.0 HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

2.1 Methods of Communication

At The Holden School, we recognise that effective communication is essential in building strong, trusting relationships between home and school. We are committed to ensuring that communication is clear, accessible, respectful and responsive, enabling parents and carers to remain informed, involved and supported throughout their child's educational journey.

In keeping with our trauma-informed, relational and neurodiversity-affirming approach, we seek to communicate in ways that promote collaboration,



celebrate successes, address concerns proactively and ensure that the needs of children, young people and their families remain at the centre of our practice.

The school uses a variety of communication methods to ensure information is shared effectively and appropriately.

Telephone Calls

Telephone calls may be used to:

- Share important information relating to a pupil's wellbeing, safety or educational provision.
- Discuss concerns or emerging needs.
- Celebrate achievements and positive outcomes.
- Arrange meetings or reviews.
- Maintain regular contact where additional support for communication may be beneficial.

Where discussions involve significant information, a summary may also be provided in writing to ensure clarity and shared understanding.

Email Communication

Email is used for non-urgent communication, information sharing and general enquiries.

Emails may be used to:

- Share updates regarding a pupil's progress or wellbeing.
- Arrange meetings and appointments.
- Provide information about school events and activities.
- Respond to parent and carer queries.

To ensure communication remains secure, professional and compliant with data protection requirements, all email correspondence with parents and carers will be conducted through authorised school systems and platforms.

Text Messages

The school may use text messaging services to communicate:

- Important reminders.
- Attendance-related information.
- Changes to arrangements.
- School closures or emergency updates.
- Key dates and events.



Text messages are sent through approved school systems and are intended for brief information sharing rather than detailed discussion.

Meetings

We value the importance of face-to-face conversations and recognise that meaningful dialogue often provides the best opportunity for collaborative problem-solving and relationship building.

Meetings may be arranged to:

- Discuss academic progress and attainment.
- Review wellbeing, behaviour and pastoral support.
- Participate in Annual Reviews and multi-agency meetings.
- Plan transitions and next steps.
- Address concerns and identify supportive solutions.

Meetings may take place:

- In person at school.
- Online via approved platforms.
- By telephone where appropriate.

To ensure the safety of all pupils, staff and visitors, meetings at The Holden School should be arranged in advance wherever possible. All visitors are expected to follow school safeguarding, security and signing-in procedures when on site.

Digital Communication Platforms

The school may utilise approved communication platforms and applications to support information sharing between home and school.

These platforms may be used to:

- Share updates and announcements.
- Communicate learning activities and home learning opportunities.
- Celebrate achievements and positive experiences.
- Provide information regarding trips, events and school life.

Current platforms used by The Holden School include:

- Microsoft Teams (where appropriate)
- Parent communication systems
- Class Dojo



School Calendar

A regularly updated school calendar is available through the school website and other communication platforms.

This provides information about:

- Term dates.
- INSET days.
- Parents' evenings.
- Annual Reviews.
- Educational visits and enrichment activities.
- Whole-school events and celebrations.

Parents and carers are encouraged to check the calendar regularly to remain informed about upcoming events.

School Website

The school website provides a central source of information for parents and carers and is updated regularly.

Information available includes:

- School contact details.
- School day timings.
- Term dates and holiday information.
- Curriculum information.
- Newsletters and school updates.
- Important policies and procedures.
- Safeguarding information.
- Admissions information.
- Careers and post-16 information.
- Parent and family support resources.

Parents and carers are encouraged to consult the website when seeking general information, as many common queries can be answered through the resources available online.

Our Commitment to Communication

At The Holden School, communication is viewed as a partnership rather than a process. We are committed to creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue,



listening carefully to the views of parents and carers, and working together in the best interests of every child and young person.

Through open, respectful and compassionate communication, we aim to foster positive relationships that support pupils to feel safe, understood, valued and successful both in school and beyond.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

At The Holden School, senior leaders play a key role in fostering positive, trusting relationships with families and ensuring that communication reflects the school's values of compassion, collaboration, inclusion and respect.

The Headteacher, or designated senior leader, will:

- Ensure communication with parents and carers is timely, effective, professional and supportive.
- Promote a culture of open dialogue and collaborative problem-solving between home and school.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.
- Respond to concerns that have been escalated through the appropriate channels in a timely manner, usually within one working day during term time.
- Ensure families are kept informed of significant matters relating to their child's education, wellbeing, safety and progress.
- Support staff to communicate confidently, respectfully and in line with the school's trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming approach.
- Seek to understand the perspectives, experiences and circumstances of parents and carers, particularly where previous educational experiences may have impacted trust and engagement.
- Foster a culture where concerns are viewed as opportunities for partnership, reflection and improvement.
- Ensure communication practices uphold safeguarding responsibilities, confidentiality requirements and professional standards.



Responsibilities of All Staff

Every member of staff at The Holden School contributes to building positive relationships with families. We recognise that supportive communication creates the strongest foundation for successful outcomes for children and young people.

All staff are expected to:

Timeliness

- Respond to communications from parents and carers promptly, wherever possible within one working day during school operating hours.
- Keep families informed when additional time may be required to provide a full response.

Respect and Understanding

- Communicate with kindness, empathy and professionalism.
- Recognise that parents and carers may be managing complex circumstances and approach conversations with understanding and compassion.
- Seek to understand the perspectives and experiences of families, particularly when concerns are raised.
- Access support and guidance from colleagues or leaders when managing challenging conversations.

Clarity

- Communicate clearly and professionally, avoiding unnecessary educational jargon.
- Ensure information is accessible, accurate and easy to understand.
- Check that key messages have been understood and provide clarification when required.

Professional Conduct

- Adhere to school policies regarding communication, data protection and acceptable use of technology.
- Use authorised school systems and communication platforms only.
- Never use personal devices, personal email accounts or personal telephone numbers to communicate with parents or carers.
- Confidentiality
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality at all times.



- Handle personal information in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and school policies.
- Share information on a need-to-know basis and in line with safeguarding requirements.

Supportive Practice

- Signpost families to appropriate support, resources or specialist services where relevant.
- Celebrate successes and positive achievements as well as communicating concerns.
- Maintain a strengths-based approach that recognises each child's individual progress and achievements.

Collaboration

- Work collaboratively with colleagues to ensure families receive consistent and accurate information.
- Share relevant information appropriately so that pupils benefit from a coordinated approach across the school.

Escalation of Concerns

- Escalate concerns raised by parents and carers to appropriate leaders promptly to ensure timely support.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

3.What We Ask of Parents and Carers

At The Holden School, we value parents and carers as essential partners in their child's educational journey. Positive outcomes are most likely when families and school staff work together with mutual trust, openness and respect.

We ask that parents and carers:

- Raise questions, worries or concerns directly with the school at the earliest opportunity so that we can work together to find solutions.
- Communicate with staff respectfully, recognising that all parties share the common goal of supporting their child.
- Provide relevant information that may help us understand and support their child's needs.
- Respond to requests for meetings, reviews or important communications in a timely manner.
- Read and monitor communications sent by the school.



- Follow the school's Complaints Procedure where concerns cannot be resolved informally.
- Understand that staff may not be available to respond outside normal working hours, during weekends or during school holidays.
- Respect the privacy and wellbeing of pupils, families and staff within both face-to-face and online environments.

Where concerns arise, we encourage direct communication with the school rather than discussing individual matters through social media platforms. This enables concerns to be addressed more effectively, sensitively and constructively.

4. Expectations for Respectful Communication

The Holden School is committed to maintaining a culture of safety, respect and collaboration for pupils, families and staff.

We understand that discussions about children and young people can sometimes be emotional, particularly when concerns arise. We therefore seek to approach all conversations with empathy, curiosity and a solution-focused mindset.

We ask all members of our school community to:

Communicate respectfully and professionally.

Listen to different perspectives.

Remain focused on finding positive solutions.

Avoid personal criticism, hostility or discriminatory language.

Respect confidentiality and professional boundaries.

In the vast majority of cases, concerns can be resolved successfully through open and honest discussion. However, where communication becomes abusive, threatening, discriminatory, intimidating or persistently unreasonable, the school may take steps to protect staff and pupils.

These actions may include:

Restricting communication to specific methods or designated members of staff.

Arranging mediated meetings with senior leaders.

Ending meetings where behaviour becomes inappropriate.

Seeking support from external agencies where necessary.



Restricting access to the school site where the safety or wellbeing of pupils or staff is compromised.

Where parents or carers feel overwhelmed, distressed or require additional support communicating with the school, we encourage them to discuss this with us. Support may be available through:

Senior pastoral staff.

Family support services.

Clinical professionals where appropriate.

Other professionals involved in supporting the family.

Our shared aim is always to maintain constructive relationships that enable children and young people to receive consistent support both at home and at school.

5. Supporting Parents and Carers with Additional Communication Needs

In line with our commitment to inclusion, accessibility and equity, The Holden School aims to ensure that all families are able to engage meaningfully with school communications.

We recognise that some parents and carers may require additional support to access information or communicate effectively with the school.

To support this, we will:

Use clear, accessible and parent-friendly language wherever possible.

Consider accessibility when designing communication materials and online content.

Provide information in alternative formats where appropriate.

Utilise specialist support and advice to improve accessibility.

Make reasonable adjustments to communication methods when required.

Work collaboratively with families to identify the most effective ways to communicate.

Parents and carers may request reasonable adjustments, including:

Accessible versions of letters, reports and school communications.

Translation or interpretation services.

Additional support to understand important information.

Alternative communication methods where appropriate.

Use of technology to facilitate communication and engagement.



Where specialist advice may be beneficial, the school may work alongside relevant professionals to ensure communication is as accessible and meaningful as possible.

Parents and carers who would benefit from additional support are encouraged to contact the school office so that appropriate arrangements can be discussed and agreed collaboratively.

At The Holden School, we believe that effective communication should be accessible to all families and that every parent and carer should feel welcomed, included and valued as an important member of our school community.

6.0 SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

The Holden School

Telephone: 01942 932540

Email: info@theholdenschool.co.uk

Website: [The Holden School](https://www.theholdenschool.co.uk)

Key Contacts

Headteacher: Alan Harrison

Assistant Headteacher: Lyn Hackett

Designated Safeguarding Lead: David Smith

School Office: Yvonne Adams (Business Manager)



OFG
Education

