



Communication Policy

Excellence for All

Policy reviewed/updated	May, 2026
Next update	May, 2029
Committee	Finance & General Purposes
Executive Headteacher	Ben Waldram
Chair of Governors	Emma Robinson

Revision date	Author of changes	Summary of changes
New policy	B Waldram	

If you have any concerns about safeguarding, please contact us on the email below or scan the code to see the safeguarding page on our website.

safeguarding@fernwoodprimary.co.uk



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Introduction and aims

At Fernwood Primary and Nursery School, we strive to build strong and positive relationships with parents, carers and visitors. We are committed to living our school values through every interaction we have with others. The trust, support and co-operation of parents and carers is fundamental to the continued success of our school and the well-being of our school community.

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; and
- 🌱 Enables our children and families to feel valued and listened to.

The aim of this policy is to promote clear, open and respectful communication by:

- 🌱 Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers;
- 🌱 Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers; and
- 🌱 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.

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- 🌱 Ensuring that communications with parents/carers are effective, timely and appropriate;
- 🌱 Monitoring the implementation of this policy; and
- 🌱 Regularly reviewing this policy.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- 🌱 Responding to communication from parents/carers in line with this policy and associated policies;
- 🌱 Working with other members of staff as appropriate to make sure parents/carers receive timely information; and
- 🌱 Following the staff code of conduct.

Parents and Carers

Parents/ carers are responsible for:

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- 🌱 Ensuring that contact information is up-to-date allowing school to decide the most practicable means of communication;
- 🌱 Ensuring that communication with the school is constructive and respectful at all times;
- 🌱 Checking and responding appropriately to all communications from the school and not adding to workload by expecting the staff to repeat communications and information unnecessarily;
- 🌱 Understanding that staff may not be able to respond immediately but will do so as soon as practicably possible;
- 🌱 Working constructively with staff to resolve any issues of concern;
- 🌱 Making reasonable requests for meetings and responses that take into consideration the many other demands on staff time, as well as staff well-being; and
- 🌱 Making every effort to positively promote the school to the wider community and not publicly undermine the school.

Please note that:

- 🌱 Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be shared with the Senior Leadership Team of the school who will respond accordingly based on the content and context;
- 🌱 Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (08:00-17:00) or during weekends and school holidays;
- 🌱 If a parent/carer is dissatisfied with the response they have received, they should follow the procedures outlined in our complaints policy. In general, please try to post public or private messages between 08:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday. Staff will respond to these in an appropriate time that does not impact upon their work-life balance; and
- 🌱 All adults will uphold and promote the values of our school and communicate in a positive, accurate, respectful and responsible manner.

How our school communicates with parents and carers

Our school predominantly uses **ClassDojo** and **Arbor** to communicate with parents. The terms and conditions of use, are available within these apps. Class Dojo is used by teachers as a means of sharing news from the classroom and as a messenger function, whereas Arbor is used for the sharing of letters and to record absence.

Types of communication include:

- 🌱 Upcoming school events;
- 🌱 Celebrations of children's work and the success of our school;
- 🌱 School holidays and closures;
- 🌱 School surveys or consultations;
- 🌱 Curriculum information;

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- 🌀 School calendar;
- 🌀 Temporary changes to the school day (Menu changes, occasional cancellations of clubs and follow-up arrangements);
- 🌀 Wraparound care;
- 🌀 Payments;
- 🌀 Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather); or
- 🌀 Absence.

School calendar

Our school website includes a full [school calendar](#) for the academic year and details of school term dates. Where possible, we try to give parents/carers at least half a term's 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) through the website, Dojo and newsletter. Any such event will be included in the school calendar and school communications via ClassDojo. Events specific to each class such as a 100 Star reward or reminders will come through your child's Dojo page.

Phone calls

Phone calls are an important part of our communication with parents/ carers and are used as needed by various members of school staff. For example:

- 🌀 If the class teacher needs to inform parents/ carers of a behaviour concern;
- 🌀 Following up previous communication as needed; or
- 🌀 Pastoral support.

Letters

We use printed letters less frequently for the purposes of efficiency and to be more eco-friendly. However, there are some circumstances where it is deemed beneficial to send printed letters home. Letters may be used to communicate in the following ways:

- 🌀 Occasional communication between parents and teacher;
- 🌀 Class activities or teacher requests;
- 🌀 Setting some homework tasks;
- 🌀 Some whole school announcements; or
- 🌀 Announcements relating to specific year groups/classes e.g. dates of special events.

Reports

Parents/carers 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; and, if relevant
- 🌀 Statutory tests including KS2 SATs, Year 4 Multiplication Check outcomes, Year 1 Phonics Outcomes & EYFS outcomes.

Parents' meetings

- 🌱 We hold two parents' evenings per year. During these meetings, parents/carers can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's well-being, or any other area of concern.
- 🌱 The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings, at a separate time from the scheduled parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or well-being.
- 🌱 Parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.
- 🌱 We also hold an open evening at the end of each academic year where parents/carers can drop in and speak to their child's class teacher about their report and can meet their child's new class teacher.

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](#); and

Parents/carers are respectfully asked to check the website before contacting the school to avoid unnecessary duplication of workload.

How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents/carers 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.

Appointments

We understand that children have medical appointments and whilst some of these could be last-minute, it makes it a smoother and more effective process if parents/carers inform the office with plenty of notice. Calling on the day or arriving at the office ready to take a child is not the most efficient method. You can email appointments and share texts/letters with the office when you come to collect your child.

Email & Class Dojo

The majority of emails can be dealt with via the school office using admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk who will forward the email to the appropriate member of staff. We aim to acknowledge all emails sent to the school office as soon as possible.

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If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school. When making the decision to contact the school, please remember that it may not be possible to respond immediately.

If you require communications in other languages, please discuss this with our admin team and we will attempt to provide this for you.

Phone calls

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- 🌀 Family emergencies;
- 🌀 Safeguarding or welfare issues; or
- 🌀 Medical needs.

If parents/ carers need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should email or Dojo—the relevant member of staff who will contact them as soon as is practically possible.

Meetings

While teachers may be available at the beginning or end of the school day, if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss their concerns.

Managing inappropriate conduct

We do not have capacity to meet persistent or immediate demands from parents/carers and we reserve the right to limit communications where we feel this is the case.

Final decisions

Whilst we welcome feedback and regularly consult with a range of stakeholders in making key decisions, ultimately the school has to make decisions in good faith, which we deem to be in the best interests of all our pupils.

Excessive parental contact or demanding/inappropriate behaviour

Please remember that any time dealing with complaints, excessive communications or questioning of school procedures is time away from our primary aim of supporting our pupils.

Please note the following: -

- 🌀 If parents/carers are rude, abusive or speak in an inappropriate tone over the telephone, our staff will politely end the call;
- 🌀 If any email or ClassDojo message is rude or inappropriate in tone, we reserve the right not to reply, or we may choose to take the action outlined within this policy;
- 🌀 In either case, the school will forward a copy of this policy to reiterate our expectations and rights regarding appropriate communication;

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- ② When the school deems correspondence to be excessive, the school reserves the right to cease communication or only offer a reply with a repeat of key messages already shared.
- ② Though fortunately rare, the school takes any instances of inappropriate behaviour very seriously and will not tolerate any circumstances which may make pupils or members of staff feel threatened. A perceived threat, or any action which makes another individual feel threatened, can be sufficient to ban individuals from the premises;
- ② The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated on the school premises or over the telephone;
- ② Bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated under any circumstances; and
- ② If inappropriate behaviour is deemed so, the headteacher will take swift and appropriate action to communicate this to the relevant parents/carers so they clearly understand how their behaviour is inappropriate. The headteacher will follow this up in writing and will seek the advice of the Chair of Governors and (if deemed necessary) that of legal representation.

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Appendix 1: School Contact List

Who should I contact?

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@fernwoodprimary.co.uk or telephone 0115 9155727

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: Please check our [website](#) and ClassDojo first, as much of the information you need is posted there. We will aim to respond to all emails within 5 working days.

I HAVE A QUERY ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO...
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher(s) in the first instance.
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher(s) in the first instance.
Payments	School Office Admin admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
School trips	Depending on your query, message your child's class teacher(s) or the office: School Office Admin admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Attendance and absence requests	Mrs Bluett admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Admissions	Mrs Bluett admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's class teacher(s) in the first instance.
School events	See the school website School Office Admin admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Special educational needs / SENDCO	Inclusion Lead and School SENCOs Lorraine Jones Lorraine.Jones@fernwoodprimary.co.uk Jen Stirling jennifer.stirling@fernwoodprimary.co.uk Ysabella Tant ysabella.tant@fernwoodprimary.co.uk Jenny Shannon jenny.shannon@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
After School/Breakfast Club	FAO Wraparound Team School Office Admin admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Parent Teacher Association Friends of Fernwood	Friends of Fernwood fof@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Catering/meals	School Office Admin admin@fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Complaints	If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found on the school website.