



PARENT/CARER COMMUNICATION POLICY

Hillcrest School is committed to fostering a positive relationship with the pupils' parents. Educating young people is a process that involves a partnership between parents, teachers and the wider school community. As a partnership, our parents will understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip our students with the necessary skills for adulthood.

Crucial to this is building and maintaining effective ongoing communication between the school and the parents about the student's academic performance and personal wellbeing.

Nurturing a positive communicative relationship with parents can help to establish a relationship of trust and confidence for both the school and the parents. It can also help the pupil's attendance, attainment, and wellbeing, and a better understanding of the individual needs, abilities, and interests of the students.

Having effective communication in place helps to ensure that parents are more involved in their child's life at school. Effective communication can also ensure that parents are involved in decision-making about their child's needs in the school.

This policy outlines how the school puts appropriate systems in place to ensure that communication always remains professional, and that communication doesn't become excessive, unjustified or otherwise unengaging for the parents.

AIMS:

- That appropriate systems are in place to ensure that communication always remains professional, and that communication doesn't become excessive, unjustified or otherwise unengaging for parents.
- That parents and all members of the school community work together and treat each other with respect and understanding. Supporting the school's ethos through their behaviour and actions.
- That all students and adults feel welcome and safe on the school site and act in accordance with the school's code of conduct.

WAYS WE ENGAGE WITH PARENTS/CARERS:

The school will utilise a variety of physical and digital mediums to communicate with parents.

Channels can include, but aren't limited to, the following:

- The school website
- The school newsletter
- The school's social media channels
- Apps – e.g. ParentMail and Study Bugs
- Phone calls
- Text messages
- Letters
- Face to face and online meetings

The school will avoid technical educational jargon when communicating with parents. A warm, friendly, welcoming tone across all channels will be utilised to foster positive relationships. The school will always respond promptly to emails, letters, and phone calls from parents/carers.

APPROPRIATE FORMS OF CONTACT

The school has an email address enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk and telephone number 0121 464 3172 for general, SEND and policy enquiries. Enquiries meant for specific staff members will then be referred to the appropriate member of staff.

Parents should always contact the school if they have a concern about their child.

As natural role models for their children, parents will be required to model good behaviour when communicating and interacting with the school.

Parents should refrain from contacting the school if they intend on displaying inappropriate behaviour towards the school.

Parents should take the work/life balance of school staff into account by avoiding contact with the school or individual staff members outside of normal school hours. This will be with the exception of emergency situations, e.g. where a safeguarding concern requires immediate attention.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS:

- That all adults always set a good example to students, showing them how to get along with all members of the school and wider community.
- That all adults seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view to bring about a solution to any concerns.
- That no member of staff, parents or students are the victims of abusive behaviour or open to threats from others on the school premises or via school or other communication channels (including email and phone calls)
- If a visitor's conduct on school premises is deemed to be offensive, threatening, and aggressive or causes any form of distress or harm, they will be asked to leave the school premises and must leave at once.
- Physical attacks and/or threatening behaviour, such as abusive or insulting language, verbal or written to staff, governors, parents and carers, students and other users of the school premises will not be tolerated and will result in withdrawal of permission to be on the school premises. Any parent who is asked to leave the premises/banned from attending the school site will have the right to appeal the decision by writing to the Chair of Governors.

GUIDELINES:

Types of behaviour that are considered unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards any member of the school community are as follows:

- Sending inappropriate, rude, confrontational or threatening letters, emails, voicemails, text messages or postings on social media.
- Being manipulative or threatening.
- Speaking in a tone that is deemed abusive or swearing either in person or over the telephone.
- Makes sexist, racist, homophobic or derogatory comments.
- Being physically intimidating, e.g. standing very close, pointing or gesturing in a threatening way.
- Making any form of physical contact.

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this Parent/Carer Communication Policy-may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences. This may include:

- Utilising mediation and counselling services.
- Receiving a warning letter.
- Alternative communication strategies being applied. E.g. contact through a representative.
- Formal notice preventing entry onto school premises or attendance at school activities. Written notice will follow any verbal notice given.
- An intervention order being sought.
- Informing the police which may result in a charge of trespass/assault or legal action.

School premises are private property and parents have been granted permission from the school to be on the school premises. Under section 547 of the Education Act 1996, it is an offence for a person to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises, and the police may be contacted to assist in the removal of individuals from the premises, where necessary.