




The Coombes Church of England Primary School

Communications Policy

Aim of Policy:

This Policy outlines the school's channels of communication and how communication success is measured.

Description: This policy describes the methods of communication used and available for use within The Coombes Primary School to establish efficient and effective communication between staff, pupils, parents/carers and the wider community.

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1.0 Aims

Effective communication is an integral part of The Coombes' continual strive for excellence and to ensure that all our children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This policy outlines the school's channels of communication and how communication success is measured.

2.0 Rationale

Efficient, effective and interactive communication is essential if all members of the school community, the wider local community and other stakeholders are to work together to support and enhance the learning and development of our children. Hence, through a spirit of partnership, trust is built, understanding is developed and shared, decisions made and appropriate communication action taken, as necessary.

3.0 Objectives

All communications at The Coombes aim to:

- Be clear, concise, timely, appropriate and measurable (where appropriate).
- Be open, honest, ethical, impartial, respectful and professional.
- Be delivered through the most pragmatic and efficient method.
- Take account of all school policies.
- Be confidential and protect privacy, if necessary.
- Be entirely compatible with the school's mission, vision and values.

- Provide the opportunity for appropriate response.
- Be ever conscious of the cost of communication transmission.

4.0 Key Audiences

- School governors, teachers and staff.
- The school's children.
- Parents, guardians and carers of the children.
- Prospective parents or guardians.
- The local residents and the wider local community.
- The management of the Keys Academy Trust.
- Other schools in the Keys Academy Trust.
- Suppliers, contractors, external agencies and volunteers to the school.
- School Alumni.
- Other school stakeholders, including the Oxford Diocese, Ofsted and SIAMS.

5.0 Guidelines and how to get information

The Coombes' communications need to reflect statutory requirements and what is considered essential or important to the smooth running of the school. The professional integrity of the school will be upheld at all times. Discussions about pupils, events or plans must not be discussed with a third party, if it may damage the school, or affect the identity or privacy of a child.

Governors, parents, guardians, carers, volunteers, suppliers and visitors to the school are expected to uphold this professional outlook and therefore fully respect confidentiality, privacy, appropriate communication response, the use of social media and the ethics of the school at all times.

The Headteacher and the school office are the main originators of information. All audiences, especially parents/guardians and pupil family members, needing information are asked to use the school website as first port of call. Parents are asked to only telephone or email the school if necessary.

All parents sign the Home-School Agreement each academic year, which refers to the Parent Acceptable Use Agreement. (E-Safety policy appendix 7)

Staff follow the Staff Code of Conduct & Personal Behaviour policy and adhere to Social Networking Guidance (E-Safety policy).

6.0 Methods of Communication

6.1 External from the School

- The school website: Regularly updated and the first point of contact for everyone, including parents, guardians, prospective parents, governors and all other stakeholders.

- The school prospectus: Available on the website and in hard copy. This is updated every three years.
- The school newsletter: Issued every fortnight in school term. This is essential for parents/guardians to be kept well informed.
- X (formerly Twitter): The school has an active X (formerly Twitter) feed, available for anyone to follow.
- The school entrance and playground: A daily, term-time opportunity for parents/guardians to talk with the leadership team and other teachers or school staff.
- School Notice Board: Informative school information displayed, including events/reminders.
- Letters about specific events and news are sent to parents when necessary and parents may be asked for a speedy response on occasions.
- An annual report on each child's attainment and progress is sent to parents at the end of each summer term.
- Hardcopy of letters in book bags: Used as 'back-up' for the website and email communication (where deemed appropriate).
- Email: When considered important enough, email is used for notification to parent/guardians, teachers and staff especially in an emergency such as school closures in winter.
- Parent/guardian evenings: Held regularly through the year to inform parents of pupil progress.
- Home learning and reading records/learning organisers are sent home on a regular basis, with parent feedback encouraged.
- Home-School Agreement: Signed by all parents/guardians at the start of the academic year (365 form).
- Parent Teachers Association (PTA): The major supporter of the school and popular for social interaction.
- Parent information: Meetings may be held in school on various topics, as well as information shared and distributed to parents within the class.
- The local press & media: The Coombes School may feature in the press, such as the local Parish Magazine.

6.2 Home to the School

- Parents are asked to inform the school by email or telephone on the first day their child is absent. A recorded message can be left with the school office.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to keep the school up to date with contact numbers, change of address and any medical information pertinent to their child.
- In person: Conversations with members of the leadership team at morning drop off (on the school gate) or with class teachers at afternoon collection
- Telephone and email: Used to contact the school office - admin@Coombes.wokingham.sch.uk in particular to check information and to inform the school of pupil 'pick-up' changes only. Messages will also be forwarded to class teachers and other staff via this email address.
- For urgent communication please call the school office on 0118 9750761

6.3 Internal Communication

- The Headteacher, SLT, teachers and staff meet in regular diarised meetings, as part of the effective running of the school and to exchange information or news.
- The Local Governing Body (LGB) meets once a term and sub committees also meet each term, at least.
- All teachers, staff and governors have school email addresses for internal, regular and ad-hoc communication. The school staff room is a daily source of information exchange.
- Governors often visit the school and attend classes, as part of their duties.
- The Headteacher, SLT and school office are at the centre of all other telephone, email or conversational communication within the school.

6.4 Emergency and Extraordinary Event Communication

This is covered in the Business Continuity Plan and or Health and Safety policies.

7.0 Communications Measurement

The school closely monitors the success of its communication and the Governor Body, who meet each term, assess the school's effectiveness against the objectives outlined in this policy.

Also, formal measurement occurs in the form of an annual teacher/staff survey and an annual parent/guardian survey, where communication features regularly in the list of questions. A pupil survey is also held each year. The Governing Body welcomes and actively encourages feedback about communications effectiveness, throughout the year.

The Governors regularly visit the school to talk to teachers, staff, parents, contractors and other visitors, with a view to gaining an impression of communication success. Any issues are flagged to the appropriate member of staff and/or Headteacher.