



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Archibald First School

1. Introduction

Good communication between the school and the home is essential. At Archibald First School, we aim to have clear and effective communication with parents and the wider community. Effective communication enables us to share our aims and values as well as keeping our school community well informed about school life.

Effective communication has a positive impact on children's learning and the children achieve more when schools and parents work together because this

- 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

2. Aims

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

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards for responding to communication from parents/carers
- 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

We communicate with parents through a range of different strategies. Some of our communications are the result of a statutory requirement, whilst others reflect what we believe is important to our school. All written communication will be in English unless specifically requested on a Pupil Information sheet which is completed by parents when their child is first admitted to Archibald First School or when subsequent notification is received by the school.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

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

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Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's computing and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are not expected to do so.

Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct as written in our Home School Partnership Agreement.

4. Home-School Agreement

Our Home-School Partnership Agreement explains the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities towards the children, the responsibilities of parents, and what the school expects of the children. We ask parents to sign this agreement when their child starts in our school.

The agreement covers the standard of education in our school, the ethos of the school, our expectations on attendance and good behaviour, and our expectations about homework. Our Governing Body regularly reviews the Agreement every 3 years, and a copy is published on the school website www.archibaldfirstschool.co.uk.

5. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

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Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Reminders

School calendar

Our school website www.archibaldfirstschool.co.uk includes a full school calendar for the year

Phone calls

Phone calls are made as the need arises. This may be to discuss an accident or a child's performance.

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our half termly newsletter

Letters are emailed unless a reply slip is attached. A copy of each letter is added to the website.

Meetings

Parents are invited to formally meet their child's teacher twice a year for a private consultation. This gives parents the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes and support the child with any areas of development. Parents are able to look at their child's work during these meetings. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

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Coffee and Curriculum / Informal parents' events take place at least twice a year offering parents the opportunity to openly speak to the class teachers and to find out about life in school including the curriculum. The children's work is not available at these sessions.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

Reports

At the end of each academic year, we provide a written report to parents on each child's progress in the various areas of learning of the Early Years Framework or the National Curriculum subjects. This report also identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. We ask parents to make a comment on the report. Parents are also welcome to discuss reports in the Summer Term by way of an appointment with the class teacher.

Parents receive reports detailing their children's performance in statutory phases and tests at three key points in their children's time at Archibald.

- End of Early Years Foundation Stage - the Early Learning Goals attainment
- End of Year 1 - Phonics Screening score
- Year 4 Multiplication Check

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

Online Communication

Our school website is a key source of information and is updated regularly. Children and their classes 'blog' about school life via the website <http://www.archibaldfirstschool.org.uk> whilst tweets are made using the school Twitter/X feed @Archibaldfirst.

School also uses online platforms for homework across the school and for learning journeys in EYFS.

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School Prospectus

The school prospectus contains a range of specified information that gives parents a full picture of provision at our school. We update this for each school year and it can be found on the school website

Public Access Documents

The school makes available a range of documentation for parents including a range of national and Local Authority documentation. We update the key policies on a cyclical basis. Key policies can be found on the website) whilst hard copies can be requested via the school office.

Absence

If a child is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, we contact a parent by telephone, if possible, to find out the reason for the absence.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Please 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.

Face to Face

Staff are always on the door at the start and the end of the school day. Quick messages or questions may be asked and answered at this point. For longer queries or those of a confidential nature, an email or phone call is more appropriate.

Email

Parents can email the school on office@archibaldfirstschool.co.uk about non-urgent issues in the first instance. We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days. If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school on 0191 285 1957.

Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 3 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 days of your request.

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If your issue is urgent, please call the school office. Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email office@archibaldfirstschool.co.uk or call the school to book an appointment. We ask that you share with us the reason for the meeting request so that staff have the opportunity to be prepared for this.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your child's home environment, or their wellbeing

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. We currently make all whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English. We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Monitoring and Review

This policy was reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body. We are aware of the need to review the Communications Policy regularly. The policy will be formally reviewed every 3 years by the Leadership Support Committee.

Date of last review: Spring 2024

Date of next review: Autumn 2027

Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Computing Acceptable Use
- Home School Partnership Agreement
- Complaints

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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 [insert school office email address and phone number]
- 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

Our main office hours are 8.30am-3.30pm

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher
Payments	School office staff
School trips	School office staff / your child's class teacher
Uniform/lost and found	School office staff
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01912851957 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office staff for a Holiday in term time form
Bullying and behavior	Your child's class teacher prior to the Key Stage Leader, prior to the Headteacher
School events/the school calendar	School office staff
Special educational needs	Mrs Angela Ward via the school office
Hiring the school premises	The Headteacher via the school office
The PTA	Archibaldchair@yahoo.com
The governing board	governors@archibaldfirstschool.co.uk Mark Moss via office@archibaldfirstschool.co.uk
Catering/meals	School office staff

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found at <https://www.archibaldfirstschool.co.uk/contact-us/compliments-and-queries/>