Moorside Primary School

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Aim

At Moorside Primary School we aim to have clear and effective communication between staff and with pupils, parents, governors, local authority colleagues and all members of the school community. This policy will help the school avoid giving out conflicting or confusing messages, and will allow us to exercise control over what information gets released and when. In this way we can ensure that our communications with stakeholders are clear, professional, timely and appropriate. The school communications are authorised and directed by the Head Teacher.

Objectives

All communications at Moorside Primary School:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents/carers, potential parents, Trust partners, and other stakeholders (including other schools, local businesses, general public) well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon free and be easily understood by all
- Be actioned within a reasonable period of time
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, method and audience
- Take account of relevant school policies e.g. Equalities Policy, Safeguarding Policy

Communication with Staff

Meetings

- Weekly briefing/diary dates meeting
- Weekly Staff meeting
- Finance Meetings
- Time set aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to their department's priorities, activities and future plans
- Weekly Senior Leadership Team meeting

Email

All members of staff are provided with their own email account to use for all school business. Email can be an efficient way of communicating with colleagues and passing on information, however, it should not be used as a substitute for face to face contact and staff should consider whether it is the best way to communicate in each situation.

Staff should ensure that:

- They do not engage in private/personal correspondence with a pupil (this includes texting and Media Messaging as detailed in the Social Networking Policy for Staff).
- Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils, parents/carers or conduct any school business using personal email addresses
- The sending of attachments should be considered carefully
- The sending of chain letters is not permitted
- Embedding adverts is not allowed

Where staff are looking to communicate with parents using email this should be done through the school's admin email address and not through their own staff email address.

Written Communications

These are placed in the staff drawers. Staff should check their drawers on a daily basis and remove items.

Notice Boards

Communications Policy reviewed November 2019

Staff notice boards are located in the staffroom and updated daily. These are maintained and updated by relevant senior staff and the Admin Team.

Communication with parents/carers and other important stakeholders
At Moorside Community Primary School we aim to have clear, effective communications with all parents/carers and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents/carers play in supporting the school.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents/carers, it is appropriate that relationships are professional and parents are addressed in an appropriate manner.

Letters
Staff will endeavour to reply to parents' letters as quickly as possible. Letters from parents will be acknowledged within 3 working days and a reply sent within 10 working days. Letters to parents must be approved by a member of the Senior Leadership Team before posting. Copies of correspondence with parents will be placed on pupil files. The school house style for letters is to always use the school's headed paper and font Arial point 12.

Email
Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information however it does not replace face to face meeting where some discussion is required. All email should be treated as letters and should be checked carefully. Staff should acknowledge email as they would a letter, within 3 working days and send a full reply within 10 working days. Email should be written carefully, in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper. It should follow the school house style – using Arial point 12.

Telephone Calls
Staff should note the content of telephone calls, as they would with meetings of parents. The notes should be recorded on the Contact Log – detailed notes from the calls, including main points of discussion and action required/taken should be kept on pupil files.

Meeting with Parents
Any parent/carer wishing to meet with a member of staff should contact the school in advance and request a meeting with the member of staff. This request should be responded to in a timely manner. Parents/carers should not come to school to talk to a member of staff without an appointment. If a parent/carer comes to school without a prior appointment, the member of staff may choose to meet with them but there is no expectation to do so. Parents/carers, like all visitors, should report to reception.

A member of staff may request their line manager accompany them to a meeting. If the meeting is taking place outside school hours the member of staff should try to ensure another colleague is nearby. It is perfectly acceptable to bring a meeting to a close in order to allow time for further investigation.

Staff should call a meeting to a close in the event of the parent/carer becoming angry or abusive. The member of staff should report such an incident to their line manager and seek further advice. The line manager should either accompany the member of staff to a further meeting with the parent/carer or hold the meeting without the member of staff being present.

Website, Social Networking Sites/Blogs etc.
Staff will not communicate with parents/carers or pupils via social networking sites or accept them as "friends". The exceptions to this are networks/blogs set up specifically for the purposes of a) teaching and learning or b) as communication tools for stakeholders. The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. Curriculum information, policies and copies of recent letters/newsletters will be available on the website. A calendar of school events is available on the website. It is updated and maintained by the Admin Team and complies with the DfE requirements of information to be published online. We are currently reviewing Facebook, Twitter and other social sites and further information will be advised in the future.

School Prospectus
This is currently under review.

Home-school Communication
Communication between parents/carers and the school play a key part in the development, both academic and personal, of each pupil as they progress through the school. All pupils are issued with a home-school reading diary. This enables parents/carers to record a wide range of information that they wish to share with the teacher and school, and for teachers to communicate with parents/carers. Most importantly parents/carers should use the diary to check day to day progress, activities, and issues.

We encourage parents/carers to contact the school if issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

Communications Policy reviewed November 2019

If a child is absent from school and we have no indication of the reason, the Admin Officer will contact a parent/carer on the same day to find out the reason for the absence. In case of pupil absence parents/carers should contact the school by telephone as soon as possible.

Communication with other schools and outside agencies
We acknowledge the importance of clarity and confidentiality around our communications with stakeholders and the importance of multi-agency working for the well-being of all of our pupils.

Safeguarding
We are supported and regularly communicate with various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on ways to meet pupils' needs to ensure they can participate fully. Support comes from such services as Educational Welfare, Educational Psychologists, SEN Department, SALT, Occupational Therapy, School Health, Social Care etc.

We recognise that children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment as per the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Confidentiality
We hold information on pupils in our school and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details of the types of data we hold and who we may pass it on to have been sent to parents/carers through the Privacy Notice, this is also available on the school website. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents/carers have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. When emailing information about staff or pupils full names should not be used, initials only.

Policy Links
Safeguarding
Data Protection and Security
Equalities Policy

Revision Record of Published Versions			
Author	**Creation Date**	**Version**	**Status**
School	Sept 2014	1.0	Draft for consultation
Amended by	**Revision Date**	31.08.2017	Draft for consultation
	Referred top S&F	2.11.17	Discussed re social media etc
	Draft amended and circulated to S&F	3.11.17	Updated areas marked in red and circulated to S&F committee. Amendments confirmed
To be reviewed	November 2019		Draft format FGB Dec 2019