



# Heart of the Forest

## Home School Communication Policy

### 1. Introduction and aims

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
- 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

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

### 2. Roles and responsibilities

#### 2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

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

#### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT 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 not** respond to communications outside of school hours or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

#### 2.3 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



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- 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.

### 3. 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.

#### 3.1 Email/ Parent app

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

#### 3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

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

#### 3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' 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).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

#### 3.4 Phone calls

We will call home to:

- Inform you if your child is ill
- To gain information about non attendance when required
- To inform you of incidents that may have occurred during the day
- To set up home learning when needed
- For general enquiries and information that we may need?????



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### 3.5 Letters and Notes

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Letters to arrange parent evenings

### 3.6 Home/School Diaries

Each pupil has a home school diary which class staff write in each day. These are sent home and parents have the opportunity to write in each evening to let the class staff know what the pupils have been doing and how their time at home has been.

### 3.7 Reports

Parents 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
- Personal Curriculum Plans which show targets being worked on each term.
- EHCP reviews are held each year and parents will receive a copy of this.

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' evenings a year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

Meetings between parents' evenings can be arranged if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour or wellbeing.

### 3.9 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

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

## 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school



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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.

### 4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 5 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.

### 4.2 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 2 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 5 days of your request.

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.

### 4.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the appropriate address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

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

## 5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:



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- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.



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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 01594 822175 / [admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk)
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)

**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 / Family Liaison Worker
Payments	School Office
School trips	School Office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01594 822175  If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the Head Teacher ( <a href="mailto:admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a> )
Bullying and behavior	Assistant Head ( <a href="mailto:admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a> )
School events/the school calendar	School Office 01594 822175
Hiring the school premises	School Business Manager ( <a href="mailto:admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a> )
The PTA	See website
The governing board	<a href="mailto:ctogovernors@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk">ctogovernors@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk</a>

#### Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.