



# **Communications Policy**

**Written by the Staff of Durand**

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# **Durand Primary School**

## **Communications Policy**

### **Introduction**

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together.

In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with 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 play in supporting the school.

We have various strategies for communicating with parents. Some of our communications are in accordance with a statutory requirement, while others simply reflect what we believe is important for our school.

We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We use an easy-to-read font, and add pictures wherever appropriate. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all pupils our school.

### **Home-school agreement**

It is a requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for schools to have a Home-School Agreement in place. It 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 at our school, and to renew it each year.

The agreement covers the standard of education in our school, the ethos of the school, and our expectations regarding attendance, behaviour, and homework.

### **Reporting to Parents**

Every year we provide a written report to each child's parents on the child's progress in the various National Curriculum subjects. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. In our school we ask the children to comment on their own progress, and we ask parents to make a similar comment.

As well as receiving the annual written report, parents meet their child's teacher in the Autumn and Spring terms for a private consultation. This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes, and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement. Parents are able to see their child's work during the Spring term meeting. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

## **Children's Achievements**

Whenever possible we like to celebrate and share some of the learning that has taken place within the school. We hold an annual showcase and exhibition near the end of the academic year so parents can see the work and skills that our learners have produced and developed during the year.

Every two weeks a child from each class is awarded a Teacher's Special Award for achievement. These are displayed prominently in our main foyer and sent home with the pupil. We also celebrate specific pieces of learning by sending home an award postcard.

## **Governors' annual report to parents**

During each school year the governing body publishes an annual report for parents. This can be at any point during the school year. The governors may also hold an annual meeting for parents, at which the report is discussed. The report must contain information relating to:

- details of the annual meeting;
- action taken on resolutions made at the last annual meeting;
- details of the membership of the governing body, and of any vacancies;
- information on pupils' attendance;
- budget details;
- school security information;
- information about the progress of the school's SEN policy;
- a summary of the school's End of Key Stage Teacher Assessment results;

## **School Handbook**

The School Handbook contains a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school. We update this each school year.

## **Public access documents**

The school makes a range of documentation available to parents. We keep a master set in the school office, and we make a copy of this available on request. It contains minutes of governors' meetings, and all school policies, including those that the governing body are required to draw up in relation to the following matters: charging and remissions, sex education, health and safety, curriculum, performance management, admissions, and action planning following an inspection. It also contains a range of national and Local Authority documentation.

## **Home-School Communication**

Each term all teachers inform parents of the children in their classes about the topics to be covered during the forthcoming period. We invite parents to support their child's work through a range of suggested activities to be shared with the child at home. We also invite some parents, who have a current DBS check, to take part in any educational visit that is linked to the work when required.

The school encourages parents to share any issues about their child at the earliest opportunity. Teachers see parents immediately, if at all possible. Where this is not possible, the parent makes an appointment. We allow many parents the opportunity to have a word with the teacher when they bring their children to school, leave a message with the waiting Teaching Assistant at the door or when they collect them after school.

We arrange Parent Consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring Term for parents to receive information from their child's class teacher with regard to progress. We hold a meeting for new parents each June. The residential visit that Year 6 children make involves a meeting with parents regarding the planning and content of the visit.

We use the Schoop push messaging service to communicate with our parents and have external message boards with information that is regularly updated.

### **Communication with other schools and outside agencies**

Toward the end of their final term in Year 6, we pass on information about the children to their intended secondary schools. We endeavour to give a view of the whole child, and we include their end of Key Stage Assessments, their strengths and weaknesses, their interests and responsibilities (e.g. school council representative, playground buddy, etc.). There is also an electronic transfer of further information about the child. We may also send several items of work.

We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on ways to meet these needs, so that children may participate more fully. Support comes from medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), from child development centres, from local doctors and specialists, and from school nurses. It also comes from various welfare-focused services, such as Educational Welfare, Social Services and Behaviour Intervention units.

We recognise that children 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. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help abused children. If any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Headteacher, as designated Safeguarding Officer, who may discuss with a parent or share this information with the Social Services depending on the nature of the referral.

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 have been sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed.

### **Communication within our school**

There is a timetable in the staff room of the week's activities, and a whiteboard for the day's messages.

Written communications are delivered through pigeonholes or by e-mail.

Supply teachers can find additional information in a Supply Teachers' Information pack in each classroom. This contains important medical information, class lists and a timetable.

Staff members' personal details will not be shared with other members of staff.

### **Electronic communication**

We use the Internet, e-mail and Schoop together with our school website.

All school members may communicate with others through the Internet. There are many benefits, but also a number of possible dangers. Rules for the use of the Internet are contained in our E-Safety policy. Safeguards in our school include constant adult supervision, sites being filtered by our service provider, controlled links, and the use of child-friendly search engines.

The Internet may be used in lessons 'live' for lesson content and for interactive teaching programs.

Our school website provides information about the school, and an opportunity to celebrate children's work with the worldwide learning community.

Parents are required to sign permission slips for their child to use the Internet in school. A record of those who do not have permission, is held by each class teacher, and by the school office.

### **Use of photographs and names**

Photographs are used in and around the school for many purposes, including About Me and other displays, records of practical work (for example art or technology projects), and records of important school events.

We may use photographs of children or their work when communicating with parents and the wider community, in newsletters, in the school prospectus, on the school website, or in the governors' report to parents with parental permission. The local or national press may on occasion publish photographs of children participating in events at school.

Parental permission must be obtained before using photographs of children or their work. Parents will want to know the policy of the press about name disclosure before giving permission for a photo to be used. Lists of those children for whom permission has NOT been given will be held by each class teacher, and by the school office.

Photographs will be checked to ensure that they are suitable.

Photographs used will not be captioned with children's names. Even on the school website only children's first names will be used unless further permission has been granted.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be regularly monitored, and will reviewed in two years, or earlier if required.

**Headteacher:**

**Chair of Governors:**

**Date:**



## Home School Agreement

The staff and Governors of Durand Primary School believe that a strong partnership between school and parents is essential in the best interests of every child. We expect all parents to support the home school agreement. Any parent who expresses a wish to be excluded for this initiative must indicate this in writing to the Head teacher and Chair of the Governing Body.

### **School Responsibilities:**

- To provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment for pupils.
- To provide a challenging teaching and learning environment for pupils to reach their full potential and beyond.
- To keep parents informed of progress through regular letters, meetings and reports.
- To inform parents of learning and behavioural problems.
- To encourage pupils to have respect for others and their surroundings.
- To encourage parents to discuss concerns and participate in school life.
- To keep parents informed of school performance.

Mrs. A. L. Waters, Headteacher

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Family Responsibilities:**

- To ensure regular and prompt attendance.
- To ensure that the child is properly equipped for learning.
- To inform the school of medical or special circumstances which may affect the child.
- To support the school's behaviour policy and ethos.
- To encourage the child by talking and listening with the child about school.
- To support the child with reading and homework and ensure that it is returned within the timescale.
- To attend relevant meetings in relation to pupil progress.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Pupil Responsibilities:**

- Be kind and caring to one another.
- Be friendly, polite and use good manners to everyone.
- Respect our school environment.
- Always be honest and truthful.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Agreement signed : Year R / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6**

**Reviewed:**

**Year 1** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year 2** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year 3** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year 4** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year 5** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year 6** \_\_\_\_\_