



# Wildground Federation

## Communication Policy & Procedures

**“The best way to solve any problem in the human world is for all sides to sit down and talk.”**  
**Dalai Lama**

### **Purpose:**

Wildground Federation is committed to maintaining effective communication and relationships between parents, children and staff members as we know what a positive impact this has on a child’s learning. Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated. Such communication can be entirely positive and practical, for example to seek information, ask a question, clear up a misunderstanding, or to draw attention to a matter. Sometimes there is a need to resolve an issue or misunderstanding. Communication includes phone calls, meetings, texts, emails, social media and letters. Effective communication promotes partnership and underpins our core value of ‘Learn and Succeed Together for the Journey Ahead’.

We use the term ‘parents’ in this policy to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

The term ‘member of staff’ in this policy includes:

- Anyone employed by the school
- Anyone training in a professional capacity at the school
- Governors (when acting in this capacity)
- Volunteers at the school (when acting in this capacity)
- Anyone employed through an external agency, who is acting in a professional capacity on the school site

Our policy shares the aims of the federation with regard to internal and external communication, and the responsibilities of the federation, its staff members and parents. In addition this policy sets out the means of communication available to parents for contacting the school and our expectations from parents when visiting the school or communicating with staff at our school. The federation aims to promote effective and timely communication between children, members of staff, parents, stakeholders and all members of the school community through the following means:

- Having a clear and professional communication strategy in place to keep parents well informed about their child’s educational progress and any other matters related to their child’s overall wellbeing
- Improving the quality of education by ensuring there is a robust process in place for consultation between the federation, parents, staff members and children on key areas
- Using the methods of communication that are the most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience
- Responding to and actioning communication within a reasonable timeframe
- Being open, honest and professional with communication, whilst maintaining our core values.

We acknowledge that sometimes there can be situations that can be emotional and challenging for parents and staff to work through. Nonetheless, we expect all our community to show mutual respect. We have clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff

(through the staff Code of Conduct) and pupils (through our Behaviour policy). We also expect parents to engage constructively (through the Parental Behaviour policy) with school staff and to work together with them in the best interests of our children.

### **Inclusion:**

- It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the support of interpreters for meetings or phone calls through the EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service) support line.

### **Legal Framework:**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Parental Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Safety Policy

### **Roles & Responsibilities:**

#### ***The Data Protection Officer:***

- Informing parents about the types of data that the school holds on pupils, who controls the data, why that data is held and who it may be shared with. This information will be concise, transparent and easily accessible; written in a clear and plain language; and free of charge.
- Ensuring that parents understand their right to access information about their child that is held by the school.
- Ensuring that parents also understand their rights to rectification, to erasure, to restrict processing, to data portability and to object to processing.
- Ensuring that consent obtained from parents, and pupils where appropriate, regarding the processing of personal data is freely given, specific, informed, and an unambiguous indication of the individual's wishes.

#### ***The Leadership Team:***

- Placing key policies, documents and procedures in areas that maximise their accessibility and usefulness to the entire school community.
- Communicating important information e.g. the curriculum, clearly to parents.
- Informing parents of all school events within appropriate timelines.
- Keeping parents informed of their child's progress.

- Ensuring that individuals are informed of their rights to withdraw consent and are provided with easy ways to do so.
- Taking steps to ensure parents who do not have access to the internet can still access the information that is included on the school website.
- Ensuring the principles and procedures of this policy are followed.
- Maintaining open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comments from parents.

### **Staff:**

- Communicating important information e.g. the curriculum, clearly to parents.
- Informing parents of school events that include their child's class.
- Ensuring the principles and procedures of this policy are followed.
- Communicating proactively with parents about their child's progress and helping parents to support their child's learning.
- Staff will call parents if a child is unwell, to share about a head injury, to share important information about a child or to provide reassurance about matters of an emotional nature.

### **Parents:**

- Reading the key communications circulated by the school and responding or acting on these communications where required
- Informing the school of important information related to their child.
- Keeping the Federation informed of any changes to contact details.
- Responding to communications from the school in a timely manner
- Parents supporting requests from school staff
- Using this policy to ensure contact is appropriate and respectful

### **Communication from school to parents:**

Parents could be contacted through the following methods:

- Face to face meetings
- Letters
- Phone calls
- Emails or text messages via Arbor
- Text messages
- Tapestry online learning journal
- School reports
- Information on Federation website

Teachers update parents of pupils' progress, the curriculum content being covered, and how they can support pupils' development and progress through activities to be completed at home. This is done through Parents Consultation Meetings and also through other sessions throughout the year to keep parents updated with the curriculum. Information is also included on the school's website. School staff are on the class doors at the start and end of the day to provide a quick opportunity for any conversation.

## Communication between home and school:

The Federation office and phone line is open between 8:00am and 4:00pm Monday to Friday and outside of these times, a message can be left on the answerphone. To inform the Federation that a child is absent, parents can call and leave a message on the absence line with the staff possibly calling back if more information or clarification is required.

Any communication received during the school holidays or outside of the school day, will be responded to when school is open. If information is sought from staff who work part time, then contact will be made during their normal working pattern.

We will only communicate with parents in respect of their own child at the Federation. Requests to raise a concern on behalf of another parent or family member will be declined unless consent has been given to do so. Requests for information about another child will also be declined. Should any correspondence be received from legal advisers, then this will be shared with Hampshire Legal Services.

## Email

**Emails should not be a substitute for face-to-face conversations and we encourage parents to talk with their child's class teacher, come into, or call, the Federation office to seek a meeting with school staff.**

- If there is a non-urgent issue, parents can email the school using the address [adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk).
- Emails will be most helpful if they are concise, explaining the query in a clear way. Lengthy and overly detailed accounts can make it more difficult to understand what is being explained and to respond in a timely or clear way
- The school will aim to acknowledge an email within 5 working days and provide a further response in a timely manner. In most instances a face-to-face meeting will be more appropriate. We ask that parents await a response from the school and that further emails are not sent pending that response.

## Meetings

- Face-to-face conversations are generally the best way of communicating with the school at drop off or pick up for quick, short messages
- When a member of staff is not able to speak to you immediately face-to-face due to school commitments, or a longer conversation is deemed necessary or appropriate, then a request for an appointment can be made to discuss the matter either in person or by telephone, at a later date. (The Federation will aim to arrange that meeting within 5 working days)
- Outside of teaching hours, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school so availability of staff outside of teaching hours should not be assumed
- During Parent Consultation Meetings, parents can talk with staff about their child's achievements, successes and progress.
- Should a meeting be requested, the decision of which staff member(s) will attend will rest with the senior staff.
- Some meetings may be held using Microsoft Teams.

## Phone calls

- If a query or concern is time sensitive and urgent, the parent should call the school office, who will liaise as necessary at the earliest opportunity. In most circumstances, teaching and leadership staff are unlikely to be available to receive calls due to teaching and other commitments.
- If the query or concern is not time sensitive or urgent, then parents can call the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them within 5 days. If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time.
- For general enquiries, please call or email the Federation office.

## Social Media

- Social media is not an appropriate method of communication for parents to contact school.
- Staff will not communicate or interact with parents or pupils via social networking sites, except in the case of blogs or social media pages set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning.

## Communication during school hours and working days

- Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours (8.00am – 4.00pm), or their working hours if they work part-time.
- Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays
- Staff may choose to work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are not expected to do so

## Behaviours and Communication:

There are some types of behaviour that the school consider unacceptable with regards to communication. These are as follows:

- A large volume of emails in respect of the same matter over a short period of time.
- Any communication that is threatening, intimidating or abusive **or demanding**.
- Continuing to raise the same issue despite it having been already addressed by the school.
- Covertly recording phone calls or meetings with member of staff.

## School contact list:

I have a question about ...	Contact ...
Safeguarding	Come in, or make a phone call to speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead.
Child's learning and well being	Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance. You can also come in, make a call or email <a href="mailto:adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk">adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a> requesting to talk with our Child and Family Support Worker.
Completion of forms or other documents	Come in or phone to talk with the office.

Child's medical or intimate care needs	Come in, make a phone call or email requesting to talk with Head of School (INF).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments for curriculum activities or educational visits</li> <li>• Information about educational visits</li> <li>• Uniform, including quality used items</li> <li>• Information about school lunches and snack time</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities</li> </ul>	Come in, call or email <a href="mailto:adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk">adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a>
Fundraising events	Come in, call or email <a href="mailto:PTFA@wildground.hants.sch.uk">PTFA@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a>
Attendance and absence	Come in, make a phone call leaving a message on the absence line or email <a href="mailto:adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk">adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a> to talk with someone about attendance concerns
SEN	Come in, make a phone call or email SENCo: <a href="mailto:senco-inf@wildground.hants.sch.uk">senco-inf@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a> <a href="mailto:senco-jun@wildground.hants.sch.uk">senco-jun@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a>
Governance	Email <a href="mailto:adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk">adminoffice@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a> so your email can be passed to the Clerk to Governors <a href="mailto:gbclerk@wildground.hants.sch.uk">gbclerk@wildground.hants.sch.uk</a>