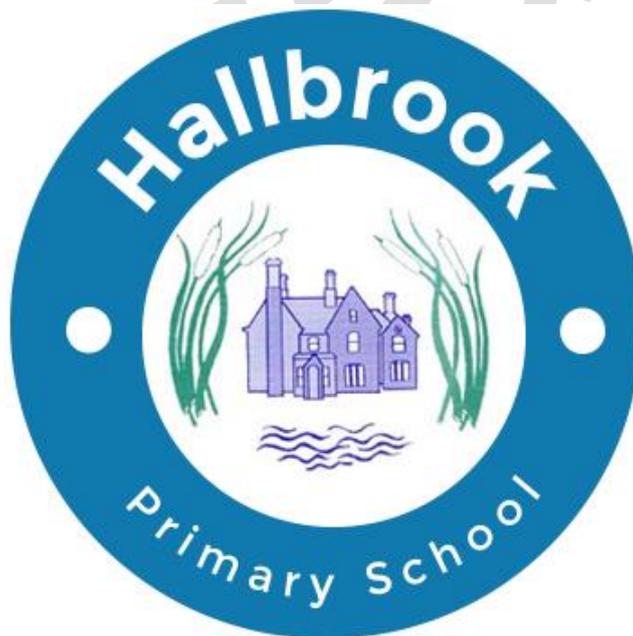


# Communications Policy

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SUCCESS  AT

Hallbrook Primary School



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Draft

## Statement of intent

At Hallbrook Primary School, staff members understand the importance of the relationship between parents/carers, pupils and the school.

At the school, there is a strongly inclusive ethos where pupils have positive relationships with adults and with each other. This policy sets out the aims of the school with regard to internal and external communication within the school, and sets out responsibilities of the school, staff members and parents/carers.

Hallbrook Primary School aims to promote effective communication between pupils, members of staff, parents/carers, stakeholders and all members of the school community. The school's objectives are to:

- Have a clear and professional communication strategy in place which helps to keep parents/carers well-informed about their child's educational progress and any other matters related to their child's overall wellbeing.
- Improve the quality of service by making sure there is a robust process in place for consultation between the school, parents/carers, staff members and pupils on key areas.
- Monitor and evaluate communication issues through regular meetings with staff, parents/carers and members of the school community.

Signed by:



Headteacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **1. Legal framework**

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000

1.2. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- E-security Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Adverse Weather Policy

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

2.1. Hallbrook Primary School is responsible for:

- Placing key policies, documents and procedures in areas that maximise their accessibility and usefulness to the entire school community.
- Communicating the curriculum clearly to parents/carers.
- Informing parents/carers of all school events within appropriate timelines.
- Keeping parents/carers informed of the progress of their child at regular intervals.
- Informing parents/carers about the types of data that the school holds concerning pupils, why that data is held, and who it may be shared with.
- Ensuring that parents/carers understand their right to view the information about their child which is held by the school.
- Ensuring that information regarding staff pay and conditions of service is made available to all who are employed at the school.

2.2. Staff members are responsible for:

- Ensuring the principles and procedures of this policy are followed.
- Communicating proactively with parents/carers about pupil progress, and helping parents/carers to support their child's learning.
- Ensuring that relevant information is passed on to supply teachers.
- Updating classroom planning files with specific pupil information.

2.3. Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Reading the key communications circulated by the school and responding/acting on communication, e.g. by attending meetings.
- Logging on to the school website for detailed information about the school calendar, term dates, exam details, monitoring and assessments, school achievements and other useful downloads.
- Informing the school of medical conditions/allergies, along with medical documentation of these conditions.
- Informing the school of child protection matters, legal issues or relevant duties with appropriate documentation.
- Raising any issues or concerns they may have with the Class Teacher in the first instance.

### **3. Internal and external communication**

3.1. It is the responsibility of all staff to maintain the school diary which should remain in the school office.

3.2. All staff will receive a weekly diary outlining weekly activities.

3.3. A whiteboard in the staff room outlines weekly activities, as well as for daily messages.

3.4. All staff members are aware of the Employee Handbook, which details a variety of school procedures.

3.5. Written communications are delivered via pigeonholes or by email.

3.6. Staff members' personal details will not be shared with other members of staff or external agencies without their consent.

3.7. Under no circumstances will staff members' personal details be shared with parents/carers.

3.8. Staff members will not communicate with parents/carers or pupils via social networking sites, or accept 'friend' requests, except in the case of blogs set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning, in accordance with the Social Media Policy.

3.9. Parents/carers will be contacted through the following methods:

- Letters home
- Text messages
- Emails
- The school website
- School newsletters

- Parent/carer meetings
  - Open sessions
- 3.10. Parents/carers will be given the opportunity to sign up to receive newsletters, etc. via email.
- 3.11. For general enquiries, parents/carers are required to ring the school office, which is open during term time from Monday to Friday between 8:30am and 4:30pm, on 01455 285693.
- 3.12. For non-urgent enquiries, parents/carers are required to email the school using [admin@hallbrook.leics.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hallbrook.leics.sch.uk)
- 3.13. All emails to the school will specify the member of staff that the query is addressed to.
- 3.14. All emails to the school will be treated as confidential, unless there is a specific reason not to do so.
- 3.15. Hallbrook Primary School aims to respond to emails as quickly as possible, within a maximum of 48 hours during term time where possible. Any delay in the response will be communicated.

#### **4. Continuous home-school communication**

- 4.1. Each term, class teachers will write to parents/carers detailing the work which will be taught the forthcoming term.
- 4.2. The school regularly updates parents/carers of ways in which they can support pupils' development and progress through activities to be completed at home.
- 4.3. Hallbrook Primary School subscribes to an electronic communication system, Parent Pay, which is utilised in order to achieve effective and consistent communication with parents/carers.
- Only the school's Parent Pay Managers will be able to access and use the messaging system.
  - Parents/carers will be asked to provide their details for the use of the system at the beginning of each academic year.
  - Any parents/carers who cannot be contacted via the messaging system will be contacted via another method set out in this policy.
- 4.4. Parents/carers will be invited to partake in any educational visits.
- 4.5. Class teachers will be available to discuss pupils' progress and any concerns with parents/carers before the start of, and at the end of, each school day.

4.6. If a child is absent from school, and the school has no indication of the reason for the absence, the school will contact a parent/carer via telephone on the first day of absence, in order to find out the reason for the absence.

- If no contact can be made with any named parent/carer, the school has the right to contact the Attendance Improvement Officer to ensure the pupil's wellbeing and safety.

## **5. Email communication**

- 5.1. Email and internet access will be used in line with the school's E-security Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement.
- 5.2. All members of staff will have their own email account.
- 5.3. Emails will not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication. Staff members will consider the best way to communicate according to each individual situation.
- 5.4. Staff members will not engage in personal correspondence with pupils.
- 5.5. Communication between pupils and parents/carers with staff members will be carried out via the school email address, and not via staff members' personal email addresses.
- 5.6. Chain emails will not be allowed.
- 5.7. The sending of attachments will be limited.

## **6. Meetings**

- 6.1. A programme of meetings will be set out in the school calendar.
- 6.2. All formal meetings will be minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda.
- 6.3. Time will be set aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to the school's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans.
- 6.4. For all formal meetings, notes will be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff members.

## **7. Prospectus**

- 7.1. The school prospectus will be utilised to communicate information including the following:

- Aims and Vision
- Curriculum
- Extra-Curricular Activities and Extended School
- Success Academy Trust

7.2. The school prospectus is reviewed annually.

## **8. Website**

8.1 The purpose of our school website is to communicate school stories to a wide range and variety of stakeholders allowing them to see deeper into what is happening in the school.

8.2 Teachers are expected to regularly post to the website what is happening in their classroom.

8.3 The contents of the website will complement the work of the school, as well as contain information about the most recent activities and successes of the school, including progress, priorities and performance.

8.4 There are statutory requirements that schools' websites must meet in order to satisfy DfE requisites, and there are also desirable, but not essential, elements the school has incorporated into our website.

8.5 The content of the website will be continuously monitored throughout the year by the Headteacher.

8.6 The content of the website will be audited annually by the Governing Board to ensure it is compliant with the DfE guidance.

## **9. Emergency communication**

9.1. All parents/carers will ensure that the school has their latest contact details, including the address, telephone number and email address, so that they can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

9.2. If a pupil is seriously ill or injured, the school will attempt to contact the pupil's parents/carers via telephone.

9.3. Where an incident affects the whole school community, such as power failure or snow, the school will send all parents/carers an email or text message.

9.4. If the school is closed for more than one day due to adverse weather or similar problem, an update will be posted on the website at least once a day.

9.5. The local radio station, BBC Radio Leicester, will broadcast a closure announcement in the event of the school closing due to adverse weather or another emergency situation, in accordance with the Adverse Weather Policy.

## 10. Accessing Information

10.1. In accordance with section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998, personal information, such as educational records, can be shared via a subject access request (SAR).

- These requests must be made in writing to the governing body, and will be responded to within 15 school days if the request is regarding an educational record.
- If the data being requested is not in relation to an educational record, the response will be within 40 calendar days.
- Some types of personal data are exempt from the right of a SAR, and so cannot be obtained by making a SAR. Information may be exempt because of its nature or because of the effect its disclosure is likely to have.
- Information regarding another individual will not be disclosed in a SAR.
- Individual requests for non-personal information cannot be treated as a SAR, but will be dealt with either as a request under the Data Protection Act 1998 or as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

10.2. In line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, private data and public records can potentially be accessed through lodging a freedom of information (Fol) request.

- These requests will be made in writing to the school, stating the name and address of the requester, as well as a description of the information requested.
- Successful Fol requests will be responded to within 20 working days from receipt of the request, unless the request does not comply with the procedure set out in the school's Freedom of Information Policy.
- Hallbrook Primary School holds the right to charge the requester a fee.
- Certain information will not be shared, such as that explained in Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

10.3. Hallbrook Primary School has the right to charge a maximum of £10 per SAR and Fol request.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

11.1. The efficiency of this policy will be continuously monitored throughout the year by the Headteacher and Governing Board.

11.2. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.

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