



Policy & Guidance

Withycombe Raleigh C of E Primary School

Whole School Communications Policy

October 2022

Overview

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 all these groups is essential, and children achieve more when everyone works together.

Every individual has the right to be communicated with respectfully. We expect this both of our staff and of every individual communicating with us.

Abusive or threatening behaviour towards any individual in our school community will not be tolerated. Please communicate in a respectful manner, even if you disagree.

Aims and Objectives

At Withycombe Raleigh Primary School we strive to maintain clear and effective communications. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values by keeping parents and the school community well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents and members of the community play in supporting the school.

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

We make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We use an easy-to-read font, and add pictures where appropriate. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial discrimination. We recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural and other groups represented in our school and community.

This Policy is supported by other Policies, including:

- Behaviour Policy including anti-bullying
- Home-Learning Policy
- Guidance on how to raise a concern
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Statement of Intent
- Facebook Page Guidelines

School Prospectus

The school prospectus contains a range of information to give parents a picture of the provision at our school. We update this each spring term.

Public Access to Documents

The school makes a range of documentation available to parents/carers including those that we are required to ratify such as: OFSTED reports, performance data, sex education, health and safety, curriculum information, admissions arrangements, and action planning following an inspection.

We make copies available on request and through our website.

Methods of communication typically include:

(There will be exceptions to this)

Who is involved	Children	Head Teacher/ Teachers/ TAs	Parents/ carers	Communications Officer/ Admin Staff	Wider community
Communication type					
Assemblies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Head Teacher's report to School Governors		✓	✓	✓	
Homework / Letters for particular issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Newsletters	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Newspaper/Radio/TV	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Notice-boards and in-school display boards	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Open days	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parents' Evenings	✓	✓	✓	✓	
PTFA meetings, social media and events	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pupils informally talking to teachers, TAs, learning support staff and other adults in the school	✓	✓		✓	
Reports to parents	✓	✓	✓		
School Council	✓	✓		✓	✓
School Governors		✓	✓	✓	
School website/social media	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Self Evaluation Form (OfSTED)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Social networking		✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff meeting minutes		✓		✓	
Texts to parents/carers			✓	✓	
Visits in person to the school office/reception	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Word of mouth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Home-School Communications

Teachers write to the parents of the children in their classes with details of the work to be covered during the forthcoming term. 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 parents to take part in any educational visit that is linked to the work.

Book bags are used for whole class or whole school communications – parents are expected to check book bags on a regular basis.

We send other letters, emails or texts of a general or specific nature when necessary.

We publish a whole-school newsletter weekly.

Communications with other schools and outside agencies

We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies. Support comes from other services (such as speech and language therapy), from specialist teams within Pupil and Family Services and other agencies within the community. We will always involve parents by seeking additional advice, help and support.

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. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Use of Photographs

Photographs are used in and around the school for many purposes, including display boards outside of classrooms, records of practical work (e.g. 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, class dojo/Tapestry, social media, or in reports to parents.

The local or national press may publish photographs of children participating in events at school, for example as part of a winning sports team.

Lists of those children for whom permission has NOT been given will be held by each class teacher, by the communications officer and by the school office who share responsibility for ensuring these children are not photographed.

Photographs will be checked to ensure that they are suitable (photos of children in swimwear would be unsuitable).

Photographs used in any media will not be captioned with full names of any children.

Images: Use and Management Policy

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, all photographs and video images of children and staff alike are classified as personal data. This means that no image can be used for display or for school publicity etc, unless consent is given by or on behalf of the individual concerned.

However, the Data Protection Act is unlikely to apply in many situations where photographs are taken within schools. The Act does apply when photographs of children are taken for official use by a school or college such as for issuing identification passes.

In the other small number of instances where the Data Protection Act does apply, if the photographer obtains permission from the parent or individual to take a photograph then this will usually be enough to ensure compliance.

There are many occasions when it is a good thing to make use of photographs and videos that include children. This is to be encouraged, however, we do all we can to ensure that images are used properly, and that as in all matters risks are minimised, and our children are kept safe and secure whether at school or elsewhere. The aim of this policy is to establish the right balance between the proper and appropriate use of technology and the safety of our children at all times.

All pictures taken will be appropriate, and will show children properly clothed for the activity in which they are engaged. We will do all we can to ensure that due sensitivity is shown in the choice and composition of these images.

Permission from Parents

All parents and carers will be asked to sign a consent form allowing (or opting out of) their children being photographed or filmed whilst taking part in school activities, and for their image to be used within the school and on the school website/Facebook/newsletter. This form will be given to the parents or carers of all children upon joining the school. This 'rolling' consent will allow the school to take pictures of pupils engaged in educational activities (e.g. sports events, drama productions, field trips) and for these pictures to be used. Where parents or carers do not give their consent, then the children concerned will not have pictures taken of them.

Parents and carers wishing to change a previous decision regarding publication of photos of their child(ren) must contact the school and complete another form.

School Performances

We do not specifically exclude parents taking video and photographic recordings of their own children during school performances. However we discourage this as it detracts from the enjoyment of performances and distracts children during productions. Only photos or video of your OWN children may be taken, stored, printed or published online.

The school will take and publish photographs for everyone to enjoy, as we know which children must be excluded from publicity due either to parental preferences or safeguarding issues.

The school will observe the way in which video recordings are made and photographs are taken during performances, and will withdraw the right of anyone to use a camera of any sort if they are felt to be making inappropriate images. For example, photography is forbidden in changing rooms or backstage during school productions.

Media Publications

Sometimes local or national media visit the school. This is often to celebrate a notable achievement by a child or a group of children from the school, or the school may have raised money for a charity whose representative wants to receive the donation in person. In this situation, where children's images might be made public, the 'rolling' consent will be observed.

Newspapers usually ask for the first names of the children to go alongside the photographs. If parents or carers do not wish this to happen, then the school will not allow the individual to be photographed or filmed by the media concerned.

Use of digital cameras/tablet cameras in school

There are many ways in which the use of digital images is valuable for children's learning (e.g. fieldwork).

Images will be made only as appropriate for school-related activities.

Children will be taught how to take pictures, but will be discouraged from taking pictures of each other, and they will be supervised by an adult at all times when they have access to a digital camera.

Mobile Phones

Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones with or without cameras into school. Adults may bring mobile phones, but will not be allowed to use them to take pictures of children on school premises. Staff and visitors must follow the mobile phone policy, and review the school site plan which shows the areas within school where mobile phones are permitted to be used.

Electronic Communication

We use the Internet and e-mail, and we have a school website. Parents are required to give permission when they register their child for them 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.

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 Internet policy. Safeguards in our school include constant adult supervision, sites being filtered by software, controlled links, and the use of child-friendly search engines.

The Internet may be used 'live' for lesson content and for interactive teaching programs through the use of a Virtual Learning Environment – or Grid for Learning.

Our school website provides information about the school, and an opportunity to celebrate our work. It complies with the Government guidelines for school websites.

Members of staff, classes as a whole, and individual older children will all have their own school-provided e-mail accounts.

The school will block / filter access to **social networking sites** such as “**YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat**” as they are age inappropriate for Primary School children.

Pupils will be advised never to give out personal details of any kind which may identify them or their location.

Pupils and parents will be advised that the use of social network spaces outside school is inappropriate for primary aged pupils. We have a school Facebook page and posts will sometimes be of interest to children (if their successes are being celebrated) and we encourage parents/carers to allow children to view this through their account under supervision.

Communications within our school

To keep school staff up to date with events, there is a shared online calendar administrated by the office staff, and a whiteboard in the main office for regular or upcoming events.

Written internal communications are delivered through pigeon holes in the corridor adjacent to the admin office.

There is a register file for each class containing copies of letters and medical information to be sent home.

Relevant information is passed onto supply teachers.

Staff members' personal details will not be shared with other members of staff or with parents or other outside Agencies.

All staff have a school email address and internal emails are used to communicate with individuals or groups of staff. Communications should be brief, clear, accurate, concise and polite. Please do not flag your email as urgent, or use all capital letters to assume greater attention for your messages.

Data Protection Good Practice Notes

Taking Photographs in Schools

Aim of this guidance

This Good Practice Guidance is aimed at Local Education Authorities and those working within schools, colleges and universities. It gives advice on taking photographs in educational institutions and whether doing so must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Recommended Good Practice

The Data Protection Act is unlikely to apply in many cases where photographs are taken in schools and other educational institutions. Fear of breaching the provisions of the Act should not be wrongly used to stop people taking photographs or videos which provide many with much pleasure.

Where the Act does apply, a common sense approach suggests that if the photographer asks for permission to take a photograph, this will usually be enough to ensure compliance.

- Photos taken for official school use may be covered by the Act and pupils and students should be advised why they are being taken.
- Photos taken purely for personal use are exempt from the Act.

Examples:~

Personal use:

- A parent takes a photograph of their child taking part in the school Sports Day to be put in the family photo album. These images are for personal use and the Data Protection Act does not apply.

Official school use:

- A small group of pupils are photographed during a science lesson and the photo is to be used in the school prospectus. This will be personal data but will not breach the Act as long as the children and/or their guardians are aware this is happening and the context in which the photo will be used.

Media use:

- A photograph is taken by a local newspaper of a school awards ceremony. As long as the school has agreed to this, and the children and/or their guardians are aware that photographs of those attending the ceremony may appear in the newspaper, this will not breach the Act.

Withycombe Raleigh Primary School

Publication Scheme on information available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

One of the aims of the UK Freedom of Information Act 2000 (which is referred to as FOIA in the rest of this document) is that public authorities, including all maintained schools, should be clear and proactive about the information they will make public.

To do this we must produce a publication scheme, setting out:

- The classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;
- The manner in which the information will be published; and
- Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. All information in our publication scheme is either available for you on our website to download and print off or available in paper form.

Some information which we hold may not be made public, for example personal information.

This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for schools approved by the Information Commissioner.

Categories of information published

The publication scheme guides you to information which we currently publish (or have recently published) or which we will publish in the future. This is split into categories of information known as 'classes'.

The classes of information that we undertake to make available are organised into four broad topic areas:

- **School Prospectus** – information published in the school prospectus.
- **School Profile** and other information relating to the governing body – information published in the School Profile and in other governing body documents.
- **Pupils & Curriculum** – information about policies that relate to pupils and the school curriculum.
- **School Policies** and other information related to the school - information about policies that relate to the school in general.

How to request information

If you require a paper version of any Policies or Documents, please contact the school in person to the office, by telephone, email, or letter.

Contact details are set out below, or you can visit our website at:

- **Email:** admin@wrpschool.org
- **Tel:** **01395 263397**
- **Contact Address:** **Withycombe Village Road, Exmouth, EX8 3BA**

Paying for information

Information published on our website is free. You can access our website using your computer, mobile phone, tablet, or if you don't have internet access you can use resources in a local library.

Single copies of information covered by this publication are provided free unless stated otherwise. If your request means that we have to do a lot of photocopying or printing, or pay a large postage charge, or is for a priced item such as some printed publications, we will let you know the cost before fulfilling your request.

Classes of Information Currently Published

School Prospectus – this section sets out information published in the school prospectus.

Class

Description

School Prospectus The statutory contents of the school prospectus are as follows, (other items may be included in the prospectus at the school's discretion):

- information about the implementation of the school policy on pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and any changes to the policy during the last year
- a description of the arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities; details of steps to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than other pupils; details of existing facilities to assist access to the school by pupils with disabilities; the accessibility plan covering future policies for increasing access by those with disabilities to the school

School Profile and other information relating to the governing body– this section sets out information published in the School Profile and in other governing body documents.

Minutes of meeting of the School Governance Committee and its committees

Agreed minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Some information might be confidential or otherwise exempt from the publication by law – we cannot therefore publish this part of the minutes.

Pupils & Curriculum Policies - Policies that relate to pupils, the school curriculum and Governance are available on the school website, in the school office, and are available in print by request.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be regularly monitored, and will be reviewed in conjunction with the School Governance Committee.

Typical Delivery Method	In person	Assembly	Phone/ Text	Email / website form	Prospectus	Leaflets in reception	School Website (in print by request)	Newsletter	Social media	Book Bags	Posters or school displays	Newspaper/TV/ Radio (after the event)
Information/communication type												
Absence reporting			✓									
Cancellation of a club		✓	✓	✓					✓			
Celebrations of success (eg sports team)	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Complaints (or by letter)	✓		✓	✓								
Contact information (school address, phone No etc)					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Governor communications/ minutes of meetings							✓	✓		✓		
Homework and spellings							✓			✓	✓	
Information about current class topics (topic webs)		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information about school menus (also on ParentPay)		✓				✓	✓		✓		✓	
Invitation to parents evenings			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Key information (uniform, opening times etc)					✓		✓					
Open days (for prospective parents)						✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Optional or special events (such as charity mufti day)		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PTFA communications events/news such as school disco							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Request for a meeting with teacher/parent/staff	✓		✓	✓								
School Club timetable		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓			✓
School Curriculum							✓					
School Documents (eg absence request forms)						✓	✓					
School Policies							✓					
School Profile: information included in the school profile eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> performance data Ofsted report Christian Values/ British Values 	✓	✓			✓		✓				✓	
School trip arrangements		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Sick or injured child needs collecting/other emergency			✓									
Special school events (eg author visit, red nose day)		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term/holiday dates				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			