

School Communication Policy

Thomas Jolyffe Primary School

To be the best we can be!



Approved by: Governing Body

Date: September 2026

Last reviewed on: October 2025

Next review due by: September 2027

1. Introduction and Aims

At Thomas Jolyffe Primary School, 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 and expectations 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

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents/carers are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing this policy annually alongside the Headteacher.

2.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents/carers 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/carers get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves) with a respectful response

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30-3.30), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

2.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers 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
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Abusive or aggressive behaviour – in person, on Class Dojo, by phone or email – will not be tolerated. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our Parents' Expectations within our Home/School agreement.

We aim to respond to all communication within 48 working hours. Parents/carers should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30-3.30).

During school holidays, designated staff have a duty to respond to only safeguarding notifications on a rota and SEND consultations made to the school by the local authority. This is organised well in advance of the holiday period. Staff are not expected to respond to contact from parents at the weekends or during the holidays.

3. How we communicate with parents/carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents/carers up to date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents/carers 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

We use email via ParentPay to keep parents/carers informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Parents' Evening bookings
- Dinner menus and dinner payments
- After School and Lunchtime Clubs (booking or last-minute cancellations)
- Upcoming trips and payments required
- Class activities or teacher requests

3.2 Class Dojo

We will post on Class Dojo about:

- Upcoming events
- Calendar dates
- Weekly newsletter Sway link
- Surveys for parents
- Information about external workshops or support sessions for parents/carers
- What the children have been doing in class 2-3 times each week
- Homework reminders
- Meetings for parents held at school
- Workshops held for parents

- Requests for helpers or resources needed
- Commendations and celebrations of children's work
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Positive behaviour points your child has earned during the day are also shared with you automatically on your Class Dojo app

3.3 School calendar

Our school website, Class Dojo and weekly newsletter include a full school calendar for the full year and are updated as new dates are booked. Where possible, we try to give parents/carers 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 make phone calls home for several reasons. Phone calls home may be made by the office staff, a member of the leadership team, a member of the pastoral and wellbeing team or any other member of staff. If you are not available we will always leave you a message and may follow up with a message on Class Dojo. This may be to:

- inform you that your child is unwell
- ask you to bring forgotten lunch, medication or swimming/PE kit into school
- to find out why your child is absent from school
- to arrange a meeting that you may have requested with the relevant member of staff
- to inform you of your child's success during the day
- to ask if you would like to look after the school guinea pigs
- to return your call if you have contacted school

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly on ParentPay:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Letters about school clubs
- Lunchtime menus and special themed day menus
- Our weekly newsletter Sway link

3.6 Homework books/Reading Diaries

- When a child has a piece of written homework, we invite you to add a comment to the homework if you wish to let us know how your child found the work. This is voluntary and only if you feel it would be a useful piece of information to share with the class teacher.
- We ask that reading diaries are signed each day to share with us that your child has read at home. All we need is the short date, book title and a signature from you. You can add a comment if you wish as this is always helpful for teachers to read, but a comment is not compulsory. Children are awarded Dojo points each time they have an adult sign their reading diary.

3.7 Reports

Parents/carers 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
- Termly progress reports which are shared at Parent's Evening in the autumn and spring term
- A report on EYFS outcomes at the end of Reception, Phonics Screenings in Year 1 and occasionally in Year 2 if children have sat a retake, Year 4 Multiplication Checks and KS2 SATs tests
- We also arrange regular meetings where parents/carers can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.8 Meetings

We hold parents/carers' evening(s) in the autumn and spring term. We hold an open afternoon in the summer term for parents to attend. During these meetings, parents/carers 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.

The school may also contact parents/carers to arrange meetings between parents/carers' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to discuss these additional needs and to be involved at all stages in their child's targets and progress towards these in IEPs.

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/carers should check the website before contacting the school.

4. How parents/carers can communicate with the school

Parents/carers should 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/carers 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 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days, depending on working pattern.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents/carers need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

If parents/carers need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 2 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents/carers have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 working days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents/carers should 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 parents/carers would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email 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 parents/carers need to speak to them urgently, teachers need to be with the children during the core school hours at 8.45-3.30, so we recommend parents/carers book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

4.4 Home-school communications app

We aim to acknowledge all messages on Class Dojo within 2 working days, and to respond in full if needed (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 4-5 working days, depending on working pattern.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents/carers need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

We request that messages on Class Dojo are not sent to staff before the hours 7.30am or after 6.00pm so that staff have the time they need to switch off and have good work/life balance while they are home. Although staff may choose to respond out of their core working hours, there is no expectation for them to do so.

4.5 Use of AI in communicating with the school

We recognise that some parents and carers may use AI tools to support or generate written communication. We will consider all communications received and will respond appropriately to the issues and concerns raised. However, where communication is lengthy, complex, repetitive, or relates to a significant concern about a child, the school may request that the matter is discussed through a face-to-face meeting rather than continued through written correspondence.

Our priority is to establish a clear understanding of the concern, listen to all perspectives and avoid misunderstandings that can arise through lengthy written exchanges. We therefore expect parents and carers to engage constructively in meetings when requested. Our shared aim should always be to work respectfully and collaboratively towards the best possible outcome for the child.

The school will not enter into prolonged or repeated correspondence where a meeting has been offered as the most appropriate means of resolving the matter. Staff time must be used effectively to support the education, wellbeing and safeguarding of all children.

5. Accessibility

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

5.1 Parents/carers with additional communication needs

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website such as using clear fonts and text colours that show up clearly against the background colour
- Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

Parents/carers who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Sign language interpreters for meetings

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

5.2 Parents/carers with English as an additional language (EAL)

Whole-school announcements and communications on Class Dojo are can be translated into the main languages from our whole school community

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

- 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.

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every year. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Home/School Agreement
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Staff Wellbeing
- Mobile Phone
- Social Media

Appendix 1: School Contact List

General Office enquiries

Miss N Gibbons – admin2052@welearn365.com

Finance

Miss E Brassington – brassington.e@welearn365.com

Headteacher

Mrs P Liversidge – liversidge.p@welearn365.com

Interim Deputy Headteacher

Mr Mark Johnston – johnston.m1@welearn365.com

SENDCo

Mrs F Wilmot – wilmot.f@welearn365.com

Attendance and Family Support Mentor

Miss T Gibbons – gibbons.t1@welearn365.com