



Heartwood CE VC Primary and Nursery School

White Cross Road, Swaffham, Norfolk, PE37 7RF
Tel 01760 721357 | Fax 01760 720193

office@heartwood.norfolk.sch.uk | www.heartwood.norfolk.sch.uk

Headteacher Mrs Emily McMillen
Deputy Headteacher Mrs Rebecca Starman



Tuesday 4th June 2024

Dear parents/carers

Communication Survey

Thank you to everyone who took time to complete the parent/carer survey. This is really important to help shape and improve our communication with parents and carers. We are a large school of 250 pupils, and it is vital that communication is as consistent and strong as it can be with the resources and capacity we have in school. Working in partnership is paramount for your child to flourish

Some of the statistics

80% of parents/carers agreed/strongly agreed that they are happy with communication from the school.

15% of parents/carers do not read the monthly newsletter.

11% do not read emails sent by the school.

34% do not use the school's website to find out more information.

Thank you for all the positive comments and responses that were left which we will share with staff.

Responses and actions to suggestions to improve communication

Thank you for the feedback and suggestions on how to improve communication, these will help shape our current offer. Please see the detailed responses and actions below:

Suggestion/ concern	Response	Actions
Individual communication books for pupils including what they have eaten at lunchtime and who they played with	<p>We would love to have the capacity, staffing and resource to be able to give daily written communication home regarding every child, but this is just not possible with 250 children.</p> <p>It takes the teacher away from teaching the class when having to write in communication books.</p> <p>We have a system in school where we log concerns and negative behaviour, and this can be used for evidence/ support if required.</p>	<p>Parents/carers will continue to be informed of any incidents face to face or by phone. If there are any concerns the class teacher will inform parents.</p> <p>Please attend all meetings for your child and arrange any additional ones if you have any concerns or just want to know more.</p>



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<p>Consistency of communication from adults</p>	<p>We agree that communication from differing adults can be conflicting and cause confusion.</p>	<p>Teachers will continue to be the main communicator to present any inconsistencies in communication.</p> <p>Teaching Assistants will be asked to sign post the parent/carer to the teacher.</p>
<p>Parents/carers being able to email teachers and staff</p> <p>Working parents not being able to speak to the teacher</p>	<p>To protect the work-life balance and well-being of our staff the governing board agreed for communication to not continue through email. Staff were being contacted over evenings, weekends and holidays. They were also receiving emails which were personal, unkind and abusive-often when at home.</p> <p>Communication via text can be misleading and does not contain body language and tone so things can be miscommunicated and misinterpreted.</p> <p>Teaching unions support this change in communication.</p>	<p>We will remind all teachers to not communicate emails to individual parents/carers to ensure consistency</p> <p>Parents/carers continue to- *speak face to face with the teacher as their first port of call</p> <p>*call the school and leave a message for the teacher to contact them</p> <p>*email the office (with name and number only, no content) for the teacher to make contact with them</p> <p>*not email staff or the school directly- these will not be responded to or checked</p>
<p>Cannot always get to speak to the teacher</p>	<p>We understand that the windows at the beginning and end of the school day are short and that parents/carers cannot always speak to staff.</p>	<p>Parents/carers to only speak to the class teacher if they need to, as this can hold them up for other parents/carers</p> <p>Follow the box above to book in a meeting with the teacher</p> <p>Teachers to come out 5 minutes before letting the children in at 8:50am to be available for</p>



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		parents/carers (this will begin w/c 10 th June)
More parents evenings and knowing more about what my child is doing	<p>We follow the DfE guidance for parent/carer meetings with 2 per year and 1 written annual report. We cannot direct teachers to do more than this outside of the teaching hours, which unions support.</p> <p>We have introduced half termly work shares for parents/carers to attend to see their child's work and have the opportunity to chat with the teacher</p> <p>We send our half termly curriculum letters and host information sessions. Sadly, these are not well attended.</p> <p>Our website has information about all aspects of the school including the curriculum planning-outlining what your children will learn.</p> <p>Nursery and Reception children have a termly focus child sheet which is sent home.</p>	<p>Parents/carers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *attend parent/carer's meetings *attend workshares where possible *book in with the class teacher if they would like to know more about how their child is doing <p>If working parents/carers cannot attend the scheduled dates for the events above, please contact the teacher who will accommodate a different date</p>
Not being able to talk to the SENDCo	<p>Our SENDCo works part time Monday- Wednesday and will always happily meet with parents/carers at their request.</p> <p>The parent/carer with pupils with SEND survey that was sent out in the autumn term was positive and actions have been implemented since to further improve communication.</p> <p>Pupils with SEND have regular APDR meetings with the class teacher.</p> <p>This year we introduced additional parent/carers meetings with pupils with SEND which were well attended.</p> <p>We have 30% of our pupils on the SEND register, which keeps our SENDCo extremely busy- please be</p>	<p>If you would like to meet with the SENDCo, please:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *catch her on the gate to book in a meeting *email or phone the office to book in (not leaving details) and she will get back to you



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	<p>patient if she does not get back to you straight away</p>	
<p>Communicating positives to parents not just negatives</p>	<p>We communicate positives to parents by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Texts - Emails - Phone class - Certificates - Postcards - Parents/carer meetings - SEND meetings - Annual reports - Workshares <p>These may not be seen by other parents</p>	<p>Teachers will continue to be discrete when talking to parents about negative things and will ask them if they would like to go somewhere more private to talk</p> <p>All staff to continue to celebrate the positives to parents</p>
<p>Differing forms of communication</p>	<p>We are in the early stages of using the School Comms App. This replaces the old expensive text system we had in place. The app is limited to the amount of characters that we can include. When we have a lengthy communication to send, we will use an email, this is currently through a different system.</p> <p>When things are sent via paper, this is because they have a slip to return to the school.</p> <p>Last year parents/carers voted on going digital to information share.</p>	<p>Update the school Facebook group to only be for community and school adverts and PR</p> <p>Staff to all use the School Comms App to communicate short messages and updates to parents/carers</p> <p>School to look at how emails can be included in the School Comms App</p>
<p>Sometimes information is not always accurate</p>	<p>We apologise for this; we try our best but sometimes communication goes through without being double checked.</p>	<p>Implement a quality control and checking system through the office to ensure dates are correct</p>



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		<p>Continue to share dates on the newsletter and proof-read prior to publication</p> <p>Staff to be reminded to check details before sending</p>
Last minute information sharing	<p>This is usually out of our control and staff communicate at the earliest opportunity; however, we understand the frustrations with some previous last-minute communication</p>	<p>Communication for last minute changes to be via School Comms</p> <p>Staff reminded to inform parents/carers of any changes at the earliest opportunity</p> <p>No longer use Facebook for communication</p>

How can parents/carers support with effective communication?

- Read the monthly newsletter
- Read emails sent from the school (check your junk folder too)
- Read the half termly curriculum letter to find out what your child is learning
- Download the School Comms app to get the latest updates
- Attend parents/carers meetings
- Where possible attend workshares and other information sessions
- Access the website for information
- Not email school staff unless is an email for a call/meeting (with no detailed content)
- Speak to the class teacher for consistency, book in with them if you need to have a longer meeting
- Not share/read information on social media groups or the playground- this is often inaccurate and biased which leads to misunderstanding
- Inform the class teacher if there is something that they need to know to support your child
- Raise any concerns with communication to a member of staff



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We look forward to further ways to improve communication between school and home.

Kind regards

Emily McMillen
Headteacher



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