



## Communication Procedures

Date Agreed by Governors: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Introduction

Positive communication is an essential element of the aims and vision of Sherdley Primary School. This enables our children and families to feel valued and listened to. The majority of this communication takes place through the frequent but brief, verbal interactions between families and staff as children are brought to and collected from school as well as by email, telephone and our school app.

## Aim

To ensure that Sherdley Primary School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively and respectfully with each other, with our children, with their families and with other members of the wider community. We should ensure that communications between all members of the school community are open, honest, respectful, ethical and professional.

## Contact details

The school holds emergency contact details for all children on the Management Information System (Arbor). Families are expected to inform the school immediately if contact information needs to be revised/updated. Depending on the nature of the information being shared, the school will use the most practicable means to contact families.

## Communications with Families

*Hereafter the term 'families' will be used to refer to all those individuals who have a role in the up-bringing and care of the child.*

Outside of teaching their designated class, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school. These duties will include care of children, organisation of extra-curricular activities, continued professional development opportunities or whole-school coordination of a curriculum subject. Teaching staff will aim to return contact within **48-hours** of the request being made via telephone, email and/or other electronic communication i.e., school app. If a meeting is deemed necessary or appropriate, staff will aim to arrange this within **5 school days**. If the school feels that more than one member of staff is needed to attend the requested meeting, school reserve the right to exceed this number of days.

## Graduated Approach

At Sherdley everything we do is underpinned by a graduated approach – see appendix below. We request that all parents use this to direct their communication. The first point of call is always the class teacher. If following discussions with the class teacher, parents feel their concern remains unresolved, this can be escalated to the phase lead, further escalated to the Assistant Head, then Deputy and then Headteacher. Please also see our Concerns and Complaints Policy, Vexatious Policy, Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

The following list, whilst not exhaustive, covers the main ways in which we will communicate with families. All response times are indicated in the following paragraphs, where extensions are needed the family will be updated with an expected response time.

Each morning on the playgrounds there are adults that you can speak to. These adults are there to help bring children into school, take urgent messages and listen to any brief concerns. Longer discussions can be facilitated at the end of the school day. The school office is manned from 8am – 4pm daily and an answerphone is available outside of these times.

### **Emails and Electronic Information**

The school subscribes to the Reach More Parents App allowing us to send messages and email letters to families. Not only is this more environmentally friendly as it decreases paper usage, it also reduces photocopying and other costs to the school. Families must provide us with a valid email address.

Families are permitted to use e-mail as a means of providing a quick, effective way of communicating information about their child or to arrange a meeting with their teacher. All emails will be received by the school office and will be directed to the relevant member of staff accordingly. Staff will not respond to emails that are sent directly to them from families. Families are reminded that teachers are teaching and their priority is being with the children. They are actively discouraged from checking emails and the school app during the school day, therefore requests which require immediate or quick action should be communicated via the school office. Emails can be sent throughout the day however they will only be responded to between 8am and 4.00pm.

All electronic communication requiring an answer should be responded to within 48 hours. Staff are not expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to electronic communications outside of the hours stated. However, staff are encouraged to work flexibly and respond to this type of communication in a way that suits them to balance their working hours. Staff do not expect families to read, respond or action emails outside hours that suit them. Parents are encouraged to speak to staff directly where sensitive discussion is required. Staff and families are discouraged from entering into in-depth discussions about a child's progress or well-being by electronic communication.

### **Reach More Parents app**

We are a paperless school. The majority of our communication is delivered through our school app. We expect all parents to download the app in order to keep up to date with events, calendars, celebrations and any other useful, or urgent reminders and information.

### **Telephone calls**

#### **Inbound**

All telephone calls will be answered by staff in the main office. Teaching will not be interrupted for telephone messages unless it is an emergency. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person. If the call requires a response from a teaching member of staff, we aim to do this within 48 hours. A member of the office staff may respond on behalf of the staff member.

#### **Outbound**

Telephone calls will be made where immediate contact with a family member is required i.e. for illness or injuries. A member of staff will call the first named emergency contact as listed. Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth. In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will either leave an answer phone message

or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers where possible.

NB: It is parents' / carer's responsibility to ensure that all contact details are kept up to date.

### **Celebration Assemblies**

We will share with parents and carers, via the school app, when your child has been nominated for a Hard Worker or Golden Pupil certificate. Parents are then invited to attend the celebration assembly, typically on a Wednesday. We aim to give you at least 6 days notice of this. We ask that only one adult attends per child receiving. We celebrate other achievements during assembly such as Reading badges, Attendance and Housepoints which parents are not invited to.

### **Behaviour**

Our whole school behaviour system is supported by Track it Lights – see Positive Behaviour Policy. Track it Lights has an app which we encourage all parents to download to their devices. During the school day, when children receive or lose housepoints, this is sent as a notification to the app. Likewise, if children's behaviour results in them losing housepoints, they may receive a 'reflection'. This varies in length according to the incident and age of child. Parents will receive a message via the school app, notifying them that their child has been to reflection that day. They have the option to speak to the class teacher at the end of the day should they wish too. Parents are asked not to phone school during the day regarding this, as staff are teaching and are unable to take the call.

### **First Aid**

Children will receive a first aid slip if they have received any first aid during the school day. The slip will be sent home as well as a message sent on the school app. Parents / Carers will receive a call from school for any serious incidents that require a higher level of first aid or require collecting to be checked by a medical professional.

### **Attendance**

Our whole school target for attendance is 96%. We will communicate positively with you via the app when your child, their class or the whole school reach this target. If your child's attendance changes and falls into a category of concern, we will communicate this to you. We will communicate your child's attendance half termly and may send letters, emails, invitation to attendance meetings if appropriate. You can find more information regarding communication linked to attendance in our Attendance Policy including penalty notices.

### **Newsletter**

Our Newsletter is sent out each Friday via Reach More Parents and contains important reminders, dates and messages for the week ahead. Families are strongly encouraged to read the weekly newsletter.

### **Parent Consultations**

All families are provided with two, short meetings each academic year. Families are asked to book a single appointment using the Reach More Parent App for an allocated date and time and to attend together. Should there be exceptional circumstances that mean you cannot attend, your child's class teacher will offer one further appointment to the family. Families are welcome to request additional meetings should they have further concerns regarding their child's progress or well-being throughout the year.

## **Written Reports**

Once a year, we provide a full written progress report to each child's family. This report identifies areas of strength and next steps. In addition we provide termly progress reports linked to overall academic achievement and reports linked to statutory assessments in specific year groups.

## **Learning Plans**

Children on the Special Educational Needs Register have a regularly updated Learning Plan which is provided to families. Each Plan offers practical advice to families on how they can work with school staff to support their child in achieving targets to assist the child's progress.

## **Increased Communication for specific children**

We recognise that for some children with SEND, more frequent communication with parents may be necessary for a fixed period. This may link to changes, times of crisis or increased risk. For children with an EHCP, a discussion will take place between the SENDCo, teacher and parents to plan what this will look like.

## **Annual Reviews for Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will have an Annual Review each academic year to discuss their progress in relation to the aims and objectives of their plan and termly review meetings are held to ensure provision and support is appropriate.

## **School Website**

The school website [www.sherdleyprimary.co.uk](http://www.sherdleyprimary.co.uk) provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

## **Frequent contact to school**

The school values open and effective communication with all parents and carers; however, we kindly ask that communication remains appropriate and necessary to ensure the smooth operation of the school. Excessive or repetitive communication that places undue strain on school resources may result in the implementation of a formal communication plan. If necessary, legal advice may be sought to ensure that communication remains constructive and in the best interests of all parties.

## **Concerns and Complaints**

All formal letters of complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's separate Concerns and Complaints Policy. All formal letters to families must be approved by the Headteacher before they are sent.

Formal correspondence with families will be kept in the child's personal folder and held for a period of time in accordance with GDPR. The school does not accept or act upon anonymous communication unless in relation to matters of Child Protection.

## **Requests for Information**

Please refer to our Data Protection and GDPR Policy for copies of children's records, freedom of information and Subject Access Requests. This will detail procedures and protocols, including timings.

### **Final Note**

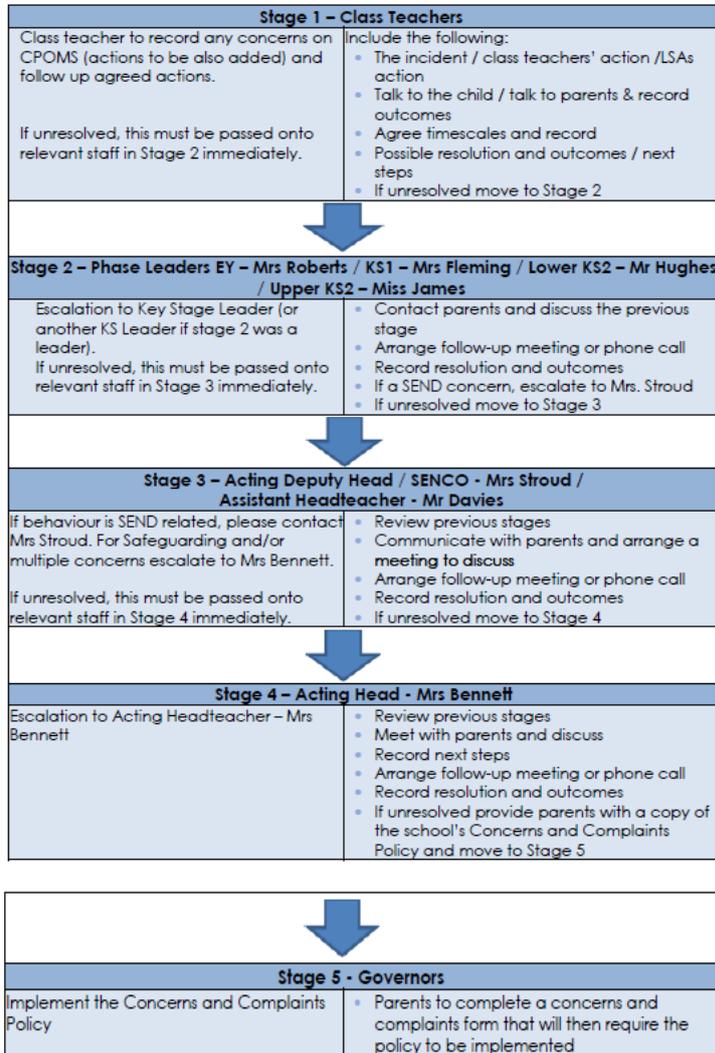
Although it is a rare occurrence, when communication becomes inappropriate, aggressive, vexatious, persistent, or disproportionate and the school deems it is unacceptable, then actions will be put in place. This behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in a parent/carer being banned from the premises for a fixed period of time. These actions will involve: The headteacher, senior management and the school Chair of Governors, and if appropriate, the police.

As stated in paragraph 2 'communications should be honest, respectful, ethical and professional', staff **will strive to adhere to this and hope this will be reciprocated by the wider school community.**

Appendix: Graduated Approach

Appendix 1 – Graduated Approach Stages for Behaviour/SEND/Mental Health/  
Safeguarding Concerns

In order to ensure that any and all concerns are responded to efficiently, a graduated approach has been implemented at Sherdley Primary School. The following 5 stages describe how we will look into and deal with any concerns. All concerns should be responded to in a timely manner and recorded on the school's CPOMS system.



**NB** - At any point in the above stages should there be a risk of significant harm a Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately.