

**BLAKENEY, PILLOWELL AND WALMORE
HILL SCHOOLS' FEDERATION**



**HOME-SCHOOL
COMMUNICATION
POLICY**

**REVIEWED: MARCH 2024
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1. Introduction and aims

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

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The headteacher is responsible for:

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

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

- Ensuring that all communications are treated as confidential within the school context.
- Ensuring that all communications are dealt with respectfully and with courtesy.

Staff will aim to respond to communication within 2 working days of receiving communications during school hours (8.30am – 4.00pm), 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.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Refer to the communication flowchart included in this policy to ensure communications are sent to the right person/people.
- Read the key communication issued by the school through Class Dojo, the monthly newsletter, messages sent and letters.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should allow up to 2 working days for staff members to respond. They should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours, or their working hours if they are part time, or during school holidays.

3. HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

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

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Class Dojo

We use Class Dojo to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Consent forms/permissions

Parents should contact the school office if they need help with accessing Class Dojo.

Class Dojo messages

Class Dojo Messaging helps teachers and parents safely and privately communicate with each other in real time. All messages sent by parents on Class Dojo Messaging can only be viewed by the teacher. No other parent (even your child's other parent or guardians) can view your messages. (see more information below about using Class Dojo messages).

Text messages

Class Dojo is the main form of communication in the Federation, however we will also use text messages to contact parents about:

- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

Letters

We send the following letters via Class Dojo regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Our monthly newsletter

If a parent requires a letter to be printed this can be done by request through the main office.

Reports

Parents 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
- A report on Key Stage KS1 and KS2 SATs tests

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress.

Meetings

We hold two parents' meetings per year. During these meetings, parents 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 to arrange meetings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

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 should check the website before contacting the school.

3. HOW PARENTS AND CARERS CAN COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL

Parents 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.

Parents should call or email the office about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Our administrators will be able to direct all contact to the most appropriate member of staff. The flowchart (appendix 1) will be followed.

Email

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within two working days.

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

Phone calls

Whilst it is possible to us email, parents should call the school office to notify the school that their child will be absent. We ask that parents call the office by 9.30am at the latest. If parents 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 two 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 have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within five days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents 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. The school office is open between 8.00am and 3.30pm, Monday - Friday during term-time. At all other times there is an answering service available to take your message. If the call requires a response, we aim to do this within 2 working days during term-time.

Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should call the school office to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request. Parents should be aware the Executive Headteacher works across all 3 schools and it may not be possible to meet within 5 days. They will endeavour to arrange a meeting as soon as reasonably possible. Alternatively, parents can speak to the Heads of school.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they 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

Class Dojo

We encourage all parents to engage with the use of Class Dojo, as this is the main form of communication provided by the school.

Class Dojo is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted class or group, e.g. specific communications regarding class trips and special events, or to all parents, e.g. urgent messages such as an unplanned school closure.

Class Dojo messages

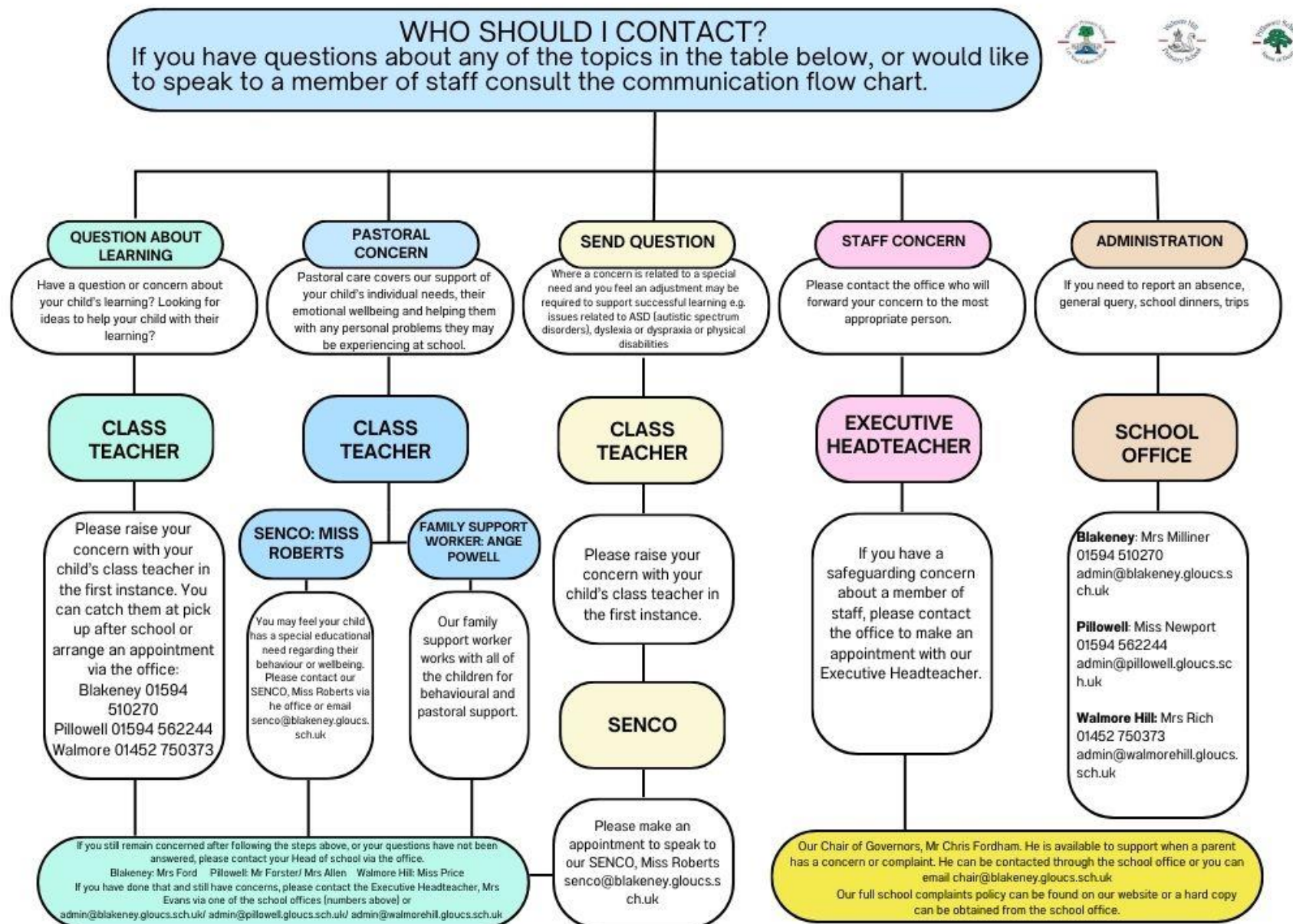
Messages will be responded to within 2 working days Monday to Friday and if a message is received after 4pm on Friday it will be responded to on Monday. If a message appears during a teacher's absence it will be responded to by the teacher on their return. Messaging through

Dojo should not be used for sensitive or behavioural issues. Parents should not report child absence through Dojo.

The following matters should always go through the office, not Class Dojo. They will not be responded to by teachers:

- Absence (such as medical appointments)
- Sickness
- School dinner enquiries
- Complaints
- Urgent messages (e.g. collection of children)

Appendix 1: school contact flowchart



Appendix 2: Useful email addresses

Parents should consult this list to use the correct email address for staff members. If this email address is not listed please use main school office email and include staff members name in the email subject. This will then be forwarded to the right person.

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
School Office	admin@blakeney.gloucs.sch.uk admin@pillowell.gloucs.sch.uk admin@walmorehill.gloucs.sch.uk
Mrs Evans (Headteacher)	head@blakeney.gloucs.sch.uk head@pillowell.gloucs.sch.uk head@walmorehill.gloucs.sch.uk
Heads of school: Blakeney: Mrs Ford Pillowell: Mr Forster/ Mrs Allen Walmore Hill: Miss Price	Please contact via the school office (email above)
SENCO and DSL (Designated safeguarding lead) Miss Roberts	senco@blakeney.gloucs.sch.uk
Governors Chair of governors: Mr Chris Fordham Clerk to governors: Mrs Jenny Purshouse	chair@blakeney.gloucs.sch.uk Federation.Clerk@blakeney.gloucs.sch.uk