



Heathfield Knoll School

Communications Policy

This policy is supported and complemented by the following policies:

- Acceptable Use of ICT
- Social Media
- Safeguarding & Child Protection

Key personnel:

Headteacher
Deputy Headteacher
Head of Early Years
Assistant Headteacher, Head of Connect

Lawrence Collins
Emma White
Celia Swain
Jane Cain

This document is reviewed at least annually by L. Collins, Headmaster or as events change or legislation requires. This is then approved by the Governing Board.

The Governors have the skills to support and advise the school in its decision making.

Reviewed: July 2026
Updated: August 2026
Next review due: June 2027

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This policy was created following a survey of teachers about the factors that added to their workload. A key finding of this consultation was that the need to communicate with parents and carers placed a significant demand upon our teachers within a busy teaching day. As a school, we decided that we had to manage both parental expectations of teachers and ensure high standards of home-school communications.

Outcomes

- Our policy has led to a reduction in the demands to respond to parental emails outside of business hours, allowing for clearer work and home boundaries.
- Parents and carers better understand the context in which teachers are working, and can modify their expectations of an immediate reply.
- By signalling the first ports of call, we have ensured that communication is distributed and directed more appropriately across the staff team.
- Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to further improve the process.

1. Overview

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise, however, that it can often be challenging to communicate with teachers because they have a very full timetable, and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives.

2. Contacting the School

Email communication is the preferred method for non-urgent matters. Telephones should be used where a more immediate response is required.

When handwritten notes/messages are sent to school, please leave them in the mailbox located in the Reception of the main house. If the student retains the note, they are responsible for showing it to the correct teacher.

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so; however, the majority of teachers' time is spent teaching and preparing lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time.

3. Telephone

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Reception staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the receptionist, who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will respond to you on the same day.
- Please note that lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

4. Email

Please use staff email addresses if you need to contact staff directly:

- Teachers are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day, and the school does not expect work emails to be checked during a teacher's time.
- We aim to respond to you as soon as possible; **during term time this is typically within 24 hours and at the latest within two working days.** Part-time staff may take longer to reply. **There is no expectation for staff to respond to emails during weekends and holidays.**

5. Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them.

- In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:
 1. Form teacher or subject teacher
 2. Key Stage Lead (main school) or Head of Connect (Connect)
 3. **Deputy Headteacher (Junior School) or Headteacher (Senior School)**
 4. Headteacher
- Meetings should always be pre-arranged with staff members.
- If you urgently need to see someone, for instance, if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.
- For non-urgent meetings, we will meet with you within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion to effectively manage multiple demands.

6. Contacting parents

Our preferred method of contacting parents is by telephone or via SchoolBase.

7. Social Media

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information, and general educational content. You can find these by looking at:

Facebook – Heathfield Knoll School and Nursery

Instagram - @heathfieldknoll

LinkedIn - Heathfield Knoll School and Nursery

YouTube - @heathfieldknollschooll638

8. No Response

If you have not received a response from the school within three working days, please contact the school by emailing info@hkschool.org.uk.

Amendments to the Policy

27/07/22	Staff changes	T.Stooksbury
31/01/23	Parts reworded	H.Griffiths
28/08/23	Order of school contacts amended to reflect SLT changes	L.Collins
27/03/24	Changes Local Advisory Board to Governors	T. Stooksbury
18/07/24	Updates to staffing.	L. Collins
07/10/24	Company name change	T. Stooksbury
15/06/25	Updates to social media	L.Collins
15/08/26	Updates to response time (to include reference to holidays)	L.Collins