

## Communication between School and Home policy

Status: Non-Statutory

Review period: Two Yearly

Reviewed: October 2025

### 1. Context and aims

**Crawley Ridge Junior School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All governors, staff and volunteers share this commitment and are trained in safeguarding policy and procedures. Any safeguarding concerns which arise at school should be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Leads [DSLs], Lisa Culligan or Laura Smart or Deputy DSL's, Cat O'Connor or Diana Buzura.**

At Crawley Ridge Junior School, our school Values (Positivity, Respect, Belonging) are at the heart of everything we do. We aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them to maximise their potential. This encompasses all interactions in school, between pupils and staff, amongst staff and amongst pupils. We aim for our Values to show through everything that is said and done in school. The values of positivity and respect are particularly relevant to this policy and our aims of effective and appropriate communication between home and school.

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and we believe that children achieve more and get more out of their school experience when schools and parents/ carers work together. Parents/ carers can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve.

At Crawley Ridge Junior School we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents/ carers and with the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents/ carers well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents/ carers play in supporting the school and their children's education. We have various strategies for communicating with parents/ carers. Some of our communications are in accordance with a statutory requirement, while others simply reflect what we believe is important for our school community.

#### **General guidelines for communication**

- (a) Communication from the School should keep all stakeholders well informed, and be honest, open, ethical and professional
- (b) Methods of communication should be chosen so they are most appropriate to the context, message and audience
- (c) Communication should take account of relevant school policies, and be compatible with our School Values and School Development Plan
- (d) The school aims to respond to all communication from parents/ carers as early as possible – in most cases this will be within 3 working days, and always within 5 working days. In the case of emails, a

response to acknowledge receipt of an email will be made where information needs to be sourced or the email is passed on to a member of staff for a response. Precision, clarity and brevity in email communications from both parties will enable timely responses.

(e) When the school is communicating with parents/ carers, we are only able to discuss their own child/ren. It is not appropriate to discuss in detail the provision, behaviour or consequences relating to other children.

(f) We encourage positive, respectful communication between home and school, and therefore expect that parents/ carers remain calm and polite when discussing matters with members of staff, regardless of the form of communication (i.e. in writing, over the telephone, in person). Aggression or rudeness to our staff will not be tolerated and if this occurs, the discussion will be terminated and parents/ carers will be asked to discuss the matter at another time or with another member of staff. In addition, communication should take place at an appropriate time (i.e. when the school day has started and teachers have taken charge of a class, they will not be able to discuss issues and an alternative appointment should be made).

(g) Should the Headteacher have any concerns about appropriate communication between home and school, a Communication Protocol may be put in place to aid appropriate communication and clarify procedures and expectations for both parties. We also reserve the right to restrict communication channels if the Headteacher feels this is appropriate.

## **2.Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

Ensuring that communications with parents/ carers are effective, timely and appropriate

Regularly reviewing this policy

### **2.2 Staff**

All staff are responsible for: Responding to communication from parents/ carers in line with this 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)

We do not expect staff to respond to communications outside of school hours or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

### **2.3 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

Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner

Checking all communications from the school, including the Newsletter

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be treated in line with the Surrey CC 'Keeping Schools Safe' guidance.

### 3. How we communicate with parents and carers

**School Website:** This is the primary repository for general information and news about our school.

**Home-school agreement:** This is a requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (see appendix 1). It explains the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities towards the children, the responsibilities of parents/ carers, and what the school expects of the children. We ask parents/ carers to sign this agreement when their child starts at our school, and where possible, for the children to sign it too. The agreement covers the standard of education in our school, the ethos of the school, and our expectations regarding attendance, behaviour and homework.

**Annual written report to parents/ carers:** It is also a statutory requirement that school provide an annual written report to parents/ carers. Every summer we provide a written report to each child's parents/ carers on the child's progress in the various National Curriculum subjects. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. In our school we ask the children to comment on their own progress and achievements during the year, and we ask parents/ carers to make a similar comment. Teachers are asked to report their 'Teacher Assessment' in Reading, Writing and Maths and we also give parents/ carers in Years 4 and 6 the details of their child's performance in the national tests, and details of national comparisons.

**Parent/ carers consultations:** Parents/ carers are provided with the opportunity to meet their child's teacher twice a year (autumn and spring terms) for a consultation. This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes, and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement. Parents/ carers are also given information on where their child is performing in relation to age related expectations and targets which the child is currently working on in core subjects. **We encourage parents/ carers to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being at any time throughout the academic year.**

When children have Special Educational Needs, or if they are making less than the expected progress, teachers may find it helpful to meet with parents/ carers more regularly. A child, whose progress is causing concern, or a child who has identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) will be reviewed and supported in line with the current Local Authority (LA) 'Code of Practice' and within school policy, protocol and procedures. Parents/ carers will be kept informed of all monitoring outcomes and educational provision made.

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice parents/ carers are encouraged to be involved from the initial stages. Parents/ carers are given the opportunity to express their views, be active in decision making and participate in their child's education, at review meetings, parent consultations and induction meetings. Where appropriate, pupils are given the opportunity to express their views and comment on their success and how best to support them (see SEND policy for more information). Parents/ carers will be invited to meet with the school's SENCO during the autumn and spring Parent/Carer consultations.

If a child has been involved in a **behavioural incident** (either as the perpetrator or the victim) we aim inform parents/ carers on the same day wherever possible. If a child has had an injury at school which we feel parent/ carers need to know about, we will call them as soon as we are able to after it has happened.

**Parentmail:** is our online messaging service which enables us to send letters and messages directly and quickly to you via email.

**Fortnightly Newsletter:** sent to parents/ carers electronically every week throughout the year. It contains general details of school events and activities. Parents/ carers expect the newsletter, and appreciate the regularity of the contact. We send other emails/ letters of a general nature when necessary, such as:

- Letters about Educational Visits - payments, confirmation and approval
- Invitations to SEN Meetings, School Performances, Sporting Events, assemblies etc.
- Letters regarding curriculum enrichment activities

## Curriculum information sessions

All teachers hold a parent curriculum information session at the start of the academic year. Parent meetings are held for Year 4 parents outlining the MTC checks which take place in June and Year 6 parents giving SATs information.

Children also receive homework on a regular basis weekly and feedback to pupils is on a regular weekly basis.

**Parent Surveys:** this is our primary method of receiving structured feedback from parents/ carers on how they feel the school and their child is progressing. We use a common bank of questions in our annual survey so that we can compare year on year.

**Parent drop in sessions:** These are informal sessions which allow parents to have a voice in all aspects of school life and see the school in action.

**SEND parent coffee mornings:** These are half termly events to allow parents of children with SEND to meet up in an informal way and connect. Members of the leadership are on hand to answer any questions for part of the session.

**Social Media:** We use Facebook (Crawley Ridge Junior School) to share information about the school's work with the wider online community.

The school aims with all parental communication to provide two weeks' notice of events or dates where possible. Where formal meetings are arranged, the content information of the meeting and attendees are shared when known.

## 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Please make sure that you contact the most appropriate member of staff for your query/ information (appendix 2 below is a useful guide for 'what to do if...')

**School Office** – this is staffed between 8 am – 4pm each day. If you call the school outside of these times your call may not be answered. Parents/ carers should contact the School Office, rather than the class teachers, for all administrative matters (i.e. absence/ payments). If your child is absent you can leave a voicemail, notify via Parentmail or send an email to the office (not the class teacher), stating the reason for absence, which will be picked up in the morning.

**Informal Playground Discussion** - Class teachers bring children into the playground at the end of the day, meaning that if parents/ carers bring/ collect their child, they can catch staff for a quick chat once all other children have been dismissed. If you would like a longer appointment, you can make an appointment for a different time with them for a meeting or telephone call. Email direct to teachers via year group emails. Class teachers check their emails regularly (i.e. at least several times per week) but not necessarily daily, so please bear this in mind when emailing. Please do not contact teachers about administrative issues via email, i.e. absence, if someone different is picking up children, as all administrative enquiries/ information should be sent to the School Office. As we do not expect the teachers to check their emails daily, if there is an urgent issue, it is best to talk to the teacher in person/ call the School Office and pass on a message.

**Concerns or complaints** - If you have a concern/ complaint we would encourage you to discuss it with the school at an early stage so that problems or worries do not fester. Most concerns or potential complaints are best settled by a discussion with the class teacher or another member of staff before reaching the complaint stage. For further information on concerns/ complaints please refer to the TAMAT policy for Crawley Ridge Junior School available on our school website so that you are clear about the correct procedures to follow in raising your concern.

## 5. Communication with other schools and outside agencies

Toward the end of their final term in Year 6, we pass on information about the children to their intended secondary schools. There is also an electronic transfer of further information about the child, organised by the government. Should another school (usually an independent school) require a detailed reference from our school for a child who may be leaving our school to join them, we will ask for a voluntary contribution from their parent.

We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on better ways to meet these needs, so that children may participate more fully. Support comes from medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), from child development centres, from local and LA doctors and specialists, and from school nurses. It also comes from various welfare-focused services, such as Education Welfare, Social Services and Behaviour Intervention units.

We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help abused children. So when any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the school (see Child Protection and Safeguarding policy).

We hold information on pupils in our school, and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes.

## Appendix 1

### Crawley Ridge Junior School Home School Agreement

Our home-school agreement is reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governors. It is provided to all new families joining the school. We also publish it annually on the school website.

#### **The School**

We will:

- Promote the development of our school Values through all aspects of our provision
- Provide a positive caring environment which promotes learning, is happy and well disciplined
- Work towards every child achieving their full potential as a valued member of our school community
- Offer a high standard of education through a broad, balanced, relevant and enriched curriculum, following national guidelines and assessment procedures
- Encourage your child to develop a positive attitude to others, regardless of gender, race, culture, belief, age and ability
- Celebrate personal and academic achievements
- Set, mark and monitor homework in accordance with the school's policy
- Work in partnership with parents/ carers and maintain good communication using a variety of methods
- Contact parents/ carers promptly in case of accident/sickness or other concerns
- Meet with parents/ carers at mutually convenient times to discuss progress and concerns
- Report termly on children's progress through parent/teacher consultations and an annual written report
- Promote children's health, wellbeing and safety
- Be very happy to welcome you to support the school community in a variety of different ways

Parent/Carer

I/We will:

- Maximise my/ our child's attendance, and ensure they arrive at school by 8.45am, properly equipped and wearing the correct named school uniform

- Make the school aware of any change in circumstances or concerns that might affect my/our child's learning, behaviour or ability to do homework and let the school know if there is any aspect that I/we need support with
- Support and work with the school to ensure that the behaviour management policies are maintained, particularly for my child, encouraging respect for the school, staff and other pupils
- Support my/our child with homework tasks and make sure they are completed and returned on time, as well as encouraging regular reading
- Attend parents/ carers' evenings and meetings about my/ our child aiming to be positive and productive, working towards moving my/ our child on in their learning
- Be involved in my/our child's life at school and support school events for the benefit of a variety of causes and also our school community
- Use my/ our time and experiences to enhance my/ our child's learning at home
- Read all information sent home as this gives important details of relevant news, policies, meetings, activities and events
- Support school policies to promote my/our child's health, safety and security, including online safety. For CRJS policies see the school website
- Always communicate with the school appropriately and politely
- Not post any on-line offensive or slanderous comments on any social media site, or on WhatsApp groups about the school or any of its pupils, parents/ carers or staff members

Please scan the QR code below to sign the agreement or visit: <https://forms.office.com/e/1E0BCsAYhK>



The Pupil I will:

- Try my best at school and for my homework
- Bring all the things I need for school
- Wear school uniform and look neat and tidy
- Be polite, helpful and behave well at school • Respect other children's culture, race and beliefs
- Keep to our Class Agreement and the CRJS promises (on display in class)
- Take responsibility for the things that I do
- Speak to an adult if I am worried, upset or unhappy.

Children will be asked to sign the agreement as part of a class assembly after discussing the information above

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Crawley Ridge Junior School *What to do if...*

Situation	What to do and who to contact
You have a safeguarding concern	Talk to one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads (Mrs Culligan, Miss Smart, Miss O'Connor or Mrs Buzura)
You have a Health and Safety concern	Speak to any member of staff immediately
Your child is ill or absent	Notify the school via Parentmail or call the school office and leave a message on the child absence line option. Please report by 9am or you will receive a call asking about your child's absence.
The person collecting your child from school is different than would be expected by staff	Ideally inform the class teacher via a note sent in with your child or given to a member of the leadership team on the gate. If there is a change throughout the day, phone or email the school office prior to pick up as soon as possible. <b>Please do not email the class teachers via year group email</b>
You are requesting a leave of absence during term time	Collect an 'Application For Leave Of Absence for Exceptional Circumstances' form from the school office or download from the school website <i>Please note leave will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and will not be granted for term time holidays</i>
Your child is late for school	Bring your child to the school office and sign them in
Your child has an appointment during school hours	This should be for urgent or exceptional appointments only, not regular dentist/doctors appointments. Inform the school office via email

	as early as possible. On the day, sign the child out of school and sign them back in again when you return.
You are moving home (address) or you are changing your emergency contact numbers/domestic arrangements	Email or write to the school office providing updated details as soon as possible. Ideally, we will need at least three contacts for each child.
You are moving school	Email the school office with details of the date you are leaving and the destination school.
You are worried about your child's progress	Talk to the class teacher
You wish to remove your child from an aspect of school which is non-statutory e.g. certain relationship and sex education lessons	Contact the Headteacher to discuss
You are helping at school (you must be DBS checked)	Sign in and out each time you are in school and wear a visitors lanyard
You would like to help out in school	Contact the class teacher or phase leader and let them know when you are able to help. Please do not be offended if the times you would like to help are not convenient for the school.
You think your child might be eligible for Free School Meals	More details can be found at <a href="http://gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals">gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals</a> Contact the school office if the criteria applies to you-you will need to complete a form with your National Insurance details
You require a payment plan or financial support for a residential or school trip	Contact the Headteacher to discuss
Your child has headlice or similar	Contact the school office immediately so that other parents/carers in the class can be notified.
Your child has lost their property ( <i>ensure everything is labelled!</i> )	Check the lost property box which is located near the gates-all unlabelled items will be put here. All labelled items are returned directly to the children however sometimes items are taken by mistake so may take a bit of time to be returned.
Your child has vomited/had diarrhoea	Do not return until 48 hours after last bout of vomiting/diarrhoea.
You are concerned about something	Talk to the most appropriate member of staff as early as possible so that concerns do not fester. In most cases this will be the class teacher.
You wish to make a complaint	See the complaints procedure on our school website and ensure you have followed the correct steps prior to beginning the procedure
You are not sure who to contact about your query	Contact the school office who will point you in the right direction or try to answer the query for you