Ravenbank School Communication Policy

Working Together to Achieve Success

Introduction

At Ravenbank School, we believe clear, respectful, and consistent communication is vital to positive relationships among staff, parents, carers, and the wider school community. We value open dialogue and a collaborative approach to resolving questions and concerns so that we can work together in the best interests of children.

Principles of communication

- **Clear, accurate and timely:** Information will be straightforward, relevant and shared with appropriate notice.
- **Inclusive and accessible:** We will adapt communication where necessary to meet language, disability or individual communication needs.
- **Listening and respect:** All parties should have opportunities to be heard, consider different perspectives and communicate courteously.
- **Direct and solution-focused:** Questions and concerns are best raised directly with school so they can be understood and resolved constructively.

These principles reflect our motto, “Working Together to Achieve Success”, and our values of Friendship, Respect, Trust and Perseverance.

Communication responsibilities

School leaders

- Ensure communication is consistent, timely and accessible; oversee sensitive or whole-school messages.
- Support staff and families to resolve concerns fairly, using the appropriate school policies and procedures.

Staff

- Communicate clearly and respectfully, following agreed school protocols.
- Avoid assuming that families already know school terminology, routines or procedures.
- Listen carefully, maintain appropriate records and refer issues to the appropriate colleague when needed.

Parents and carers

- Engage with staff politely and constructively, giving relevant details and an opportunity to respond.
- Recognise that staff have teaching and safeguarding commitments and may not respond immediately.

- Respect privacy and avoid sharing unverified accounts or personal information about children or staff in group chats or on social media.

Raising questions or concerns

We encourage parents and carers to speak to the school at an early stage if they have a question or concern. A direct conversation, by telephone or in person, is often the quickest and most productive way to establish the facts, understand different perspectives and agree next steps.

1. Class teacher: For matters relating to a child's learning, wellbeing, classroom experience or day-to-day support, contact the class teacher first.
2. Appropriate leader or SENDCo: Where a concern remains unresolved, or specialist advice is required, the school will involve the relevant senior leader or SENDCo. For SEND matters, the class teacher remains the first point of contact, with the SENDCo providing specialist guidance where appropriate.
3. Headteacher: Where concerns are significant, persistent or remain unresolved through the usual channels, they may be referred to the Headteacher. The nature of a concern may justify earlier senior leadership involvement.

Parents may contact the school office at ravenbank.primary@thebeamtrust.co.uk to request a telephone call or meeting. This informal route does not prevent anyone from using the school's formal complaints procedure. Serious safeguarding concerns should be reported promptly to the school's designated safeguarding lead; in an immediate emergency, contact emergency services.

Using artificial intelligence (AI) to communicate concerns

We recognise that some parents and carers may choose to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to help organise their thoughts, translate information or draft written communications. This is entirely acceptable and may help families communicate more confidently.

However, AI-generated messages can sometimes adopt a highly formal, accusatory or escalated tone which does not accurately reflect the concern or support constructive dialogue. We ask parents and carers to review any AI-assisted communication before sending it, ensuring that it is factual, proportionate, respectful and reflects their own views and experiences.

Where possible, we encourage parents and carers to begin with a conversation with the member of staff directly involved, rather than lengthy email exchanges. A telephone call or meeting often enables misunderstandings to be clarified quickly and allows everyone to focus on finding a positive way forward. We will still consider concerns raised in writing, including AI-assisted messages, on their merits.

Please do not enter confidential information about other children, staff or families into publicly available AI tools. Parents and carers should also avoid sharing concerns about identifiable individuals in WhatsApp groups, social media or parent forums; these discussions can lack important context and may cause unnecessary distress.

Collective responsibility and informal communication

- Families are encouraged to read school newsletters, emails and other routine updates.
- Anyone unsure about information should ask the school directly for clarification.
- Rumours, incomplete accounts and online discussions should not be treated as verified information. The school may be unable to discuss personal circumstances relating to other pupils or members of staff.

Communication channels

We use a range of channels to keep families and the wider community informed.

Audience	Information	Main channels

All parents and carers	Events, dates, curriculum and strategic updates	Weekly newsletter, website, email and occasional social media reminders
All parents and carers	Urgent safety or operational updates	Email or call the school office, please check the website or newsletters first to check the information hasn't already been shared
Individual parents and carers	Progress and attainment	Learning Reviews, meetings and termly reports
Individual parents and carers	Illness, injury and incidents	Text for head bumps; phone call for illness or serious injuries
Prospective and new families	School, staff and curriculum information	Parent handbook, website, visits and transition information
Local community	School news and community involvement	Website, local press and social media

Parents and carers are responsible for keeping their contact and emergency contact details up to date.

Protocols for school staff

- Include the practical information families need, such as dates, times, locations and any required action.
- Use inclusive, accessible language and avoid assuming prior knowledge.
- Provide reasonable notice when asking families to respond or take action.
- Refer sensitive or complex issues to the appropriate leader and follow school safeguarding and data protection procedures.

Feedback opportunities

We welcome constructive feedback through parent and carer surveys, informal conversations, school meetings, focus groups and suggestions made to the school office. Formal complaints are handled under the school's complaints procedure.

Legal, ethical and accessibility considerations

- Personal data will be handled in line with applicable UK data protection law and school policies. We will respect confidentiality and explain where information cannot be shared.
- Reasonable adjustments to the communication process will be made where required, including for disabled parents, carers and pupils.
- Communications must be non-discriminatory and respectful of diversity.
- Images of children will only be used in accordance with the school's consent arrangements and relevant safeguarding and data protection procedures.

Response times

We aim to respond promptly. Please allow up to two working days for a reply to non-urgent communication. Urgent matters will be prioritised. If a full response requires longer, we will aim to explain this and provide an update. Staff are not expected to respond outside their normal working arrangements.

Related policies

SEND Policy • Complaints Policy • Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • Data Protection Policy • Parent/Carer Code of Conduct (where applicable)