Lady Boswell's C.E. (Aided) Primary School

Learning Together, Christ at the Centre, Learning for Life

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Date of Policy: May 2026
Approved:
Review Cycle: Annually
Date of Next Review: May 2029

Policy to be authorised by: Steering

We value every member of our community as a unique child of God and seek to demonstrate His love through our words and actions. We enable every child to achieve their full potential so that they leave us with their heads inspired and their hearts enriched.

As a result, our children will:

Develop a positive sense of self and well-being; confident to make the right choices and keep themselves safe in an ever-changing society

Strive for academic excellence, developing a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning

Become effective communicators, collaborators and leaders

Be resilient, resourceful and courageous

Be curious, creative individuals and confident problem solvers

Grow in spiritual awareness and develop a strong moral compass and a deepening understanding of the Christian faith in a multi-faith British society

Become responsible and tolerant global citizens who value diversity, forgive readily, and have concern for the needs of each other, the school, the wider community, and the planet.

Communication Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Managing Conflict and Building Positive Relationships with Parents and Visitors Policy, Complaints Policy, Home-School Agreement, Acceptable Use Policy, Use of Mobile Phones Policy, GDPR Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Underpinning principles

- ✓ Choosing to be part of the Lady Boswell's community involves an **expectation that every member respects the school's Christian values of kindness, respect, love, faith, honesty and forgiveness.** These values will underpin all actions of our school community
- ✓ Communication between home and school and other agencies should always be via the most efficient and effective method. All parties should be aware that the teachers will be class-facing during the school day.
- ✓ Working in partnership with parents continues to be at the heart of our school and we strive to maintain positive relationships that benefit our pupils.
- ✓ Whilst there are formal channels of communication, we also embrace an open-door policy, inviting parents to visit, get involved with activities and to provide feedback.

Ways in which Lady Boswell's communicates to its school community

The school communicates to the school community in a wide variety of ways. These may include but are not limited to:

- Written/email communication to parents via the School Office from the Office, Co-Headteachers, Governors, Subject Leaders, Teacher/s or the PTA
- The school website
- Google Classroom (Sharing of curriculum and class-based information, including Knowledge Organisers and homework)
- 'Meet the Teacher' information mornings
- Weekly newsletters
- Contact books
- Parent Evenings
- Open Classrooms
- Telephone calls to parents to share individual or urgent information
- Notifications via the Arbor App or SMS messages for urgent information
- Interim and End of Year Reports (sent Via the Arbor App or End of Year Reports sent home on paper)
- Members of SLT on gate duty daily
- Regular opportunities for parents to speak with teachers at the end of the day
- Parent-Governor Forums
- Co-Headteachers' annual end of year letter to parents
- Face to face meetings
- SEND provision review and transition meetings
- Information sharing sessions (for example New Parents' Welcome, NELFT, Phonics training, transition to secondary information etc)
- Features in the local press

Ways in which parents can communicate with school

Telephone	Parents may call the School Office on 01732 452851 who would be very happy to answer or signpost your enquiry or message. Teachers will be class-facing from 8.30 to 3.30 sometimes with duties or responsibilities at breaktime so may not be available for same-day or ad hoc telephone calls. The School Office will be happy to pass on requests for call backs and teaching staff will take reasonable steps to do this as quickly as possible. There is generally a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) available each day to manage urgent enquiries. Where we cannot respond immediately, you will be given a time frame for response.
Speaking to the teacher at the end of the day	For passing on messages or feedback, asking clarifying questions about curriculum or homework, expressing minor concerns or information sharing. This is a great informal opportunity for parents to liaise directly with the class teacher and have any questions quickly answered. Teachers from Years R to 3 will be available to parents every day on the playground. Older year groups' teachers will be available two to three times per week.
Speaking to a member of SLT on the gate	An opportunity to speak with senior leaders about any aspect of the school, ask questions or give quick messages or feedback.
Face to Face meetings	Staff are always happy to meet with parents to discuss confidential or more substantial enquiries or concerns. Please make a request via the contact book or School Office giving a brief overview of the subject of the request and who you would like to meet with. Teaching staff will do their best to meet with parents as soon as they can and these appointments are typically offered from 8.20 to 8.40 or immediately after school. Many of our teachers have additional commitments of clubs or staff meetings before or after school but we would endeavour to find a mutually convenient time. We request that parents are mindful that meetings with teachers during the school day take them away from teaching the class and so, where possible, these are avoided. Please see below for further guidance on face to face meetings.
Contact book	For quick messages to the class teaching team. Children should bring these into school each day.
Email	Parents may email teachers via the School Office and may not email teachers, Senior Leaders or the Co-Headteachers directly. This enables queries to be appropriately signposted to the relevant staff and ensures that no urgent messages are missed due to teachers not being desk-based. The Co-Headteachers' PA may respond on behalf of the Co-Headteachers to enquiries received via email.

Teachers are unavailable at the start of the school day for ad-hoc meetings or communication with parents as they are busy settling the children and making statutory attendance checks. Parents of pupils in the EYFS may pass on quick messages to staff on the Reception Class gate. Parents from Years 1-6 are not

permitted to go to the classrooms and approach the teaching team at the start of the school day. If a parent has an urgent message in the morning, this can be given via the School Office who will gladly pass this on to the class teaching teams.

To enable effective and efficient communication, parents and carers are expected to:

- Keep abreast of information supplied via email from the school, use the website, Google Classroom to seek published or shared information
- Have realistic expectations about accessibility of teachers during the school day whilst they are engaged in their teaching responsibilities
- Have realistic expectations about the capacity for frequent individual parental communication, considering pupil and parent numbers within school
- Communicate clearly and courteously to us, we are here to help and always will if we can
- Use appropriate communication channels
- Allow reasonable time for responses, particularly where their contact to school was made outside of school hours
- Avoid repeated or escalating contact

We understand that for many working parents, evenings are used to catch up on communication. Whilst the School Office inbox can receive emails 24/7 and 365 days a year, emails are only checked within school opening hours. School will utilise out of office auto-replies during school holidays to clarify this.

Who is best to contact?

Reporting absence	Please email or telephone the School Office
Queries about lunches, clubs or trips	Please email or telephone the School Office
Enquiries about Orchard	Please email or telephone the School Office
Changes to collection arrangements	Please put a note in the contact book or email or telephone the School Office who will pass the message on
Curriculum queries, PE days, class arrangements	Please first check the School Website or Google Classroom or utilise the class WhatsApp group. If you are unable to answer your query then please contact the School Office
Safeguarding concerns	Please call the School Office and ask to speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. If one is not immediately available then someone will call you back
Information regarding SEND concerns	Please request contact with the class teacher via the contact book or School Office. The class teacher will involve the SENCo or SEND Specialist Teacher, where required
Information relating to a medical need or injury	Please contact the School Office
Wellbeing or family concerns	Please contact our Family Support Worker or the class teacher
Concerns around specific incidents	Please email or telephone the School Office who will be able to direct your enquiry to the class teaching team or a member of the Senior Leadership Team
Queries around attendance	Please contact the School Office who will signpost to the Attendance Team or Family Support Worker
Changes of contact information	Please email or telephone the School Office
Enquiries about admissions	Please email or telephone the School Office

Response times and staff availability

Overall, school staff are not desk-based and cannot be immediately responsive to digital or telephone communication as they are in class teaching the children. Urgent queries should be made via telephone to the School Office who will pass information on to the most appropriate member of staff.

Parents and visitors should expect the following response times to communication:

- General or non-urgent enquiries: within 5 working days
- Safeguarding concerns: same day
- Complaints: in line with the Lady Boswell's Complaints Policy

If an issue requires investigation or further information gathering, parents will be informed of the expected timescale. If staff cannot reasonably respond within the time frames above, they will contact parents to let them know the new timeframe.

Lady Boswell's values the work-life balance of its staff and we are aware that communication demands are a key factor impacting staff wellbeing. Therefore, school staff are **not expected** to:

- Respond to emails outside of working hours (directed time for teachers is 8.30 to 4pm)
- Respond during teaching time where they are prioritising the education and care of pupils
- Provide personal contact details
- Engage in prolonged or repetitive email exchanges with parents
- Telephone or meet with parents outside of their working hours
- Provide information in writing that would more efficiently or effectively be communicated using other channels

Meeting expectations

The school believes that most concerns can be best resolved by face to face or telephone contact and so, with this in mind:

- The school will endeavour to find a mutually convenient time for meetings with parents and can utilise virtual options to accommodate working parents. Parents should not expect meetings to be scheduled after 5pm
- The school will take every reasonable step to inform parents of the subject and/or aims of any meeting that they request with parents or visitors. We expect parents or visitors to do the same. This enables effective prioritisation and preparation for the meeting, including ensuring the appropriate staff are present
- Parents should not expect to receive extensive written communication or documentation ahead of any meeting, and the school will not expect this of parents. Demands from parents for extensive information in writing will not be accommodated
- Parents may request a copy of any formal notes or minutes taken during a meeting, or a follow up confirmation of the agreed actions where these have been formally noted
- The vast majority of our meetings will not require notes or formal minutes. Parents may make a request in advance of a meeting for formal minutes to be taken and the school will take reasonable steps to facilitate this. Parents must allow the school a reasonable amount of time to accommodate any such request.
- To ensure workload for school staff is appropriately managed and that communication is clear and consistent, requests for separate, additional or repeated meetings parents will not usually be accommodated. Although the Co-Headteachers may consider requests where there are

exceptional circumstances, family separation or preference is not usually a valid reason to accommodate these types of requests

- The school will decide which members of staff are best placed to meet with parents on a case by case basis. Meetings requested with the Co-Headteachers may sometimes be reasonably conducted by other members of the Senior Leadership Team and vice versa. There will be occasions where a member of the SLT might join a teacher in a meeting with parents. Where there are teacher job-shares, parents should expect to meet with one or the other teacher, not both simultaneously
- It is unlikely that parents will meet directly with Teaching Assistants

Complaints and concerns

We welcome any feedback that we receive from parents, pupils and third parties, and we acknowledge that not all of this will be positive. Our **Complaints Policy**, available via the school's website, sets out how the school deals with complaints, and sets out the difference between complaints and concerns:

• A **concern** is defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'

• A **complaint** is defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'

The school recognises that expressing complaints can be an emotive issue. However, the school will not tolerate any level of rudeness, aggression, abuse or personal attack via any communication method throughout the complaints process.

Please also see the **Managing Conflict and Building Positive Relationships with Parents and Visitors Policy.**

How we manage persistent or unreasonable contact and communication expectations

Contact may be considered **unreasonable** if it involves:

- Excessive frequency (e.g. multiple emails/calls in a day/week/month)
- Requests for numerous meetings or telephone calls outside of the typical parental communication pattern (e.g. expecting numerous additional meetings, requesting weekly telephone calls)
- Repeated contact before a response is due
- Refusal to accept the school's response
- Unnecessary engagement in lengthy email exchanges
- Refusal to utilise the school's wider communication channels
- Requesting excessive information or dialogue from the school, including lengthy responses via email or in the contact book
- Demanding all information to be provided in writing when this is not in the interest of efficient or effective resolution of a query or operation of the school
- Expecting wider school communication to be repeated to individuals
- Aggressive, accusatory or disrespectful language
- Contacting multiple staff about the same issue
- Attempts to bypass the Complaints Procedure

If communication becomes unreasonable, the school will:

1. Acknowledge the concern
2. Clarify the school's position
3. Set expectations for future communication (e.g. 'We will respond within 5 working days. Please do not send further emails until then.')

If the behaviour continues, the Co-Headteachers may implement:

- Close monitoring of communication by senior leaders, including interception where necessary
- A single point of contact for the family, including utilising the Family Support Worker
- Restricted communication times (e.g. one weekly scheduled call)
- Restricted communication methods (e.g. no further email exchanges on the issue)
- A Communication Plan

Parents will be notified in writing, with a review date.

In the case of serious or persistent breaches, the school may:

- Issue a formal warning
- Involve the Local Authority
- Apply the Persistent Complaints elements of the Complaints Policy
- Refer to police if behaviour constitutes harassment, in line with the Managing Conflict and Building Positive Relationships with Parents and Visitors Policy.

Abusive behaviour

All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place in which to work and learn. As a Church of England school, we expect all members of our community to communicate within our Christian values. Rudeness, abuse or threatening behaviour towards school staff, or other members of the school community is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any incident will be treated seriously and a disruptive visitor may be banned from entering the school or even prosecuted.

If a member of staff receives written correspondence, e.g. letter, e-mail or text, of a threatening or abusive nature from a parent, carer or member of the public, this will be reported immediately to a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team and a copy retained as evidence. The receiving member of staff will not reply to the correspondence without first agreeing the response with the SLT member, or the SLT member will respond on their behalf. The school reserves the right to not respond to rude, aggressive or abusive communication.

If a visitor or parent is abusive, aggressive or rude to a member of staff during a face to face meeting, virtual meeting or telephone call, the school staff reserve the right to end the meeting / conversation.

Appendix 1: Exemplar letters for excessive communication

Letter 1 — Initial warning / setting expectations

Dear [*parent/carer*],

We are writing regarding the volume and frequency of communication we have received from you about [*issue*]. We understand that you are keen to resolve this matter, and we have responded to your concerns on [*dates*].

To ensure staff can carry out their duties effectively and to maintain a positive working relationship, I must ask that you allow the school time to respond. Our Communication Policy states that we will reply within 5 working days.

Please do not send further emails or make additional calls about this matter until we have responded.

[Note: If you wish to communicate a new safeguarding concern, please do contact the School Office immediately.]

Thank you for your cooperation.

Co-Headteachers

Letter 2 — Imposing communication restrictions

Dear [*parent/carer*],

Following my previous correspondence dated [*date*], we are writing to inform you that your level of contact with the school continues to be excessive and is impacting staff workload and the smooth running of the school.

In line with our Communication Policy, I am implementing the following restrictions with immediate effect:

- You should direct all communication to [*named contact*] only
- You may communicate a maximum of once per week, on [*day/time*]
- The school will respond within 5 working days
- Telephone calls will not be accepted unless pre-arranged

[Note: If you wish to communicate a new safeguarding concern, please contact the School Office immediately.]

These arrangements will be reviewed on [*date*].

If you do not comply with these restrictions, the school may take further action in line with our Managing Conflict and Building Positive Relationships with Parents and Visitors Policy.

Co-Headteachers

Letter 3 — Escalation / warning of school site ban

Dear [*parent/carer*],

Despite the communication restrictions put in place on [*date*], your contact with the school continues to be unreasonable. This behaviour is now having a significant impact on staff wellbeing and school operations.

If this behaviour continues, I will have no option but to consider further measures, including restricting your access to the school site under the school's Managing Conflict and Building Positive Relationships with Parents and Visitors Policy.

I strongly encourage you to follow the communication arrangements previously outlined. These remain in place until further notice.

Co-Headteachers