

ASHGATE CROFT SCHOOL

HOME SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY



Updated: September 2020

Introduction

This policy has been written after consultation with parents/carers, parent governors and staff.

Ashgate Croft School aims for our parents/carers and families:

- To feel valued and involved as partners in their child's education
- To feel well supported in their access to other service providers
- To be well informed

ALL WRITTEN COMMUNICATION FROM SCHOOL WILL BE FREE FROM JARGON

General information from school

- School website - updated on a regular basis.
- Parents/carers will be kept well informed about the school and their children's progress: Headteacher's newsletters, curriculum/activities bulletins, school brochure, annual reviews, annual reports etc.
- Parents/carers will receive information on class lists, including staff and pupils, by the end of the academic year.
- Each September parents/carers will receive a diary sheet of the year's planned activities.
- Parents/carers will be informed well in advance of whole school closure days relating to staff training.
- Annual reviews will be held on a Tuesday and Wednesday but we will endeavour to be flexible for those parents/carers unable to make this time.
- Parent/carer forums will be organised at least three times a year on topics/issues raised by parents/carers.
- School will consult annually with parents/carers via a questionnaire.
- If important information is given out whilst your child is absent from school for more than one week, the information will be posted to you.
- Any concerns or complaints received from parents/carers will aim to be resolved efficiently and sensitively following the school's complaints procedure. More information on this procedure is contained in the School Brochure or can be obtained on the school's website.
- School use a service called ParentMail to communicate with Parents/Carers. It can be accessed via a free mobile app on both Android and iOS. Parents/Carers will be able to access messages from school regarding upcoming events, activities and other things such as topping up dinner money, paying for trips, completing forms, and giving consent/permission. Support and assistance can be provided by the school office or on ParentMail's website: <https://www.parentmail.co.uk/help/parenthelp/>

- Parents/carers are also able to access information via the school's website at www.ashgatecroft.derbyshire.org.uk
- Arrangements are in place for communication for separated parents to receive relevant information from school.

Communication by telephone

- There will be a member of our admin staff available to take your calls between 8am and 4.30pm. Calls out of these hours will be answered by an answer machine.
- Calls to class staff can be made between 8.45–9am, 10.30am – 10.45am, and after 3.30pm.
- Special message pads will be used by admin staff to record calls. Class staff to record content of all calls, both to and from home, including time and date. E-mails from the Admin Team will be acceptable, as long as they follow the format above.
- If an immediate response to your call is not possible the appropriate member of staff will call you back the same day.

Class staff responsibilities

- The following information will be available on the school's website at the beginning of each academic year: Class timetable, school dinner menu, curriculum coverage sheet which gives a brief outline of work to be covered for the Autumn term (this information will also be sent out at beginning of subsequent terms), homework challenge and a copy of the home/school communication policy.
- Class staff to send updated information (curriculum coverage sheets, homework challenge and 'what our class has been up to') to Head's PA by the last Wednesday of each term to ensure the website is up to date.
- Invite parents/carers to special assemblies.
- Arrange an information exchange morning/afternoon during Autumn Term 1 for parents/carers providing an opportunity for each class teacher to explain how the class operates/methods/activities etc. Parents/carers will be able to ask relevant questions and to clarify the best ways of communicating between home/school for the pupils in the class.
- Check home/school diaries on arrival at school.
- Acknowledge that the diary has been read even if no response is required e.g. home may have informed you of a medical appointment.
- Respond that day to any queries from home.
- If informed of a child's absence, pass this information to the Receptionist immediately.
- Be specific when writing in home/school diary e.g. Fred swam without arm bands rather than Fred has been swimming.
- Label all work sent home with what level of support has been required to achieve it.
- Inform admin staff about letters sent home so that they can respond to queries etc. if parents/carers ring school.
- Personal Skills targets will be written in consultation with parents/carers during Autumn 1 and Spring 3 (sent out at the beginning of Autumn 2 and Spring 4)
- Parents/carers will be informed if their child requires an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) and will be consulted during the process. They will receive a copy of the IBP and be asked to sign this.

- Any information regarding medical issues, for example falls/bumped head will be written in diaries and where appropriate documentation sent home.
- If a child has an epileptic seizure Parent/carers will be informed via the diary. A record sheet detailing information about the seizure will be stapled in the diary as well. Where required class staff will contact Parent/carers via telephone. The school nurse may be the member of staff contacting Parent/carers.
- If a child has an epileptic seizure the documentation and home/school diary will be completed by permanent staff, not supply staff.

Parent/carer responsibilities

- Inform school (by phone) of child's absence.
- Supply school with current telephone number especially if a mobile phone number changes.
- Check your child's bag each night for letters/information from school and respond as required either by phone or in home/school diary.
- Read your child's home/school diary every night.
- Send your child's home/school diary to school every day.
- Write in the home/school diary to acknowledge you have read it.
- Write in the home/school diary any information you feel may help the staff work with your child.
- Write something about your child's weekend in the home/school diary.
- To inform school if your child's home/school diary is not with them when they arrive back from school.
- Keep up to date by accessing the school website and reading alerts from texts and Parentmail

Home/school diaries

These are recognised by both staff and parents/carers as being a vital element of effective home/school communication. Home/school diaries are confidential and bus escorts will be informed not to read them.

- Each child will be provided with a home/school diary at the beginning of each academic year and a message switch will be provided for those pupils with an identified need.
- Home/school diaries will be sent home daily to the child's main residence.
- Lost home/school diaries will be replaced by school immediately.
- Home/school diaries will be made available to visiting professionals e.g. physio/speech and language therapist etc. so that they can write notes home.
- Class staff will write in home/school diaries at least three times a week, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Some children will require more input, for example, pupils who have limited language/communication skills. Frequency of input is to be negotiated between class staff and home.
- Teachers are responsible for monitoring what is written in the diaries. Any specific request for the teacher will be responded to on the day.

Parent Governors (School Champions)

- School Champion details can be found on the LEARNERs' Trust's website: <https://www.learnerstrust.org/acs-governors>. The Clerk to Governors can be contacted by email: ACSRLow@learnerstrust.org