



Forest Gate Community School

Fly, Grow, Connect, Strive

Communication Policy

1.0 Forest Gate Community School Mission Statement

Forest Gate Community School is a learning community where our students have high aspirations for themselves and each other. We want our students to grow into well-informed, well-balanced and confident citizens. We aim to provide a disciplined, safe environment where children learn effectively and respect each other.

2.0 Policy links to School mission, aims and values

All of the work of Forest Gate Community School is intended to support the delivery of our mission statement in full.

This policy is specifically intended to ensure effective and timely communication.

3.0 Purposes and implementation

All communications at Forest Gate Community School should keep staff, students, parents, board members and other stakeholders well informed in a timely manner. Communication should be honest, ethical and professional and should use the channel of communication that is most appropriate to context, message and audience.

The policy will be put into practice when communicating between staff, outside agencies, parents and students. Charlotte Whelan Associate Headteacher is accountable for implementation and review. A summary is in the Staff Handbook and on the website. On-going monitoring will take place for impact and effectiveness.

4.0 Communication

This information can be located in the guidance published on the school website.

Students should refer to their student planner and the relevant section of the school's website. Aspects of relevant policies will inform curriculum planning and teaching and learning practices.

Staff should refer to their staff handbook in the section on teaching and learning, student well-being, organisation, management and staffing and in the relevant sections of the school's website.

Parents/carers should refer to the induction guidance, home – school contract, student planner, options guidance and in the relevant sections of the school's website.

We believe that effective partnership working is key to the implementation of our aims, values and policy aspirations. In particular this policy relates to our working closely with Board members, Local Authority for Newham, Childrens' Services and Metropolitan Police.

4.1 Internal Methods of Communication

Face- to- face communication

- Communication between colleagues should remain professional and friendly.
- All staff are expected to communicate regularly with colleagues. Nobody should work in isolation and opportunities should be found by staff to share information and network with colleagues in a way which enables them to fulfil their role. All staff should be made to feel included and welcome.
- Communication should be in person where possible. Where there is misunderstanding or disagreement between colleagues, face to face communication between the two colleagues should be undertaken in the first instance.

Email

- Email is an effective and useful method of communication. All staff should be aware of the school's internet and online safety policy when using school email.
- Staff should become familiar with and adhere to email protocols as outlined in the staff handbook.
- Emails should be used for communicating instructions and sharing information.
- Hard copies of important emails should be retained, if necessary.
- Staff should endeavour to reply to emails within 24 hours, particularly regarding outside communications.
- Email is a formal method of communication and members of staff should be mindful of this when using school email.

Meetings

- All staff should have regular meetings with their Line Manager.
- For all staff there is an integrated programme of meetings. All staff are invited to contribute to the content of the meeting. All meetings should be structured to reflect school priorities, preferably with the agenda shared prior to the meeting. Minutes should record actions from the meetings. Staff are expected to attend on time.
- For staff with management responsibilities, meetings should occur with their line manager. The frequency should be determined by the demands of their role. Both parties should feel free to bring up matters arising. Formal minutes with actions and deadlines should be taken and circulated by the line manager and should be forwarded to their own line manager.
- Where a member of staff needs more support, line managers can arrange a series of meetings. Formal minutes with actions and deadlines should be taken to evidence the support and participation.
- All meetings should be scheduled using the school's online diary system.

Staff Briefing

- These take place on a weekly basis usually on a Monday 8.25am and all staff are expected to attend. Information pertinent to that week is shared. Briefing minutes are taken and circulated to all staff.

Written Communication

- These are placed in staff pigeon holes. Staff are expected to empty their pigeon holes regularly.

Telephone Calls

- These should take place using the school networks.
- It may be preferable to use personal mobile phones to contact a member of staff, particularly if they are not available in their office. This is permissible but professional judgement should be used here.
- Staff should avoid using personal mobile phones to contact parents and in such circumstances must withhold their number.
- Staff should never contact students using their personal mobile phone unless discussed beforehand with the designated safeguarding lead or in an emergency.
- Staff should endeavour to reply to phone messages with 24 hours, particularly regarding outside communications.

4.2 External Communication

- Communication should be clear and professional at all times.
- Staff should endeavour to reply to phone messages within 24 hours, particularly regarding outside communications.
- All communication should be responded to within 48 hours. Where more time is needed an acknowledgement of the communication should take place within this time period.

Informal communication

- Where informal communication takes place, staff should be mindful of their professional responsibility. If issues or actions arise from the communication, this should be shared with relevant parties and logged on Behaviour Watch and any documents should be placed in the student's file.

Email

- External emails should be treated in the same way as internal emails.
- All letters and communication will be sent to parents and carers via email.
- All letters will be checked for accuracy and clarity.

Meetings

- All relevant parties should be invited to meetings.
- Meetings should be arranged at a time that is convenient to all relevant parties.
- Meetings, particularly with parents, should rarely take place without a prior appointment
- All meetings should be scheduled using 'Outlook'.
- All meetings that take place should be 'minuted' or recorded appropriately. All formal actions should be noted. Following a meeting with a parent or carer written communication with the actions discussed should be shared.

Written Communication

- These are placed in staff pigeon holes. Staff are expected to empty their pigeon holes regularly.
- A letter received from a parent/ carer or outside agency pertaining to a student should be replied to in writing within 48 hours and placed on the student's file
- Any letter of complaint should be shared with line managers for advice.
- All letters of complaint and their subsequent replies should be forwarded to the Office Manager for logging.

Telephone Calls

- These should take place using the school network when at all possible.

- A written note of important telephone calls should be kept.
- When making a call, staff should introduce themselves, their role and the name of the school. They should establish who they are speaking to before continuing the conversation.
- Incoming schools should be announced by the receptionist. They should state the name of the caller, the institution they represent and or the students' name and the purpose of the call.
- There are no answerphone facilities on individual extension numbers. All calls which are not connected will be directed back to the receptionist who will send an email to the intended recipient for follow up. This will include the caller's name, institution or student it is from, contact number and purpose of the call.

4.3 Communication with Parents

Dynamic Progress Reporting (DPR)

- Parents are able to log on to the DPR to view their child's academic progress at any time.
- The DPR is updated by teachers regularly and is captured four times a year.
- ● Parents can email their child's teacher directly using the DPR.

Parents' Evenings

- Each year group has a parents' evening each year where parents will have the opportunity to meet with all of their child's subject teachers.
- The dates are published at the beginning of the year. Reminder letters will also be sent out.

Parents' Information Evenings

- At times during the year Parents' Information Evenings take place which have a different focus. Key staff attend and parents will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- The dates are published at the beginning of the year.

School Newsletter

- Periodically the school newsletter will be distributed to parents and the community with news from the school and useful information.

School Website

- All key letters and information will be published on the school website for information.

Parental Concerns

- Parents should contact the appropriate member of staff. For curriculum issues it should be the subject teacher or Head of Department. For all other issues Form Tutors and Year teams should be contacted. Parents can contact by email, telephone or letter. All formal concerns should be addressed in writing.

4.4 Links with other policy areas

The policy links with the following areas:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- ICT Policy
- Behaviour and Safeguarding
- Leadership, organisation, management and staffing

- ICT and Online Safety
- Safeguarding and Early Help
- Complaints Policy

Policy documentation control

Responsible for review:	Charlotte Whelan
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