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Dear Parents and Carers,

This week I have been reflecting on our incredible site and how lucky we are to occupy a six and a half acre area on the outskirts of Exeter, with some of the country's most unique and wonderful landscapes. We are developing our provision as we promote the STEAM curriculum, with a focus on developing our understanding of environmental science, nature and the arts. I want our community to provide an education that engages with the critical climate issues facing our society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and beyond. Thank you to those parents that have been into school to share your expertise of industry and academia, we are privileged to have a wealth of resources within our community.

The first set mocks of this calendar year was an incredibly busy few weeks and coincided with the horrible virus that I know affected our community, pupils, parents and staff. I want to thank our support staff who showed some tremendous flexibility to support these exams. Mr Alexander and myself are looking forward to hearing from parents of our Year 11s pupils at our meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March. We will be sharing our plans and calendar to support our Year 11s as they prepare for the final steps in their journey at our school. If you are a Year 11 parent and you would like to attend, and haven't already, please let us know by completing the form below:

<https://forms.office.com/e/LADjim55cU>

Over half-term we linked our Facebook newsfeed to the homepage of our school website to help share a little of what is going on and improve more immediate news for all families. Following your feedback about finding a central way to share live information, we feel by doing this, you can still readily see our up-to-date news on the website if you do not follow the school Facebook page directly.

Thank you to parents and pupils who came to our Year 9 options event on Thursday evening. We had a great turnout and I know that teachers will be keen to answer questions with pupils over the coming weeks. Parents will have a further opportunity to meet with teachers at the Year 9 parents evening on the 14<sup>th</sup> March. We also have our Year 8 parents evening the week before on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, which will coincide with World Book Day. Details of booking appointments will be shared on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February for the Year 8 parents evening.

Over the weekend, we have an Exmoor Challenge training walk, led by Mr Page, and next week we have our Year 10 Work Experience Parents evening on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February.

We really want to hear more feedback from you about our school. In order to strengthen this, we have set up a form on the Parent Homepage of our school website. If you click the link, any direct feedback will be instantly shared with the school. It is my intention to address points raised and continue to support all members of our community feel a sense of belonging to our community and an active part of our improvement journey. You can find this by following the link below.

[Parent feedback](#)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Arnold', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Phil Arnold  
Headteacher

## Communications protocols/policies January 2024

At Thomas Hall School, we want to develop an effective, productive relationship between stakeholders. This requires improved communication from all parties across the community. An honest, open and transparent dialogue is required to successfully support the children and employees within our care and safeguard their wellbeing.

### Aims

- 1: To maintain effective, professional and informative communication systems
- 2: To develop positive working relationships across all stakeholders
- 3: To support the development of each child across our school.

It is our intention that all communication at Thomas Hall School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional.
- Use jargon-free English and be easily understood by all.
- Be conducted in a timely manner Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, method and audience

Communication for parents:

- The main communication from parents is via email or telephone and parents are asked to contact the school via the school office. [Reception@thomashallschool.org](mailto:Reception@thomashallschool.org) This enables the school to act in a timely manner and also ensures that the response is addressed within the time scale outlined below:
  - **Acknowledgement:** 1 working day
  - **Response:** 5 working days
- In exceptional cases where further information or a thorough investigation is required, a 10 working day limit is applicable. If this is the case, then a holding communication will be made.
- Teachers set aside time each school day to check communications. However, commitments, illness and part-time working may restrict an immediate response. We therefore ask for patience and understanding from our parents when awaiting a response.

Parents may wish to contact the school via email as an alternative to telephone or letter. Admin staff will forward any communication to the appropriate staff member for whom the message relates. All email communication will be treated in the same way as a letter.

The school is proactive in encouraging the use of email, with office email contacts being publicised regularly in newsletters and all parents being encouraged to give an email address for prompt and effective communication.

### Telephone calls

All telephone enquires will pass through the main school office, who will direct the call to the relevant member of staff. In the likely event that the member of staff is not available to answer the call a message should be left and a return call will be placed at the earliest appropriate time.

### Meetings

At times, at the request of the school or parent, a meeting may take place if either party feel that this would be the most appropriate communication method. Meetings are conducted to discuss formal points or concerns pertaining to a student's welfare or well-being. All meetings must be agreed in advance.

Notes from telephone calls /meetings/ email content will be saved electronically on to the pupil profile on our Arbor system.

All visitors to school must report to Reception, sign in and wait to be collected by the staff member they are seeing.

Communication from parents should be polite and civil at all times. Rudeness, inappropriate language, verbal abuse or threatening behaviour will result in the communication being ended immediately. Should the Headteacher deem it necessary for safeguarding and security reasons, action will be taken and restrictions may be put in place for future communication.

**Please note:**

Staff are not permitted to communicate with parents or students via private social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as "friends". The exception is networks or blogs set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning, together with official School sites. This is part of our safeguarding procedure to protect students and staff.