



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 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.

The school is required to recognise parents as being those who meet the following definition:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not



- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, a guardian or other relative
- any person who, although they are not a biological parent and do not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. A person typically has care of a child or young person if the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after them, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school's practice is to add parents to the Management Information System so that the child's parents receive information regarding their child's academic progress and attainment, as well as pastoral notices. Teachers will communicate with the child's parents should there be an immediate need to contact them during the school day. There may be limited exceptional circumstances which may prevent the school from communicating with both/ all parents as outlined above, such as restrictions imposed through an Order made by the Family Court.

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.