



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Policy reviewed and agreed by: Teaching, Learning and Inclusion Committee
Date: June 2026
Next review: June 2028

Aim

At Goring Primary School we endeavour to ensure that communication among all members of the school community (staff, parents, helpers and the wider community) is both effective and efficient at all times. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated.

Definition of communication

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It involves:

- Respectful listening
- The management of relationships and appropriate involvement of people
- An awareness of attitude and behaviour as well as the clarity of the message
- Timely, effective action if required

Objectives:

All communications at Goring Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon-free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- Be actioned within a reasonable time
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience
- Take account of relevant school policies
- Be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Vision and School Development Plan.

External methods of communication

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Good communication between the school and the home is essential and is a two-way process. In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through

keeping parents well-informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting the school.

While staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. To this end parents will always be addressed in an appropriate manner and staff will avoid developing close friendships with parents.

We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our school.

Communications with parents/carers

Website

The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. The Class pages display the termly curriculum plans for each year group and update parents weekly on what their children have been learning and how to support and further this at home. The website contains a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school, including all the latest dates and events related to the school. The website is updated regularly.

Email

The class newsletters are emailed to parents on a weekly basis.

The school promotes the use of Parentmail in ensuring that general messages and information are communicated to parents. Any communication that needs to be sent to parents using this system is approved by the Executive Headteacher. Parents are encouraged to respond to general requests using the Parentmail system where possible (eg, permission slips, attendance at an event, or booking parent consultation slots). However, it is acknowledged that electronic communication will not take the place of face-to-face conversation.

All email communications should be sent to the school office in the first instance:

office.3803@goring.oxon.sch.uk.

While most communication will be sent electronically, on occasion the school will send a letter to parents via their child. It is also acknowledged that there are some families who do not have electronic means of communication and arrangements are made accordingly.

Telephone

Parents are encouraged to phone the school if there is any immediate information the school needs to know (eg, pupil sickness or to make an appointment with a staff member). The school will endeavour to respond quickly and appropriately. The school will also phone the parents if there is an urgent issue concerning a pupil or specific issue.

New pupils

Parents of new pupils are invited to an induction meeting where relevant information regarding how the school operates is shared. They are given a new parent pack containing useful information including a copy of the home-school agreement which summarises the positive working relationship the school wishes to foster with the pupil and their family.

Raising concerns

The school aims to resolve all issues as speedily and informally as possible. However, where it has not been possible to come to a satisfactory conclusion the Complaints Policy will be used and parents will be communicated with in accordance with that policy.

Social networking sites/blogs, etc

Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as their 'friends'.

Written reports

Once a year we provide a full written report to each child's parents on their progress in each subject. This report gives a summary of the pupil's academic development; parents are encouraged to take up any queries directly with the teacher through the drop-in sessions provided.

Parent/Teacher meetings

In addition, parents meet their child's teacher twice a year for a consultation at parents' evening (in the autumn and spring terms). This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement.

Teachers welcome the opportunity to talk to parents as and when issues arise, either at the end of the school day or by arranging an appointment.

When children have special educational needs, or if they are making less than the expected progress, we find it helpful to meet with parents more regularly. We will also make any reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand a communication.

Communication with the community

Members of the local community are invited to school functions such as assemblies, Harvest Festival, Christmas carol services and school productions. The children visit the local community at Christmas to sing carols and take part in community events.

Parents' communication with the school

Parents are required to follow the conditions of the Home–School Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers when communicating with their child's school.

Parents are responsible for keeping the school informed of absences, keeping contact information up to date and informing the school of any change in circumstance and any other relevant information regarding their child.

Internal methods of communication

Meetings

There is an integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff, both formal and informal, and this includes a weekly briefing. All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. It is important that time is put aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to subject leader's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans. For all other meetings notes should be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff. The approved minutes of staff meetings are available to all staff via email and can always be requested from the meeting Chair.

Email

Information and notification of initiatives are communicated through the use of email where appropriate. Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information; however, it does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required.

Mobile phones

Staff - Mobile phones should not be used during lessons, on the playground or when in contact with the children. In exceptional cases, such as family illness, the circumstances should be discussed with the Executive Headteacher. Non-intrusive work-related mobile phone use is acceptable during PPA or management time. During trips and off-site provision, staff should ensure they can be contacted by mobile phone at all times.

Pupils – Pupils should not bring mobile phones to school. Any exceptions must be discussed with and approved by the Executive Headteacher.

Parents/carers– Use of mobile phones while on the school site should be *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment. Parents are welcome to photograph or film school events such as shows or sports day, but images that include any children other than their own should not be published (eg, on social networking sites) without the permission of the parents/carers of those other children.

Parents and visitors are required to turn phones off when volunteering in classrooms and at Forest School. Making voice recordings on a mobile phone or other device during meetings or discussions with staff or governors is not permitted.

Staff notice boards

The staff notice board is located in the staffroom.