



Communications Policy

2025-26

Date: July 2025

Review Date: October 2026

Signed: _____

Headteacher

Introduction

Positive communication is an essential element of the aims and vision of Joydens Wood Infant and Junior Schools. We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on children's learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

Most of this communication takes place through verbal interactions between parents/carers and staff at drop off or pick up. Other methods of communication include: text and email, telephone and Class Dojo.

Aim

To ensure that Joydens Wood Infant and Junior Schools are a thriving and successful school community, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our children, with their families and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are open, honest, respectful, ethical and professional.

Contact details

The schools hold at least two emergency contact details for all children on Arbor (Management Information System) and parents/carers can update this on a regular basis. Parents/carers are expected to inform the schools immediately in the event that contact information needs to be revised. Depending on the nature of the communication, the schools will use the most practicable means to make contact.

Code of Conduct

The schools do not accept or act upon anonymous communication unless in relation to matters of serious child protection. When communication becomes aggressive or inappropriate and the school deems it is unacceptable, then actions will be put in place in accordance with our Parent/Carer Code of Conduct, Home School Agreement and Acceptable Usage Policy.

Communication

- Parents/carers are welcome to contact the schools to discuss their child's progress, ask questions, gain support or to have the opportunity to talk about their child/home issues with their child's class teacher first.
- If required, further communication with Year Group Leads or specific teams within the school can be arranged. *Please refer to Appendix 1: Who should I contact.*
- Staff will not respond on weekends or during school holidays.
- Staff will respond to communication from parents between 8.30am and 4.30pm, within the following timeframes:
 - **3 school days for a meeting**
 - **2 working days for an email or phone call**
 - **2 working days for a response on Class Dojo**

Outside of teaching their designated class or management responsibilities, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school. Therefore, arranging a mutually convenient appointment allows the schools time to organise cover to make staff available to speak to parents and to gather any necessary information prior to the meeting.

The following list, whilst not exhaustive, covers the main ways in which we will communicate with parents. All response times are indicative and, where extensions are needed i.e. for further investigation, a holding response will be given to the parents.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Emails and Electronic Information

- The schools use Arbor to email letters to families – parents must ensure the schools hold a valid, up-to-date email address for each person with parental responsibility (these emails should be different for each person).
- Parents should be made aware this is an automatic system and replying to these emails will not be received by the school.
- Parents are permitted to use e-mail as a means of providing a quick, effective way of communicating information about their child or to arrange a meeting with their teacher via the school offices:
Infants: info@joydens.org Juniors: Office@joydens-wood-junior.kent.sch.uk
- All emails requiring an answer should be responded to within 2 school days, following an acknowledgement email from the office staff so you know the message has been received.

Telephone calls Inbound

- Staff in the main school offices will endeavour to answer all telephone calls.
- It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching for staff to take a telephone call unless it is an emergency.

- Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person.
- If the call requires an urgent response from a member of staff, this will be dealt with as appropriate.

Telephone calls Outbound

- Telephone calls will be made where contact with a family member is required i.e. for unknown absence, injuries or accidents.
- A member of staff will call the person(s) with Parental Responsibility first and foremost.
- Where no contact is made, staff will call the named emergency contact as listed.
- Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth.
- In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will either leave an answer phone message or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers, where possible.

Reporting Absence

- Parents/Carers should report their child's absence as soon as possible on or before the day of absence.
- This should be done via Arbor or by calling the school office.
- Absence should be reported every day the child is due to be off.

Home/School Communication Text

- The schools have a text system, which is used to communicate with parents.
- Text messages are sent to the primary contact.
- This is not a reply service.
- We will text parents about:
 - In the event we are unable to make contact for an absence
 - Short-notice changes to the school day
 - Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
 - Reminders about upcoming events or about communication shared from the school

Class Dojo

- Class Dojo connects the school and parents through building virtual classroom communities.
- It enables staff to share the learning that is taking place that week and any announcements or reminders for specific class or year group events.

- Class Dojo is constantly updated by staff and should be checked regularly by parents for important notices and information to support your child's learning.

Guidance on Class Dojo

- Those classes that have two teachers job sharing, staff will only respond on the days they work and if you send a message beyond the hours that teachers will reply you may not get a response. Please call the school office if this is the case.
- This is not a social media platform between the school and home.

DO

- Do use the messaging facility in a respectful way so the professional partnership between home and schools remain appropriate. We want this platform to be a good tool that strengthens communication between teachers and parents.
- Do use Class Dojo to upload and share your child's homework on the Portfolio option under their Student Account.
- Do message your child's teacher if you have a small query or would like to find out something simple, for example:
 - *We've lost Louis' login details for TTRockstars. Can you send them to us again please?*
- You can message on Class Dojo to ask the teacher if you could arrange to speak to them over the phone or in person.

DON'T

- Please do not message your child's teacher to notify them of absences or illnesses – this should be done via the school office as normal. This includes if there is a medical reason why they cannot do PE.
- Please do not use Class Dojo to message about any urgent or serious issues; please use the school office and normal school procedures for this. For example, if there has been a bereavement in the family or a change in circumstances at the home situation or you feel you need to raise a safeguarding concern to the school. The latter should be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Leader or one of the Deputy Safeguarding Leaders. Please call us on that type of matter.
- Please do not use Class Dojo to inform your class teacher if there has been a change on who is picking up your child; please use the school office and normal school procedures for this.
- Do not share any materials, including pictures/screenshots, from Class Dojo online via websites and/or social media accounts.

Junior School Newsletter

The Junior School Newsletter is emailed out each half term and contains important reminders, dates and messages for the half term ahead. Parents are strongly encouraged to read these. Newsletters will also appear on Class Dojo as well as the school website.

Written Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- Interim progress reports following parent-teacher consultations
- A report on Key Stage 2 SATs tests
- Results of the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check
- Results of the Year 4 multiplication check

Parent Consultation Meetings

- During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.
- All families are provided with two, 10-minute meetings each academic year.
- Office staff will provide two weeks' notice for when the booking system will be open.
- Parents are asked to sign up for an allocated date and time and commit to attending these meetings.
- Should an appointment be unavoidably missed, parents are asked to contact their child's teacher via the school office who will make every effort to arrange another mutually convenient time for a meeting or phone call.
- The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing and likewise parents are encouraged to contact the school.

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
 - Interpreters for meetings or phone calls
- We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

School Website

The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the year and is regularly updated. Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

Complaints

All formal letters of complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's separate Complaints Policy. (See the Policies area of the school website)

Requests for Information

Please refer to our Data Protection and GDPR Policy (See the Policies area of the school website) for copies of children's records, freedom of information and Subject Access Requests. This will detail procedures and protocols, including timings.

Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Acceptable Use Policies (IT)
- Attendance Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Remote Learning Policy and Code of Conduct

Appendix 1: Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the school office on:
Infants: info@joydens.org Tel: 01322 523188
Juniors: office@joydens-wood-junior.kent.sch.uk Tel: 01322 522151
- Our offices are open **8.30am to 4.00pm**.
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails.)
- The office administrators will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff and send an acknowledgement to you.
- Staff will try to respond to all emails within 3 working days.

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework/wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher
Payments:	<i>Any issues with ParentPay please call the School Office.</i>
School trips:	Information: Your child's class teacher Payment: The school office
Uniform/lost and found (in this order):	1. Your child's class teacher 2. The school office
Attendance and holiday form requests:	If you need to report your child's absence, you can do this via StudyBugs If you want to request approval for term-time absence/holiday, you must complete the form which can be collected from the school office.
Bullying and behaviour (in this order):	1. Your child's class teacher 2. Your child's year group lead 3. Assistant Headteacher 4. Deputy Headteacher 5. Headteacher
School events/the school calendar:	Diary Dates on the school's website
Special educational needs and Disabilities (SEND):	Infants: Miss Vinton Juniors: Mrs Hensher
Hiring the school premises:	Infants: Mrs Tinnams Juniors: Mrs Smith
Catering/meals (in this order)::	1. School Office 2. Catering Team