V1. March 2026

Green Shoots Federation

Home-school communication policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:-	**Green Shoots Federation**
On:-	**March 23rd 2026**
Chair of Governors:-	**Tim Jermyn**
Last updated:-	

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1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' 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

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30am – 3.10pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

Where parents require letters or reports completing by staff in school, they should allow six weeks for staff to complete and return paperwork. For more complex requests information may need to be gathered- if this is the case staff will communicate timelines with parents. Staff with teaching commitments will only be able to respond during non-teaching time allocations.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Abusive or aggressive behaviour – in person, by phone or email – will not be tolerated. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30am – 3.10pm), or during school holidays.

A copy of the parent/visitor charter can be found on the website.

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up to date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

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

3.1 Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Payments
- School news

3.2 In App messages

We will in app message parents about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term. Dates and upcoming events are also listed on the front page of our weekly newsletter.

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/newsletter.

3.4 Phone calls

Staff may call parents to discuss a behaviour incident that has occurred during the school day.

Our pastoral team may call to discuss a pastoral need for your child.

Staff may call to notify you of daily incidents such as missing kit, missing lunch, bumped heads etc.

3.5 Letters

We try not to send many letters home as they get lost and left in school bags. Most letters will be emailed so please check often! We **may** however send home information including

- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter
- Letters about trips or events or fundraisers

3.6 Homework books/school planners

Platforms for setting and completing homework are not the appropriate platforms for communicating with school staff.

In some specific circumstances pupils may have an agreed hone school communication book due to additional needs. In these circumstances messages can be recorded in this book.

3.7 Reports

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

- A mid-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- A report on Key Stage (KS) 1 Teacher Assessments and KS2 SATs tests
- A report on Phonics Screening Check outcomes at the end of Year 1 and any resits in Year 2
- A report on EYFS outcomes at the end of Reception year
- A report on Multiplication check outcomes at the end of Year 4.

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' evenings per year. 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.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

IEP meetings are also held one a term where parents are invited in to review and plan the IEP with the school.

3.9 School website

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

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.10 Home-school communications app

Green Shoots Federation uses Arbor App. Through this app we will send reminders about payments and key events in school. You should ensure you log in on this app when you are given details and check this frequently for key updates.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

4.1 Face to Face

There will be a senior member of staff on the gate at the start of every day. We welcome any urgent messages being corresponded at this time. If time does not allow, we will advise the appropriate follow up if necessary.

4.2 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 7 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.3 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 3 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 7 working days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

- Collection information or details

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

4.4 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 7 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

4.5- Requests for reports or letters from the school

- All requests for information from the school such as letters or reports should be made in writing via email.
- We aim to provide the information requested within six working weeks of the request. In some cases this may not be possible or appropriate and we will communicate this to you clearly and the expected timescale.

5. Accessibility

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

5.1 Parents with additional communication needs

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website
- Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Sign language interpreters for meetings

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- 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.

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Social media policy

Appendix 1: school contact list

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
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

We try to respond to all emails within 5 working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT…	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher via the school office
My child's pastoral support	Pastoral lead- Michelle Ratcliffe Inclusion@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk
Safeguarding	Designated safeguarding lead- Rebecca Quinn head@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk
Payments	School Finance- Mrs Thomson-Cawte finance@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk
School trips	School office- Mrs Steele office@ hoveton-st-johns.norfolk.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01603 782520 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact 01603 782520- a Holiday form will need to be completed and signed. office@ hoveton-st-johns.norfolk.sch.uk
Bullying and behaviour	Mrs Quinn head@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk
School events/the school calendar	Mrs Steele-
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENCO- Mrs Medler- senco@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT…	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Before and after-school clubs	Mrs Steele office@ hoveton-st-johns.norfolk.sch.uk
Complaints	Mrs Quinn- Headteacher head@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk
PTA	Mrs Grice lgrice@greenshoots.norfolk.sch.uk
Governing board	Mrs Quinn or Mr Jermyn (Chair of Governors) office@hoveton-st-johns.norfolk.sch.uk
Catering/meals	Mrs Steele office@ hoveton-st-johns.norfolk.sch.uk

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.
A copy of the school's complaints policy can be found on the website.

https://www.hovetonstjohn.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Concerns-and-Complaints-Policy.pdf