

Presdales School



'Achievement for All'

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Enquiries & comments

Any enquiries and comments about this publication may be made to:

Telephone: 01920 462210 / Email: admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk

Address: Presdales School, Hoe Lane, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9NX

Introduction

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable or they may work part time. We also recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives. Modern communication methods can mean more efficient sharing of information, though this needs to be structured to ensure that it is manageable for staff whose primary responsibility is to teach young people.

We encourage clear, open communication links with parent/carers as we believe it has a positive impact on students' learning. Open communication provides parent/carers with the information they need to support their child's education and it also helps to build a partnership between home and school.

Such communication can be entirely positive and practical for example to seek information, ask a question, and clear up a misunderstanding or to draw attention to a matter. Sometimes there is a need to resolve an issue or misunderstanding.

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

We use the term 'parent/carers' in this policy to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a student
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents, carers, or child-minders)

The term member of staff as referred to in this policy includes:

- Anyone employed by the school
- Anyone training in a professional capacity at the school
- Trustees (when acting in this capacity)
- Volunteers at the school (when acting in this capacity)
- Anyone employed through an external agency, who are acting in a professional capacity on the school site

We acknowledge that sometimes there can be situations that can be emotional and challenging for parent/carers and staff to work through. Nonetheless, we expect all our community to show mutual respect. We have clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct) and students (through our behaviour policy). We also expect parent/carers to engage constructively with school staff and to work together with them in the best interests of our children.

We will only communicate with parent/carers in respect of their own child at the school. Requests to raise a concern on behalf of another parent/carer will be declined, as will be requests for information on another child.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

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

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

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

Parents

All parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is always respectful
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Responding to communication from the school (such as requests of meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school
- Informing the school if their contact details change (This can be done via Edulink)

Contacting the school

Email

If you are unsure who to email, or of an email address for a member of staff/team, then initial contact should be made by emailing our admin address (admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk). Our

admin team will be able to direct your query to the correct teacher or leader. Once you have had contact with a member of staff, then it is reasonable to expect communications will then continue directly with the member of staff.

- Teachers are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day and the school does not expect work email to be checked during a teacher's personal time.
- We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and **within three working days**. Part-time staff may take longer to reply.

The school will email parents using SIMS and/or Edulink. Emails from SIMS will appear in your inbox from: 9194013@sims-communications.co.uk. If you wish to reply to any of these emails, then please do so to the admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk address.

Telephone

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Reception staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the receptionist who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will aim to respond to you within three working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

Communication between home and school

Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

- Form Tutor or Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Head of Department (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Head of Year (if query is pastoral related)
- Assistant Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Headteacher

Meetings **should always be pre-arranged** with members of staff.

- We recognise that sometimes you receive news that may cause upset. It is not appropriate to come to school expecting to speak to a particular member of staff without an appointment. Appointments can be made via the school receptionist and a pre-arranged meeting will allow us to have the right information to hand and to meet with you at a time that both suits you and fits with that teacher's timetable and other fixed commitments.

- If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.
- For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days, although this is likely to be longer for meeting with the SEND team. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

Contacting you

Our preferred method of contacting you is via email.

We also remind you that you have access to Edulink which provides you with current information on attendance, consequences, reports and any homework that your child has been set.

Parent evening appointments are booked via School Cloud

Details surrounding extra-curricular activities are shared with both parents/carers via Edulink and can also be found on the [school website](#). The school calendar can also be found on the school website.

If you need support with accessing these systems, please contact admin.

Social Media

Social Media Feeds

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information and key events at the school. This is for the benefit of parents and students. Our whole-school feed is on LinkedIn.

Our social media feeds are not monitored for inbound messages. We are unable to respond to messages or comments. If you have a question about an event or other post on social media, please either email or call the school.

Our social media feeds operate on a 'best efforts' basis by staff whose primary commitment is to the teaching and learning of students. Expectations around frequency and timeliness of updates need to be moderated accordingly, particularly after normal school hours or during holiday periods.

We understand that parents and carers particularly enjoy updates and photographs from school trips. The primary concern of staff needs to be the safety and learning of students on the trip and there may not be time to post about trips in detail. Parents/carers should also be aware that we are often in parts of the country or abroad where there is limited signal, so it may only be possible to update at the end of the day. We will endeavour to update parents on the return time for trips, though we will always encourage students to contact home themselves directly.

Appropriate use of Social Media

We are aware that some parents set up group chats for classes or year groups on WhatsApp, Facebook and other platforms. Whilst we recognise that these can be useful for some parents, these

are not endorsed by the school and we will never post official messages on these forums. On occasion, information provided by parents on these forums can be inaccurate or not representative of the school's view. Please rely on official social media channels, the school website (presdales.herts.sch.uk) or email received directly from the school.

Our teachers and staff have a right to a personal life and to be protected from harassment online. We ask that parents never address staff members directly via social media and must not post inaccurate or defamatory statements about staff or the school on social media platforms

Contact with the school should be made using telephone, email or in person by appointment. Complaints to the school need to be addressed to the Headteacher. Our complaints policy is on the [school website](#).

In the event you do not receive a response from the school within three working days, please contact the school by emailing admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk or telephone the school and we will follow up your enquiry.

Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.

Appendix 1: School Contact List

School admin:	01920 462210 admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Finance office:	finance@presdales.herts.sch.uk
School trips:	trips@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Uniform/lost and found	admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Attendance	attendance@presdales.herts.sch.uk
School absence line	01920 462210 Option 1
Pastoral care*	admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Academic*	admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk
SEND	SENDsupport@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Peripatetic Music Lessons	Musictuition@presdales.herts.sch.uk
School events/calendar	https://presdales.herts.sch.uk/
Hiring the school premises	lettings@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Chair of the Trust Board	governors@presdales.herts.sch.uk
Presdales School Association	pa@presdales.herts.sch.uk

**Your email will be forwarded to the most relevant person. Once this line of communication*

is open, it would be appropriate to continue contacting the relevant member of staff directly

Appendix 2: Examples of unacceptable behavior and communication

If the school is unhappy with the way that a parent or carer is communicating with the school they will ask to meet with them in the first instance. If the issue continues the school has the right to use a raft of measures to protect the wellbeing of its staff and students. These may include putting the parents on a communication plan so that only certain members of staff can communicate with the family or even banning the parent from the school site in more extreme circumstances.

There are some types of behaviour / communication that the school consider unacceptable. These are as follows:

- Any physical aggression e.g., slapping, hitting, punching and kicking.
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, or students e.g., standing very close to her/him.
- The use of aggressive hand gestures including finger pointing towards a member of staff or student.
- Spitting at a member of staff or student.
- Shaking or holding a fist towards a member of staff or student.
- Shouting at members of staff or students (either in person on school grounds, over the telephone or over video conferencing).
- Swearing, or using offensive language including derogatory language about a protected group or characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Threatening or offensive comments about a member of staff or student at the school; this can include verbally, via texts, emails, social media, etc.
- Sending abusive messages to a member of staff, including via text, email or social media
- A large volume of emails in respect of the same matter over a short period of time. Continuing to raise the same issue despite it having been already addressed by the school. Posting defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, on social media platforms.
- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches).
- Breaching or not conforming to the school's security procedures.
- Covertly recording phone calls or meetings with member of staff.
- Any other behaviour that is disrespectful, threatening, or offensive.