



Sandal
Primary School & Nursery

Sandal Primary School

Communication Policy

Adopted: July 2026

Review date: July 2027

Sandal Primary School Communication Policy

Introduction:

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated.

Good communication between the school, home and outside agencies is essential to the support of good progress and attainment of children.

Aims:

To ensure that Sandal Primary School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of our school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate. In our school, we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community.

Objectives:

All communications at Sandal Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents and stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional.
- Be jargon free and easily understood by all.
- Be actioned within a reasonable time.
- Use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience.
- Take account of the relevant policies.
- Be compatible with our core values and School Improvement Plan.

School Will Undertake To:

- Place key policies, documents and procedures in areas that maximise their accessibility and usefulness to the entire school community, e.g. on the school website.
- Ensure that parents and children have clear lines of communication.
- The curriculum is clearly communicated to parents.
- Parents are informed of forthcoming events within appropriate timelines.
- All communications are treated as confidential within the school context.
- All communications by parents with school will be responded to in a timely manner.

Parents Will Undertake To:

- Read all communications issued by school.
- Raise concerns at the earliest opportunity with the school in an appropriate manner.
- Act on the communications.
- Not discuss school issues on social media.
- Regularly check the school website for detailed information about the school term dates and other useful information.
- Inform the school of important information related to their child, such as:
 - ❖ Medical conditions or allergies, supported by medical documentation relating to these conditions.
 - ❖ Any SEND or other needs their child has.
 - ❖ Child protection matters, legal issues or relevant duties with appropriate documentation.
 - ❖ Change of address / emergency contact details/ e-mail account changes.
- Keep their personal information (telephone numbers, addresses) up to date, via the Arbor App. Raise any issues or concerns they may have with the appropriate contact, e.g. contacting the class teacher with education-related issues.

Internal Communication

All communication will be given face to face where possible.

All staff should have access to their work email and check this daily. This is how daily management and safeguarding issues are communicated with staff.

Staff will receive a weekly update and refer to the school calendar which details the activities for the week ahead.

Staff absence and illness should be communicated to school as detailed in the school's absence management policy.

Written communications to specific staff members are delivered by email.

Methods of Communication: School to Parents

Parents will be contacted through the following methods:

- Arbor App
- Telephone
- Text messages
- E-Mail
- Tapestry (EYFS only)
- The school website www.sandalprimaryschool.co.uk
- The school Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573950445989>
- Weekly Update
- In-person meetings
- Written reports

Arbor

Arbor is our primary communication tool to parents. It is used for whole school, year group, class and individual communication. We use it to collect data and consent from parents. All parents should have access to the School Arbor APP. If you do not have access to this facility parents/carers should contact the school office to make alternative arrangements.

Telephone

School will contact parents by telephone to discuss matters which require immediate action. This could be relating to medical attention needed by a child, serious behaviour or safeguarding concerns or for specific information, which is urgently needed or needs to be passed on.

Email

The school uses the following systems which communicate to parents by email:

Medical Tracker - Some injuries, primarily head bumps, which require first aid will be communicated to parents via email.

It is essential that parents keep school up to date with their latest email address and contact telephone numbers.

Tapestry – EYFS only

Teachers in EYFS (Reception and Nursery) will use Tapestry to communicate non- urgent information directly with parents. Please see the appendix attached, which provides guidance on the matters and information that should be communicated using Tapestry.

They will also use Tapestry to share pictures and videos that celebrate and record some of the developmental goals of your children.

School Website

The school website promotes our school and contains lots of useful information relating to the curriculum, day to day running information, staffing, letters to parents, school calendar, key dates, school meal details, pupil-related policies, school uniform and statutory information that must be published.

Sandal Primary Facebook page

Our school Facebook page is a one-way communication tool. It will provide you with useful day to day information. This is the main platform that the school uses to promote and share all the great things that are happening in our school. This includes pictures and videos of different activities. Only children whose parents have given photo consent will be included in any of these posts. This enhances our key communications.

School letters

The school communicates with parents with letters and newsletters which are sent electronically via Arbor.

Weekly Update

The school sends out a weekly newsletter with key messages and information for each year group.

Written reports

Each year, we provide two written reports to each child's parents on their progress. The first report focuses on the child's personal, social and emotional development. The second report focuses on end of year academic achievements. Each of these reports are sent in paper form.

In addition, parents meet their child's teacher twice a year for a private consultation at parents' evening. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being. When children have particular educational needs, parents will be invited to meet with the school's Special Needs Coordinator (SENDCo).

Separated parents – if duplicates of any information are required, due to parents living separately, then these parents should contact the school office to make us aware of the specific requirements that are required to keep you up to date with all school communications.

Staff will not communicate or interact with parents or pupils using any other forms of communication, other than those set out above.

Methods of Communication: Parents to School

Tapestry – EYFS only

All parents should have access to the Tapestry App. This is used by EYFS teachers as a way of communicating general messages regarding pupils to parents. It is also a tool for parents to use to message teachers with issues regarding their child. Parents must adhere to the guidance associated with this, which is set out in the appendix.

Telephone 01274 598115

Telephone communication is appropriate where enquiries are deemed more urgent by the parent, such as communicating particular information about the child to school. The school office is open 8:30am – 4pm. All child absence should be reported by telephone to the school office before 9.30am on each day that a child is absent from school. There is an absence reporting answerphone should parents' phone before 8:30am.

Email

Parents can email school at Office@Sandalprimaryschool.co.uk to communicate non-urgent messages or concerns to members of the school leadership team or the school's office administration. All emails will be treated confidentially and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please note that emails should specify which member of staff the concern or query is addressed to.

Letters

Letters can be handed into the school office, or posted to school. As with emails, all letters will be treated with full confidentiality and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please let the office know if the information in the letter requires urgent attention.

Arbor

Information and consent is gathered from parents via the Arbor App. Parents can complete user defined fields, to gather and update data - for example, photo consent.

Appointments

Parents can book appointments either with their child's class teacher or a member of the School's Senior Management Team. They are asked to phone the school office and give a brief outline of what they wish to discuss. We will try and accommodate all requests from parents of this nature and will call you back to arrange a convenient time to meet.

Communications SLA

School will respond to all communications in a timely manner. All telephone calls will be responded to within 48 hours. All e-mails will be responded to within 5 working days. All letters will be responded to within 10 working days.

Any communications that are sent after 4pm or during the weekends or school holidays, will be considered to have been received at the start of the next working day.

Recording meetings

If parents and/or other individuals wish to record a virtual and/or face-to-face meeting, they will discuss their intentions beforehand with the school no less than 24 hours before the meeting commences. The school will decide if recording requests are appropriate, in consideration of the meeting's subject matter and the school's Confidentiality Policy.

The school will accept all recording requests in exceptional circumstances relating to disability e.g. if parents are hard of hearing and/or have a memory-related disability.

For virtual meetings and/or face-to-face meetings to be recorded, consent will need to be obtained from all participants. The final decision to permit any individual and/or parental recording of meetings will reside with the school.

If parents and/or other individuals fail to obtain the school's permission to record before the meeting begins and insist on recording without permission, the school will be permitted to suspend the meeting.

Any complaints surrounding the school's rejection of a parent's request to record a meeting or the school's suspension of a meeting due to permission not being granted, will be dealt with in line with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Emergency communication

All parents will ensure that the school has their latest contact details, including their address, telephone number and email address, so that they can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

If a pupil is seriously ill or injured, the school will attempt to contact the pupil's emergency contact(s) via telephone.

Where an incident affects the whole-school community, such as power failure or snow, the school will send all parents an Arbor message. This will be followed up with a duplicated communication on Facebook.

If the school is closed for more than one day due to adverse weather or a similar problem, an update will be posted on the Bradford Schools Online website.

In the event of a serious incident, the school will follow its Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy – parents will routinely receive updates on how the school will communicate with them during an invacuation, lockdown or evacuation via Arbor.

Accessing information

In accordance with an individual's right of access under the UK GDPR, personal information (such as educational records), confirmation of data processing and other supplementary information will be shared with individuals who request access.

The procedure below will be followed in terms of SARs:

- The requests will be made in writing to the governing board and will be responded to within one month of receipt.
- The period of compliance may be extended by a further two months where the requests are complex or numerous. If this is the case, individuals will be informed within one month of receipt of the request, with an explanation of why an extension is required.
- A pupil, or the parent of a pupil, will have the right to access the information that the school holds about the child in question.
- Individuals have the right to access their personal data free of charge.
- Where requests are manifestly unfounded or excessive, a reasonable charge for the administrative costs of providing the information will be applied, or the request will be refused.
- If any request is refused, the individual will be informed of their right to complain to the supervisory authority and to a judicial remedy without delay within one month.

Under the UK GDPR, remote access to a secure self-service system will be given to provide individuals with direct access to their personal information.

Freedom of Information Requests

In line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, private data and public records can potentially be accessed through lodging a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. The procedure below will be followed in terms of FOI requests:

- The requests will be made in writing to the school, stating the name and address of the requester, as well as a description of the information requested.

- Successful FOI requests will be responded to within 20 working days from receipt of the request, unless the request does not comply with the procedure set out in the school's Freedom of Information Policy.
- The school holds the right to charge the requester a fee, if complying with the request would cost the school an excess of £450.
- Certain information will not be shared, such as that explained in Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Monitoring and review

The efficiency of this policy will be continuously monitored throughout the year by the Headteacher and Governing board.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2027.

Appendix A

Tapestry - A Guide for EYFS Parents

Sandal Primary School recognises the importance of fostering a healthy home-school partnership and we know that a strong relationship between teachers and parents/carers can have a positive impact on a child's ability to reach their full potential.

In EYFS, we use Tapestry as a platform for communication. It is used to communicate day to day general reminders and information between parents and teachers, to foster engagement and share developmental success in your child's learning journey between school and home. Sometimes Tapestry is used by parents to communicate concerns and complaints which is not what it is intended for. Below is a comprehensive list of do's and don'ts to ensure a positive experience for both you and your child's teachers.

Do:

- Engage with your child in a positive way and discuss any information that is shared on Tapestry with them.
- Ensure that all communications that you send are polite and respectful.
- Leave only positive comments and likes in response to posts.
- Share any relevant information with teachers that may assist your child's wellbeing and learning experience during the day.

Don't:

- Allow children to use the App to message teachers.
- Contact teachers regarding attendance or absence issues. These should be addressed through the school office.
- Use the platform to address any behavioral issues or complaints. These issues should be addressed by contacting the school office to arrange a more personable opportunity to communicate with your child's teacher.
- Use the platform to discuss the specific learning needs of your child. These should be done face to face with your child's teacher and such meetings should be arranged through the school office.
- Expect immediate responses from teachers. Teachers are asked to check Tapestry regularly to ensure effective communication between parents and home, however they are teaching during the school day and are not required to respond or read Tapestry outside of the normal working day. Teachers will respond when it is convenient to them.

If staff feel that the nature of your message is not suitable for discussion on Tapestry, they will message you with a response that directs you to the school office to deal with the matter in a more personable way.