



# Communication Policy



**September 2017**  
**To be reviewed September 2018**

# Concord Junior School

## Communication Policy

At Concord Junior School, we believe that good communication is essential. We aim to ensure that communication among all members of the school community (staff, pupils, parents/carers and the wider community) is both effective and efficient at all times. It is through effective communications 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:
  - The management of relationships and appropriate involvement of people
  - An awareness of attitude and behaviour as well as the clarity of message
  - Active and respectful listening
  - Timely, effective action when required
- Every member of staff has a responsibility to support effective communications and needs to recognise that the quality of their communications reflects on the school's reputation.
- For the purpose of this policy, communication includes not only the message but also how that message is communicated; not only the responsibility for communication but also how effectively that responsibility has been carried out.
- As a school we strongly believe in the concept 'Talk to Think'

### Objectives

All communications at Concord Junior School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, directors and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Be as transparent as possible, offering clear explanations for major decisions
- Be actioned within a reasonable time
- Be courteous, jargon-free, professional and easily understood by all
- Respect confidentiality
- Use the method most effective and appropriate to the content, message and audience
- Take account of relevant school policies
- Ensure that staff are fully informed of all relevant school activity to enable them to be as effective as possible in their role
- Written communications must comply with agreed practice

## **Internal Methods of Communication**

### **Staff notice board**

The staff notice board is located in the staffroom and is updated regularly. Staff should check the board daily to ensure they are aware of any meetings, visitors or activities taking place in school.

### **Meetings**

There is a comprehensive schedule of meetings, both formal and informal, to facilitate involvement of staff. It is important that time is allocated during this schedule for structured opportunities for staff to engage in collaborative tasks such as work scrutiny, reflection on whole school priorities and curriculum planning.

All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. For all other meetings, notes should be taken, action points noted and feedback given to staff.

The approved minutes of staff meetings are available to all staff via email and can be requested from the Headteacher.

A copy of the agenda and minutes for each meeting are stored in a box file in the Deputy Headteacher's office.

### **Email**

Information is 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. Staff email accounts should be checked daily and emails should be responded to within 24 hours (during the working week).

### **Mobile phones**

**Staff** - Mobile phones should not be used during lessons or when in contact with the children unless previously agreed with the Headteacher.

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 into class. If mobile phones are brought to school they should be handed in to the school office via the dinner money boxes.

**Parents/carers** – Use of mobile phones whilst on the school site is not encouraged. Any use should be *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment and follow the advice in the Trust and School Acceptable Use Policies.

### **Written communications**

Written communications, including internal and external mail, may be handed to staff personally, emailed or placed in pigeon holes in the staff room. Staff should check pigeon holes regularly.

Preparation for school trips eg risk assessments and staffing, should be communicated in a timely manner (at least two weeks in advance) in accordance with the EVC policy.

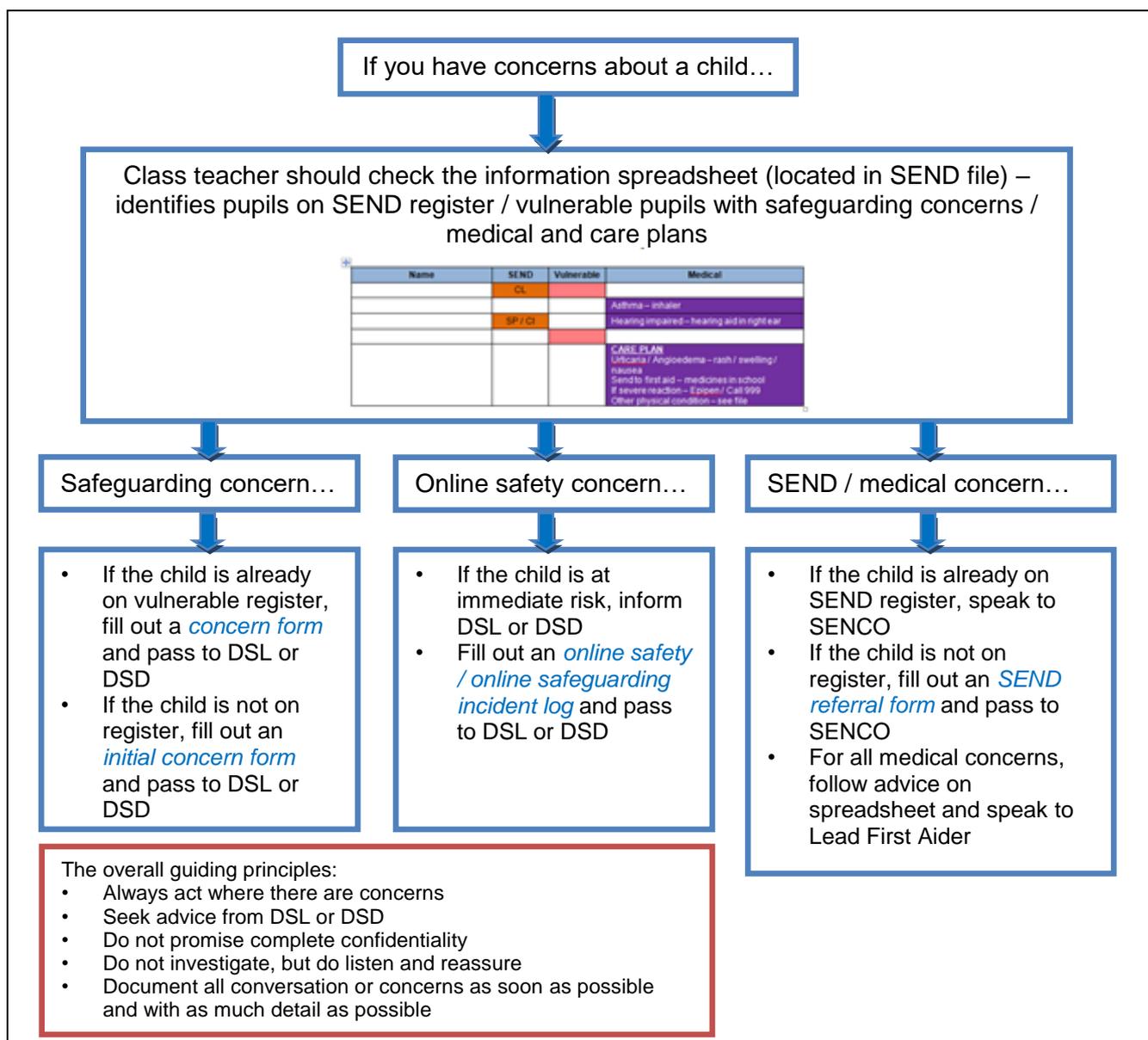
### **Assistance Required Cards / Medical Assistance Required Cards**

These cards are given to all staff (including supply staff) and should be sent with a child to the main office if assistance is required, enabling the teacher to remain in the classroom supervising the class.

**NB Pigeon holes should not be used for confidential communications of a safeguarding nature. These should be passed directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Nicola Sherwood) or Deputy (Michelle Kouni).**

## Recording and Reporting

- The first point of call for communication with parents should always be the child's class teacher.
- If a parent calls school or approaches a member of staff on the yard, they should be directed to the class teacher in the first instance.
- If the communication is of a safeguarding nature, the first point of contact should be the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.
- If the communication is in relation to SEND, the first point of contact should be either class teacher or SENCO (depending upon the nature of query).
- Communications with parents where a concern is raised should be recorded in a timely and appropriate manner. If the concern is a behaviour or general concern, this should be documented on a [pupil/parent communication log](#). These logs should then be passed to a member of SLT for information sharing and will be filed and stored in the Deputy Headteacher's office.
- If the concern is of a safeguarding or SEND nature, the flow chart below should be followed



## **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 children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve.

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.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial 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**

### **Letters**

Staff will endeavour to respond to parents' letters as quickly as possible. Any letter of complaint should be referred to the Headteacher.

Letters to parents must be approved by the Headteacher before they are sent. Copies of all correspondence with parents should be handed in to the school office, where a file will be kept.

### **Text Messages / Email**

The school has a text messaging and email system it uses to communicate to parents. Any communication that needs to be sent to parents using this system must be approved by the Headteacher. If a parent communicates with the school using email, a copy should be printed. A hard copy of any email sent directly to a parent should be filed and a copy stored in the school office.

If emails are used to communicate information about pupils, only initials should be used, names of pupils should never be used in full.

### **Telephone calls / Conversations**

Conversations with parents should be recorded on the pupil/parent conversation log. The logs should provide an accurate and full version of any conversation, actions agreed and outcomes should be completed. The log should then be handed to a member of SLT for information sharing purposes. All communication logs are stored in a file in the Deputy Headteacher's office.

### **Social Networking**

Staff must not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites.

Class Dojo is the only exception to this, as staff are encouraged to post photographs and information about their class' curriculum at least once each week. Photographs and posts should not include pupil images or names.

### **Written Reports.**

Once a year we provide a full written report to each child's parents on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development.

In addition, parents meet their child's teacher three times during the year for a private consultation at Parents' Evening. 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. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

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.

### **School Website**

The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

### **Home-school communication**

A calendar of school events is produced at the start of each term and issued to parents on the school Newsletter. The Newsletter is sent to parents at the beginning of each half term. It contains general details of school events and activities and a copy is placed on the school website.

A Home-School Agreement is sent out to all families each year. The agreement states the responsibilities for staff, pupils and parents. Copies of signed agreements are stored in the school office.

The school encourages parents to share any issues about their child at the earliest opportunity. Teachers arrange to see parents as soon as possible. Many parents have the opportunity to have a brief word with the teacher when they collect them after school or before school.

We arrange various meetings for parents throughout the year. Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents of planning, content and arrangements. Transition meetings take place in July.

### **Communication with other schools and outside agencies**

We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on better ways to meet these needs, so that children may participate more fully. Support comes from medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), from Educational Psychologists, from health professionals and specialists.

We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help children at risk. When any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, who may share this information with Social Care.

We hold information on pupils in our school, and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to are available on the school website. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998.