|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ava Kennedy School Design | **Communication Policy**  **“by working together we learn, we achieve, we care”** |

**Policy Consultation & Review**

This policy is available on request from the school office.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on a two yearly basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on January 2021. It is due for review on January 2022.

Signature Headteacher Date:

Signature Chair of Governors Date:

**Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the

following:

* The Education Act 2002.
* Data Protection Act 1998.
* The Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

* GDPR Policy
* Freedom of Information Policy
* Internet Safety Policy
* Safeguarding Policy
* Social Media Policy
* Assessment for Learning Policy (AfL)
* Marking and Feedback Policy
* EYFS Policy

***At Reedham Primary and Nursery School, the relationship between parents/carers, pupils and the school is extremely important to us. We have a firm focus on nurturing the pupils’ positive relationships with both adults and each other. The aims of the school with regard to internal and external communication are detailed in this policy, along with the responsibilities of the school, staff members and parents/carers.***

**The Definition of Communication**

At Reedham Primary, we use the following definitions:

* **LANGUAGE** – the ability to understand words and sentences and organise thoughts in order to be able to respond using appropriate vocabulary and grammar
* **SPEECH** – the ability to combine sounds together to say words. This involves the physical elements of pronunciation.
* **NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (NVC)** – the ability to understand and use gesture, body language and facial expression to communicate your message.

These strands occur in all areas of school life; attention, listening, play, negotiating and are fundamental to the progress a child makes. The ELKLAN training has formed the basis of our speech, language and communication plan, incorporating a range of strategies to develop children’s language skills, irrespective of any difficulties they face.

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It involves:

• Respectful listening

• The management of relationships and appropriate involvement of people

• An awareness of attitude and behaviour as well as the clarity of the message

• Timely, effective action if required

**Our Aims**

Reedham Primary and Nursery School aims to promote effective communication between pupils,

members of staff, parents/carers, stakeholders and all members of the school community.

The school’s objectives are to:

* To provide a whole school environment where all forms of communication, such as verbal and non-verbal, are valued, used and understood by all members of the school community., which integrates ELKLAN principles and methodologies throughout all aspects of school life.
* To ensure that children leaving Reedham Primary are effective communicators.
* To identify children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) as early as possible and to provide appropriate support and intervention as necessary.
* To ensure that Speech, Language and Communication is given a high profile through regular training and inclusion on staff meeting agendas.
* Have a clear and professional communication strategy in place which helps to keep parents/carers fully informed about their child’s educational progress and any other matters relating to their child’s overall wellbeing.
* Ensure parents/carers are fully aware of the ways they can contact school. And that the school is in possession of the current contact details for all parents/carers.
* Constantly endeavour to improve the quality of service by making sure there is a rigorous process in place for consultation between the school, parents/carers, staff members and pupils.
* Monitor and evaluate annually communication issues through regular discussions with staff, parents/carers and members of the school community.

**A Communication Friendly School - Pupils**

At Reedham Primary we feel that pupil voice is an important strand of education, which involves:

* Listening to young people.
* Giving young people the language to understand and express their views and feelings.
* Encouraging children to recognise and vocalise the support they need and find useful.

We provide a communication friendly environment where children are encouraged to speak out and voice their opinions in order to:

* Take ownership and responsibility for their achievements and challenges.
* Make informed choices.
* Better engage in the learning process and become an active rather than passive learner.
* Access support that they may need.

Strategies deployed to promote communication include:

* Providing regular and frequent opportunities for children to speak and listen to each other, interact in a group and participate in role play, throughout their time in school.
* Interaction – Stop, Listen, Respond…
* Thinking about the vocabulary used in questioning – using open questioning to promote speaking and listening opportunities.
* Extending vocabulary – making information and directions visual and accessible for all learners needs.
* Encouraging children to ‘Speak Out’ when they are unsure.
* Displaying clear behaviour expectations around the school rules visually.
* Using visual timetables/time lines to support children with SLCN or where appropriate
* Whole school ELKLAN training in Communication Counts, including ‘top-up’ training annually and training for new staff as part of induction.

Communication will link closely with all areas of the curriculum and form a vital part of learning across the school. As such, this policy will be supported by work in Phonics, other intervention programmes and input from outside agencies such as speech therapy. Children receiving additional support for a SLCN will be highlighted on their Learning Plan and targets will reflect what they are working on. These will be share with parents as well to incorporate a uniformed approach to ensure children progress.

**SEND Children – Communication with other schools and outside agencies**

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 to form an individualised Learning Plan.

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.

Prior to pupils joining our Early Years and Foundation Stage or the primary school, children are invited to visit the school to enable us to gain further information about them in order to support their transition to Reedham Primary and Nursery School.

On initial entry, children are assessed and any causes for concern are identified and monitored. Further support is given to children with SLCN and they are tracked through the school to ensure routines are consistent.

Staff will identify additional SLCN needs in their classes and follow the school procedure to refer to the SENDCO who will then seek support of outside agencies where appropriate.

The SENDCO meets with the local Cluster SENDCO 3 times a term to review children currently receiving Speech and Language input, gain advice for children presenting with difficulties and plan any referrals/work for the term.

**Roles and responsibilities**

Reedham Primary and Nursery School is responsible for:

* Placing key policies, documents and procedures in areas that are accessible and useful to the entire school community (e.g. the school website).
* Communicating the curriculum clearly to parents/carers, through termly overview plans.
* Informing parents/carers of details all school events within appropriate timelines.
* Keeping parents/carers informed of the progress of their child at regular intervals.
* Informing parents/carers about the types of data that the school holds concerning pupils, why that data is held and, where necessary, who it may be shared with.
* Ensuring that parents/carers understand their right to view the information about their child which is held by the school.
* Ensuring that information regarding staff pay and service conditions is made available to all employees at the school.

**Staff members are responsible for:**

* Ensuring the principles and procedures of this policy are followed.
* Ensuring that pupils are given appropriate feedback so they are aware of their targets, progress and are given time to act on feedback in accordance with our Marking and Feedback Policy.
* Communicating proactively with parents/carers about pupil progress, and helping parents/carers to support their child’s learning.
* Ensuring that relevant information is passed on to supply teachers.
* Updating Pupil Asset data with specific pupil information in accordance with our AfL Policy.

**Parents/carers are responsible for:**

* Reading the key communications circulated by the school and responding/acting on communication when necessary, e.g. by attending meetings.
* Logging on to the school website for detailed information about the school calendar, term dates, exam details, monitoring and assessments, school achievements and other useful downloads.
* Informing the school of medical conditions/allergies, along with medical documentation of these conditions.
* Informing the school of all up-to-date contact information (phone numbers, addresses, etc), including that of emergency contacts.
* Informing the school of child protection matters, legal issues or relevant duties with appropriate documentation.
* Raising any issues or concerns they may have with the class teacher, through either a face to face meeting, a telephone call or an email to the teachers’ school email. For more information on complaints please see our Complaints Policy.

**Internal and external communication**

* A diary is kept in the school office for all staff to view which outlines weekly activities, as well as a whiteboard for daily messages in the staffroom.
* All staff members are aware of the Staff Handbook, which details a variety of school procedures.
* Written communications are delivered via letter or by email, using Pupil Asset.
* Staff members’ personal details will not be shared with other members of staff or external agencies without their consent.
* Under no circumstances will staff members’ personal details be shared with parents/carers.
* Staff members will not communicate about school matters/ children with parents/carers or pupils via social networking sites, or accept ‘friend’ requests, except in the case of pages set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning, in accordance with the Social Media Policy.
* Parents should not contact staff through social media and should only use school permitted channels of communication.

**Parents/carers will be contacted through the following methods:**

* Phone calls
* Letters home
* The school website
* The School’s Facebook page
* Tapestry (For EYFS)
* The Reedham Read it
* School newsletters
* Parent/carer meetings

For general enquiries, parents/carers are required to ring the school office, which is open from Monday to Friday between 8am and 4pm, on the school phone number: 01493 700271.

Please note the office is unmanned from 1.20pm but a message can be left if the call is unanswered. A member of staff will aim to return the call as soon as possible or will relay the message to the appropriate party.

Parents/carers can email the school using the email address for general enquiries: [office@reedham.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:office@reedham.norfolk.sch.uk)

* All emails to the school will be treated as confidential, unless there is a specific reason not to do so.
* Reedham Primary and Nursery School aims to respond to emails as quickly as possible, within a maximum of 24 hours. Any delay in the response will be communicated.

**For specific class related enquiries parents/carers should email their child’s class teacher:**

Heron Class – Mrs Bethell [sbethell7brs@nsix.org.uk](mailto:sbethell7brs@nsix.org.uk)

Owl Class - Mr Edwards [cedwards3krj@nsix.org.uk](mailto:cedwards3krj@nsix.org.uk) or [head@reedham.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:head@reedham.norfolk.sch.uk)

Owl Class – Miss Waters [swaters6xrh@nsix.org.uk](mailto:swaters6xrh@nsix.org.uk)

Otter Class – Miss Spaul [bspaul4nrg@nsix.org.uk](mailto:bspaul4nrg@nsix.org.uk)

**Continuous home-school communication**

* When necessary, class teachers will write to parents/carers detailing the work which will be taught in class.
* The school regularly updates parents/carers of ways in which they can support pupils’ development and progress through activities to be completed at home.
* Pupils in Heron and Owl class have a home-school reading diary which can be utilised by parents/carers to record a wide range of information that they wish to share regularly with the class teacher.
* Class teachers will be available to briefly discuss any concerns with parents/carers before the start of, and at the end of, each school day; appointments can be made to discuss anything at more length at a mutually agreeable time.
* A pre-admission interview will be held by the Head Teacher for new parents/carers prior to their child’s entry to the school.
* If a child is absent from school, and the school has no indication of the reason for the absence, the school will contact a parent/carer via telephone on the first day of absence, in order to find out the reason for the absence.
* If there are further days of absence and no communication with the parent/carer has been established, the school will contact all emergency contacts that the parent/carer has provided in order to find out the reason for the absence. If communication is made with an emergency contact, school will inform them that the parent/carer should contact school as soon as possible.
* If no contact can be made with any named parent/carer for five days, the school has the right to contact the Education Welfare Officer to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the pupil.

**Email communication**

* Email and internet access will be used in line with the school’s Internet Safety Policy.
* All members of staff will have their own school email account.
* Emails should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication; though there may be extenuating circumstances, when this is a necessity. Staff members will consider the best way to communicate according to each individual situation.
* Staff members will not engage in personal correspondence with pupils.
* Communication between pupils and parents/carers with staff members will be carried out via the school email address and not via staff members’ personal email addresses.
* Chain emails will not be allowed.
* The sending of attachments will be limited to official school documents.
* Under no circumstances will adverts be embedded into emails.

**Meetings**

* All formal meetings will be minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda.
* Time will be set aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to the school’s reflection on priorities, activities and future plans.
* For all formal meetings, notes will be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff members.
* Minutes of meetings will be copied to relevant staff members, as well as the senior leadership team, and a copy will be saved on the staff shared area on the faculties drive, in a clearly marked subject folder.

**School website**

The school website will be utilised to communicate information regarding the following:

* Policy sharing
* Local Offer
* School curriculum information
* School timetables
* Clubs and activities
* School hours
* School uniform
* Term dates
* Pupil safety
* The school calendar
* Ofsted reports
* Exam information

The school website will be updated as and when necessary.

The contents of the website will complement the vision of the school, as well as contain information about the most recent activities and successes of the school, including progress, priorities and performance.

**Emergency communication**

* All parents/carers will ensure that the school has their latest contact details, including but not limited to 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 parents/carers via telephone.
* Where an incident affects the whole school community, such as power failure, the school will post a message through Pupils Asset. School will also contact key parents by phone who will post the message on social media to inform other parents of the incident quickly. If there is opportunity to let the parents/carers know in advance, a letter will be sent home via the pupils.
* If the school is closed due to adverse weather or a similar problem, updates will be posted via Pupil Asset and our Facebook page at least once a day.
* The local radio stations will broadcast a closure announcement in the event of the school closing due to adverse weather or another emergency situation, in accordance with the Adverse Weather Policy.

**Accessing Information**

In accordance with section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998, personal information,

such as educational records, can be shared via a subject access request (SAR).

* These requests must be made in writing to the governing body and will be responded to within 15 school days if the request is regarding an educational record.
* If the data being requested is not in relation to an educational record, the response will be within 40 calendar days.
* Some types of personal data are exempt from the right of a SAR and so cannot be obtained by making a SAR. Information may be exempt because of its nature or because of the effect its disclosure is likely to have.
* Information regarding another individual will not be disclosed in a SAR.
* Individual requests for non-personal information cannot be treated as a SAR but will be dealt with either as a request under the Data Protection Act 1998 or as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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.

* These 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.
* 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 body.
* This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body.