

FBPS Communications Code

January 2019

Learning Together: Working as One

Aspire; Believe; Succeed; Excel

Friday Bridge Primary School provides a welcoming, safe, happy learning environment where everyone is respected and listened to; a school where we take pride in ourselves and our achievements, enabling children to become confident and successful learners. We recognise the value of each individual and provide a wealth of opportunities for children to realise their potential. We work in partnership with pupils, governors, the local and wider community to encourage children to strive for excellence and aim high, laying the foundations for life-long learning.

Friday Bridge Primary School encourages everyone to **Aspire** by:

- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum which widens experiences and provides opportunities for all to achieve
- Setting the highest possible standards of behaviour
- Recognising the individual learning needs of each child, planning accordingly to enable us to develop skills and maximise progress
- Celebrating and recognising effort and achievement

Friday Bridge Primary School encourages everyone to **Believe** by:

- Offering excellent pastoral care; ensuring all children feel listened to, respected and safe
- Valuing the development of the 'whole child'
- Encouraging everyone to do their best
- Inspiring a love of learning through high quality teaching and stimulating learning environments
- Recognising the talents of individuals and providing opportunities to build upon these

Friday Bridge Primary School encourages everyone to **Succeed** by:

- Providing high quality learning opportunities, which challenge learners to achieve their potential
- Reviewing targets and practice to ensure all learning needs are catered for
- Sharing high quality practice both within and beyond our school
- Supporting pupils throughout their learning journey
- Working with parents, governors and the wider community to 'open doors' enabling all children to be the best they can be

Friday Bridge Primary School encourages everyone to **Excel** by:

- Being outward looking and actively seeking opportunities to improve
- Recognising that our learning journey is never complete
- Encouraging aspirations for future learning
- Striving for excellence
- Challenging learners to aim high and 'reach for the stars'

Working as One is most effective when all staff, parents and children understand their responsibilities and work together towards the same goals.

The School will:

- Provide your child with a high standard of education, implemented by rigorous national guidelines, within a balanced curriculum
- Ensure that our learning environment is stimulating and challenging
- Celebrate your child's academic and personal achievements
- Make provision to enable your child to achieve their full potential
- Care for your child's safety and well-being following all safeguarding protocols
- Teach children to develop a positive attitude to one another, regardless of differences
- Regularly meet with you to communicate the progress of your child, celebrating their strengths and explaining how we can support them with areas for development
- Provide information to you about our school, including relevant policies, meetings, workshops, activities, newsletters and open days
- Welcome you if you would like to contribute to our school's broader curriculum.

Where a parent has a concern the school will:

- explain clearly how and when problems can be raised with the School
- respond within a reasonable time
- be available for consultation within reasonable time limits
- respond with courtesy and respect
- attempt to resolve problems using reasonable means in line with the school's complaints procedure
- keep complainants informed of progress towards a resolution of the issues raised

All Parents will:

- Make sure children arrive at school between 8:50 - 9:00 am prepared to start their lessons and ensuring they are wearing named school uniform, or other suitable clothing, and that their PE kit is brought into school at the beginning of each week
- Do their very best to provide a safe, secure and happy environment at home
- Let the school know of any concerns or worries that may be affecting a child's learning, behaviour or ability to do homework
- Support the school by encouraging children to develop a positive attitude towards our diverse community
- Attend meetings with child's teacher and other staff, aiming to be positive and productive, working towards moving children on in their learning
- Support and work with the school to ensure that the behaviour management policies of the school are maintained
- Encourage a positive attitude
- Read all information sent home as this gives important details of relevant policies, meetings, workshops, activities, newsletters and open days
- Support your child by making sure that homework tasks are completed and returned on time.

The School can expect parents/members of the public to:

- treat all school staff with courtesy and respect
- respect the needs and well-being of pupils and staff within the School
- avoid any use, or threatened use, of violence to people or property
- avoid any aggression or verbal abuse
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the School a reasonable time to respond
- recognise that resolving a specific problem can sometimes take some time
- in the case of a complaint, follow the School's complaints procedure
- not use any social media platforms for the purposes of complaint

Pupils will:

- Respect one another's culture, race, feelings, beliefs and values
- Accept responsibility for the things they do
- Be responsible for their school and homework
- Ask for help and try their best
- Ensure they take home any letters
- Be kind and speak politely to everyone in school
- Take good care of the building, equipment and school grounds
- Behave in a safe way
- Be helpful
- Tell a member of staff if they have worries or are unhappy

Pupils themselves will be:

- treated kindly
- listened to
- helped
- friendly to one another
- encouraged to play and join in games
- encouraged to feel happy, wanted and safe.

The aim of this code is to foster good communications between parents and the school.

The school always welcomes contact with parents because this fosters mutual understanding and support which has a positive effect on children's performance and their attitudes to learning.

The school wants to ensure that parents always have an appropriate and helpful response to their communications. However, unlike some businesses and other occupations, the professional duties of staff can make it difficult for them to speak or meet with parents during the school day.

Due to teaching commitments, staff will typically be unavailable between 8.50 am and 3.15 pm each day. There are also other times outside these hours when they attend meetings. The important business of working with and responding to parents must be managed within this context.

Principles for responding to parents

In order to achieve the most effective balance for children, staff have always observed the following principles:

- welcoming contact
- responding as quickly and fully as possible
- involving parents in our work with children
- sharing information as often and as fully as possible

When correspondence is made to an individual parent on an important matter, the letter will be sent by post or handed directly to the parent to ensure confidentiality and security. On some occasions it may be appropriate for the school to contact parents by email. For day to day or routine matters correspondence will be sent via the children's book bags. The school will refer breaches of the communications policy to the Chair of Governors.

Guidelines on responding to parents

It may be helpful for parents to know how they can expect their telephone calls, letters, emails and requests for meetings with the school to be dealt with. The following guidelines show how we aim to respond to parents.

Telephone Calls

- **Messages:** All telephone calls are received through the main office. A message will be taken and sent to the relevant person as soon as possible. Staff will normally take details of the caller's name and telephone number and purpose in calling. The person concerned will try to respond as soon as possible and by the end of the next school day if possible. The school's telephone number is 01945 860220
- **Urgent calls:** The call will be put through to the most appropriate or available senior member of staff if possible or a message will be taken
- **Messages for pupils:** Messages for children will be taken by a member of staff and passed on as soon as possible
- **Busy times:** The office is busy between 8.50 - 9.15 am and 3.00 - 3.45 pm. At these times and at other times, calls may be recorded on an answer machine. This is checked regularly and if a message is left, it will be passed on.
- **Telephone calls made at arranged times:** If teachers have arranged with parents for them to receive calls at particular times of the school day, those teachers will try to ensure that they are available. Should other commitments or events make this impossible, a staff member will take a message and the person concerned will try to call back the same day.

Letters and emails

- The school will always try to **acknowledge** letters and emails received from parents within two working days during term time

Email: office@fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk

Address: Friday Bridge Primary School, Maltmas Drove, Friday Bridge,
WISBECH. PE14 OHW

- If more time is required to provide a fuller response or to arrange a meeting, staff will try to include in the acknowledgement details of when these will happen
- Staff will try to respond to the most pressing concerns of parents as quickly as possible. It is our intention to try to **respond** to any letter or email as soon as we can and within ten working days within term time. If there is likely to be a delay we will let you know the reasons why.

Complaints

We will investigate a complaint and aim to respond with ten working days. If we cannot provide a full response within ten working school days then we will write to the complainant explaining this and giving a date by which we will endeavour to provide a full response. For further information please see our Complaints Policy.

Meetings

Where situations are more complex, a face-to-face meeting is preferable to a letter or telephone call and this will be arranged at the earliest convenience for parents and staff.

Meetings with Class Teachers

The class teacher is the first point of contact for any concerns about a child. Teachers are not available between 8.50 am and 3.30 pm but mutually agreed appointments can be made outside these times either through the office or directly with the class teacher.

Depending on the nature of the situation, a meeting may include a more senior member of staff.

A record may be kept and notes shared with all parties where appropriate. Parents will only be invited to discuss their own children. Staff will not talk about other children in front of other parents. All meetings and discussions are confidential between the staff involved and the parents and parties should not divulge information to others without the agreement of parents and the school.

Emails

The school has a system of sending all standard forms of communication home to parents via email where parents have provided an email address. For all other correspondence, hard copies will be provided. Parents must ensure that the school office is informed of any changes to email addresses.

Website

The school seeks to put as much information as possible on its website. Most general information that parents would seek can be readily found at www.fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk

Parents are encouraged look at the website on a regular basis.

Protocol for Communications

The school undertakes to treat all communications with parents with courtesy. It expects to receive the same in return. Both parties will work towards identifying and resolving problems quickly and efficiently. Where difficulties cannot be resolved the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher may be involved. An Education Officer or other agencies will be invited in situations which are particularly complex and in an effort to move forward.

The school reserves the right to take appropriate action if aggressive behaviour from any party occurs on school premises.

Social Media

Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at the school.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school

Definitions and Scope:

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Windows Live Messenger, YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper site.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the school's Equalities, Child Protection and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

Within this policy there is a distinction between use of school-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media.

Staff Use of Social Media in practice:

- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above
- Members of the school staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts
- All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Headteacher

- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the school and members of its community on any social media accounts
- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account