



## Home-school communication policy

The Beacon Church of England (VA) Primary School

<b>Approved by:</b>	Curriculum & Learning Committee	<b>Date:</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	Summer 2028	

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## The Beacon's Vision Statement

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Our vision is for 'Living life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). The bible teaches us that God wants all his children to flourish, and that community and living well together are of the utmost importance in achieving this aim. We call our community 'One Big Beacon Family', together we focus on achieving our Vision for all members of our community. Working with parents and carers, we provide learning and play experiences which engage children's interests; inspire them to want to know more; motivate them to persevere with their learning and empower them to develop skills of independence. We aim that our children will become:

- **Confident individuals** who can positively face the successes and challenges of life.
- **Successful learners** who can take their place in a constantly changing world.
- **Responsible citizens** who are able to make a positive contribution to today's diverse society.
- **Appreciative and respectful of** other **people's uniqueness and talents** and recognised and celebrated for their own.

We want each child, member of staff and our wider community to learn to live life in all its fullness, develop wonderful life-long memories of their Beacon years and the knowledge, skills and understanding to be able to continue to flourish throughout their lives.

Throughout our lives, we face tough challenges, difficult times and great joy. We can read examples of all these, and how to manage them, in the Bible. In order to live life in all its fullness, we all need support to learn to understand, develop and use strategies which keep us safe, care for and promote our mental health and wellbeing and empower us to be our best selves.

'Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

Further information about our Vision statement can be found on our school website.

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Headteacher: Mrs A Billington

Administration Manager: Mrs L Neill

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## 1. Introduction and aims

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

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The Beacon's primary methods of communication with parents and carers is through our School Jotter App. This includes any real-time updates, for example when events have to be unexpectedly cancelled, or arrangements change. Details of how to download this are on our website. It is the responsibility of all parents and carers to ensure they have access to this, and that notifications are enabled. Parents and carers can request support through our admin office.

The Beacon sends information to parents and carers by email and phone calls.

It is important that you inform us of any changes to email addresses, phone numbers and/or your home address.

It is important to tell us if parents / carers separate. This is particularly important as when parents / carers live at the same address, only one email will be sent to the person you have told us is the first contact.

Parents and carers are given a log-in to be able to book events and make payments online.

### 2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

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

### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's internet acceptable use policy

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- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves). We **aim** to respond to queries as soon as possible, and within five working days.

The school office is open between 8.30am and 4pm Monday to Friday, the admin team are available during these hours.

Teaching staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.20am until 5pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

Our policies can be found on the school website, Information / Policies page.

## 2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Making every reasonable effort to ensure communication is of a reasonable frequency and length
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (see above) or during school holidays.

## 3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents and carers should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

### 3.1 School Jotter App

We use the School Jotter App to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Weekly newsletters

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- Any important and/or urgent updates, for example relating to clubs/ classes/whole school
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

### 3.2 Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Individual emails about your child / their class
- Payments due / overdue
- Letters about some trips and events
- To send School Reports

### 3.3 Text messages

We will keep text messages to a minimum due to the cost to school. Most messages are sent through jotter or email. We may text parents and carers about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

### 3.4 School calendar

Our School Website and School Jotter Calendar functions include as many calendar items as possible for the academic year. This is regularly updated.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

### 3.5 Phone calls

It is our intention to be pro-active in our communication with parents and carers. You may receive a phone call to discuss something with your child's teacher as a pro-active action so we can work together to support your child. We may also call you to let you know something we are proud of your child for.

We will make attempts to call parents/carers in the following situations:

If your child has received an injury which we judge to be above and beyond usual accidents and injuries in school.

If your child has received a head injury.

### 3.6 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

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- Weekly Newsletter is shared on School Jotter and our website each Friday
- Wednesday online safety update is sent on School Jotter and our website
- Letters about trips and visits

### 3.7 Homework books/school planners

Homework is sent home by class teaching teams. We inform you about this in the half-termly or termly class newsletter. Information about homework is also found on each class web page.

### 3.8 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- End of Key Stage and other Statutory Assessment reports (EYFS Profile, Y1 /Y2 phonics, Year 4 Multiplication Check, End of Key Stage 2 Assessments. Please note end of Key Stage 1 Assessment is no longer statutory as of 2023-2024).

### 3.9 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening per term. In the Summer Term this is offered after School Reports have been sent out. These meetings are booked for a 10minute time slot, we offer in-person meeting (and video call by Teams in exceptional circumstances e.g. Covid/closure). During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern. Dates for the meetings are shared at the start of term, and bookings can be made via our website two weeks beforehand.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or who have other additional needs, are expected to attend termly My Plan meetings. They may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

All meetings are booked through the Bookings Section of our School Website.

### 3.10 School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

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Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

#### 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

##### 4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Parents should always include the [admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk) address when emailing the headteacher and / or their child's teaching team.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Each class has an email address, we request that the [admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk) email is copied in to all correspondence so we can ensure someone gets back to you in the event of staff absence.

- Foundation Stage Unit: [reception@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:reception@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)
- Year 1: [yr1@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:yr1@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)
- Year 2: [yr2@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:yr2@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)
- Year 3: [yr3@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:yr3@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)
- Year 4: [yr4@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:yr4@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)
- Year 5: [yr5@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:yr5@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)
- Year 6: [yr6@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:yr6@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk)

##### 4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within two working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within five days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

##### 4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

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We try to schedule all meetings within ten working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

## **5. Inclusion**

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) in English. Where parents/carers need information in another language, we work with them to provide this.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every three years.

The policy has been approved by the Curriculum & Learning Committee on behalf of the governing board.

## **7. Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Internet acceptable use
- Parent/Carer Code of Conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing

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## Appendix 1: school contact list

### Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below or would like to speak to a member of staff, we politely ask that you check our School Jotter App, Website and newsletters first as much of the information you need is there.

- Email or call the school office on [admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk) or 01395 264300
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

We try to respond to all emails within two working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child is unwell and will not be in school	<p>Please either email or phone school, leaving a message before 8.30am.</p> <p>Please include your child's full name, their class, the nature of their illness and expected return date.</p> <p>Please note if your child has sickness or diarrhoea, they need to be clear for 48 hours before returning to school.</p> <p>Please update this information if your child does not return when expected</p>
<p>My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework</p> <p>My child's wellbeing/pastoral support</p>	<p>Your child's class teacher – also copying in <a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation Stage Unit: <a href="mailto:reception@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">reception@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> <li>• Year 1: <a href="mailto:yr1@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">yr1@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> <li>• Year 2: <a href="mailto:yr2@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">yr2@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> <li>• Year 3: <a href="mailto:yr3@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">yr3@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> <li>• Year 4: <a href="mailto:yr4@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">yr4@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> <li>• Year 5: <a href="mailto:yr5@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">yr5@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> <li>• Year 6: <a href="mailto:yr6@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">yr6@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></li> </ul>
Payments	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Admin Team
School trips	Mrs Tracie Whitefield, <a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a>

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I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Uniform/lost and found	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Admin Team
Attendance and absence requests	<p>If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01395 264300 or email <a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> before 8.30am</p> <p>If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office</p>
Bullying and behaviour	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> we will forward this to the relevant person
School events/the school calendar	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Admin Team
Special educational needs (SEN)	<a href="mailto:SEND@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">SEND@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Mrs Kumar and/or Mrs Billington. Mrs Tracie Whitefield is our SEND and Early Help Administrator
Early Help	<a href="mailto:SEND@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">SEND@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Mrs Kumar and/or Mrs Billington. Mrs Tracie Whitefield is our SEND and Early Help Administrator
Before and after-school clubs	<p><a href="mailto:extendedschools@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">extendedschools@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></p> <p>please copy in <a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a></p> <p>The Extended School Team</p>
Hiring the school premises	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Admin Team
PTA	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> Mrs Tracie Whitefield, Chair of PTFA
Governing board	<p><a href="mailto:Governor@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">Governor@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a> This will be forwarded to the relevant Governor as long as it meets the requirements below.</p> <p>Please note that Governors are not able to respond to any comments, concerns or queries about day-to-day matters or individual children. Governors are responsible for the strategic leadership and management of the school.</p>
Catering/meals	<a href="mailto:admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk">admin@beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk</a>

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## Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints procedures and policies which are available on the school website.

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