

Parent/Carer to Staff Communication

At Hele's School we are committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to communication being respectful, measured, sensitive and constructive. In adhering to these principles we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents and the school, to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our students.

In order to ensure that all communications are both positive and productive, we ask parents/carers to respect the following:

1. Be aware that any emails sent outside "office hours" (8am-4pm) will be dealt with the next **working** day. Staff will **aim to respond to parental e-mails within 48 hours** but please do understand that teachers may need a **working** day or two to respond to emails as schedules are very busy at School, and the answer may involve meeting with other teachers, staff or students who may have valuable input. **School's target is to acknowledge an email within 48 hours and to normally resolve within 5 days.** More complicated issues may take longer to fully and effectively resolve.
2. Send emails intended for staff to the Hele's School email address: Heles.School@plymouth.gov.uk. The email will then be forwarded onto the appropriate staff member. Please mark your email clearly with both the subject matter and 'for the attention of...' The points of communication should be as follows:

Area of concern	First point of contact
SAFEGUARDING	Designated Safeguarding Lead/Principal
ACADEMIC	Subject Teacher or Head of Department
PASTORAL (low level)	Tutor
PASTORAL (medium level)	Head of Year/House
ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (low level)	Tutor
ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (high level)	SENDCo
SERIOUS – ACADEMIC or PASTORAL	Head of Year/House and/or Senior Leadership Team
ADMINISTRATIVE	School Office
FORMAL COMPLAINTS	Principal in the first instance, then the Chair of Governors if the complaint is not resolved

3. Send only non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use email to inform a teacher that your child is to wait for you at Reception after school or meet you somewhere when the day ends, since a teacher may not have time to read your message in a timely fashion. Instead, use the telephone to contact the Reception to be sure your message is received and clearly understood.
4. Do identify yourself in the subject line of your email message and, if appropriate, the name of your child.
5. Keep communications focused on your child only. Matters of a personal nature should never be in email, but communicated in face-to-face meetings.
6. Be mindful of what you say/write about staff in front of children and other parents in order to maintain positive relationships with School.
7. Understand that email responses from teachers may be short due to time constraints, but that teachers will remain open to discuss issues further via telephone or a pre-arranged meeting. Please do not attend without having previously made an appointment, as this can be very difficult to accommodate due to teaching schedules and meetings before or after school.
8. Email is for information. If you wish to discuss your child's academic/learning progress, please make contact via telephone or by scheduling a meeting with your child's tutor/teacher/Head of House, as appropriate.
9. Note that, when agreed between the teacher and the parent following face to face or phone conversation, email may be used as a form of regular communication about a student's day at school as part of a broader dialogue about progress.
10. Please refrain from using the blind copying (bcc) of third parties into email communication; the email must address the intended audience.
11. Maintain a courteous and respectful manner when communicating with School staff at all times. It is important to remember that our staff are qualified professionals and that the focus of communications should be on a collegiate approach to advance your child's progress, either academically or socially. Emails should never contain negative comments about any individual. Staff will not respond to abusive or confrontational emails and will forward them to the Principal for follow-up action (refer to the 'Safeguarding Staff from Abuse' policy on the Hele's School website).

Note: School representatives will collect email addresses from the parents/carers of students upon starting at Hele's. This will facilitate improved communication through use of 'In Touch' to email whole cohort/school messages. Please inform the School of any change in email address.