

Granta School

Communications Policy

The aim of this policy is to foster good communications between parents and carers and the school during a time of unprecedented national health crisis. During this time school attendance may be inappropriate for some/most or all pupils depending on the stages of national response.

Introduction

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

When school attendance becomes inappropriate this is especially important. We want to work together to support pupil's engagement with learning at home and to provide meaningful activity and social support at a time of potential isolation.

We want to ensure that parents and carers always have an appropriate and helpful response to their communications. However, the professional duties of staff can make it difficult for them to speak or meet with parents or carers during the school day.

Due to teaching commitments, staff will typically be unavailable between 8.45 am and 3.45 pm each day unless the school is closed to all pupils. This is because even if particular classes or departments close, teachers may be redeployed to cover absent colleagues.

Please ensure that we have all your up to date contact details including email addresses/ phone numbers/ mobile numbers and emergency contact details, thank you. In the eventuality of a school closure and we are unable to contact you we might become alarmed for your wellbeing.

Principles for responding to parents/carers

The following principles will be engaged:

- welcoming contact from parents and carers;
- responding as quickly and fully as possible;
- liaising with other colleagues to provide the best and most accurate information whilst maintaining an uncomplicated key contact system
- sharing information as often and as fully as possible with parents and carers outside of specific requests
- Liaising with services such as health and social care to support pupils at home

Our main routes of communication will be via email and website. However, we will provide hard copies and postal for families who we know do not have on line devices.

If school remains open partly or wholly then the following applies daily.

Every effort will be made to respond to messages on an occasional basis if school is closed

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 01223 896 890
- **Urgent calls:** If the school is open urgent calls will be put through to the most appropriate or available senior member of staff 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:** At these times, and in the case of school closure, 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 or carers 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.
- In the event of extended school closure in exceptional circumstances, key stage managers can arrange for outgoing calls to parents or carers at arranged times from their private numbers but will ensure that their caller ID is switched off. Parents and carers will not be able to call into private staff numbers. Call costs will be reclaimable from the school via the school business manager expenses claim form.

Letters and emails

- The school will always try to **acknowledge** letters and emails received from parents/carers within five working days during term time. If the school is closed and therefore teaching duties are suspended, emails will be acknowledged within 2 working days. If the teacher is unwell (with sufficient warning) they should put an out of office message onto their system giving the emailer an alternative agreed contact.

Contact email addresses for parents to use in the first instance are:

6th form students : jilloyd@granta.cambs.sch.uk

KS4 students: hnorris@granta.cambs.sch.uk

KS3 and KS2 pupils: lbillington@granta.cambs.sch.uk

KS1 and EYFS pupils: kblack@granta.cambs.sch.uk

Complex needs department Emma Stubbings : estubbings@granta.cambs.sch.uk

The postal address is Granta school, Cambridge road, Linton CB214NN

Phone number 01223 896 890

Central office email: office@granta.cambs.sch.uk

- Key stage managers will forward emails to the most appropriate contacts for example subject teachers or class teachers for curriculum, members of the designated person team for welfare questions or concerns, members of the leadership team for strategic decisions or Emma Stubbings for health or protocol signposts. Please be aware that Emma is a member of the teaching team and is not a health representative or able to give medical advice.
- We will respond to postal letters as soon as is practicable, during 5 working days in usual circumstances and as and when the site is accessible during school closures.

Sharing of activity and work during school closure

Teachers who are well enough to work will be available via email during the working day from home and will be able to prepare, provide, mark and respond to pupil endeavours on a regular bases. Due to the diverse learning and communication needs of our pupils these will be adapted to be suitable.

We will aim to contact all families at least once per week : health of teachers permitting. This means you should expect contact even if you do not specifically request it.

Complaints

We have a separate complaints policy for use when school is open even if individual pupils are not in attendance.

During school closure periods Informal complaints will be responded to by key stage managers in the first instance. Formal complaints will be subject to amended timeframes depending on the necessary investigations and contacts and these will be discussed and agreed when the complaint is received.

Multi-disciplinary contacts and welfare

We hope that parents and carers will feel able to contact us during period of non attendance and share any concerns they have. We will be able to either help directly with discussion time and ideas or be able to help with signposting to other services who can help. We aim to be involved with family to family support systems when they are established. We will make every reasonable attempt to contact all families for a check in once per week. Key stage managers will agree with teachers and families the best person to do that. We are considering how best to support pupils who have receive free school meals.

The sharing of data will remain subject to the usual checks and balances between safeguarding pupils and GDPR and we have separate policies to explain that further.

Safeguarding

Should you have any concerns regarding your own safety, safety of anyone in your household or any other child or vulnerable young person then you can :

- Email the school designated safeguarding team on
- welfareandsafeguarding@granta.cambs.sch.uk

or you can call school welfare team on 07798603583

or you can contact social care directly and details can be found at

<https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/parents-carers>

If you are concerned that there is immediate risk please dial 999 and request emergency service support.

Helpful additional contacts:

www.NSPCC.org.uk

www.keep-your-head.com/cyp

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

www.womensaid.org.uk

[www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/support help/84011](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/support%20help/84011)

www.actionforhappiness.org

Website

The school seeks to put as much information as possible on its website. Parents/carers are encouraged look at the website on a regular basis.

Protocol for Communications

The school undertakes to treat all communications with parents and carers 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, team leaders and/or the Headteacher or Deputy 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

The school recognises that social media is increasingly used as a form of communication. Staff **will not** communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as 'friends'. The exception to this rule would be if the school

decides to establish a secure Learning Platform akin to a social networking site (such as Starz) for the purpose of Teaching and Learning.

Under the current situation with Covid-19 the school will consider alternative safe platforms and groups to network families and pupils in a time of likely prolonged isolation.