



# Wellfield Middle School Communications Policy

*Positive communication strengthens our community; it is built on respect, honesty and kindness, and helps every member of the school feel valued and heard*



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## Communications Policy

### 1. Purpose

At Wellfield Middle School, we believe that effective, efficient and consistent communication sits at the heart of a safe, caring and aspirational learning environment. Our commitment is to model communication that is honest, respectful, timely and purposeful so that all members of the school community can flourish.

### 2. Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that effective communication and consultation takes place between the school, families, pupils and other stakeholders and that there are robust processes in place to facilitate this (Appendix 1).

### 3. Introduction

Wellfield Middle School recognises that clear, consistent and effective communication strengthens relationships and creates a cohesive and supportive community. Our commitment is to be open, transparent and accessible to all stakeholders who interact with the school - pupils, families, governors, outside agencies and the wider community.

Families are central partners in a child's learning journey. This policy addresses the main ways in which the school will ensure that there is effective two-way communication between home and school. Recognising the vital role families play in their child's education, Wellfield Middle School actively encourages and supports families to work alongside us in developing a shared understanding of their child's needs.

### 4. Definition of Communication

*“Communication is how we show who we are. Every message we send - in words, tone or actions - should reflect our shared commitment to being Ready, Respectful and Safe”*

Every member of staff plays a vital role in ensuring that communication - whether verbal, written or electronic - is clear, consistent and professional. We also strive to ensure that communication between all members of the school community is timely and effective in its purpose. Effective communication helps every member of our community feel valued, included and informed while supporting the wellbeing, safeguarding and personal development of all.

All communication should model the same high expectations we set for pupils: *Ready, Respectful, Safe*. Families, governors and pupils also play an important role in upholding the tone and reputation of our school. We expect all communication - both sent and received - to be respectful, courteous and fully aligned with our shared values, as described in our Communication Charter (Appendix 2).



## 5. Principles of Effective Communication

Communication should be:

- Honest, open, ethical
- Calm, courteous, professional
- Jargon free and accessible for all
- Empathetic; listening without barriers
- Non-judgemental, open and solution-focussed
- Actioned within a reasonable time
- Be compatible with our core values
- Purposeful and relevant

The Communication Policy aligns with the principles of the school's Equality Policy and Online Safety Policy.

### As outlined in our Communication Charter, staff should:

- Build a welcoming, inclusive culture where communication is respectful and positive
- Ensure signage, messaging and interactions reflect our Ready, Respectful, Safe ethos
- Respond to enquiries promptly, acknowledging within 2 working days and resolving within 10 working days
- Use a range of communication methods, ensuring accessibility for all (for example, telephone contact, e-mail, post, text and social media).
- Communicate with families for positive reasons (including by using Marvellous Me), as well as when they have a concern (e.g. about behaviour, needs, etc)
- Share clear information about learning so families can support their child
- Provide timely, meaningful updates on pupil progress and wellbeing

### As outlined in our Communication Charter, families should:

- Ensure that any communication with the school is polite and respectful
- Make use of communication channels, such as School Gateway, to keep up to date with routine information
- Ensure emails are brief and clear
- Understand that a member of staff may be unable to respond on the same day an enquiry is made
- Understand that school staff will not respond outside of school hours
- Refrain from making complaints personal and/or airing grievances online
- Provide feedback. Opportunities are provided throughout the year for families to convey to us what they think of the school, including through Parent Voice questionnaires and Parent Forums.

Our goal is that every family feels well-informed, listened to and involved in their child's education.

## 6. Communication with Families



## 6.1 Letters

Letters offer families clear, formal communication. To ensure consistency, letters to parents/carers must be processed through the school administration team and approved by the Headteacher before being sent out via the School Gateway app. Whole school information will also be shared on the school website and via the half-termly school newsletter. Year group information will also be shared via termly curriculum letters.

Families are required to provide the school with a current email address and latest mobile/telephone number for prompt and effective communication. However, if we are unable to obtain a current email address for any parent or carer, communications will be delivered home in hard copy by their child or sent by post.

Staff will use correct salutations when writing to or emailing families. The use of a parent, carer or staff member's first name is usually not appropriate and therefore the vast majority of communications will be to and from: Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr etc. Sign off is always Ms/Mrs/Mr/ Dr teacher surname.

Families often need to communicate with us, including about their child's progress and wellbeing. Staff will always reply to correspondence from families as quickly as possible. A response to acknowledge receipt of correspondence will be made by telephone, letter or email **within 2 working days and fully responded to within 10 working days.**

Records of correspondence with families will be placed on pupil files on CPOMS (the school's Safeguarding programme). Any letters of concern or complaints should be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints policy which can be [found here](#).

## 6.2 E-Mail

Email is one of our preferred methods of communication due to its efficiency and clarity. **Emails received will be treated in the same way as letters: acknowledged within 2 working days and fully responded to within 10 working days.** Emails will always have a professional tone and be courteous and relevant and we kindly expect families to reciprocate this.

Families may wish to contact the school via email for a general enquiry as an alternative to telephone or letter. The school email address is: [admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk)

**Under no circumstances will staff contact pupils or families using their own personal email address.**

## 6.3 Telephone calls

We recognise that staff are often teaching or working with pupils, and while our office team endeavour to answer calls as quickly and effectively as possible, immediate responses to telephone enquiries (particularly those that require speaking to a member of the teaching or Senior Leadership teams) may not always be possible.

In a non-emergency, a **return call will be made within 2 working days, with any follow up action from the request/query/problem being dealt with within 10 working days.** Staff will make a record of a telephone conversation with families via CPOMS.



### 6.4 Texts

Texts from School Gateway are sent to families (including in the event of an emergency closure of the school). We use School Gateway as the main form of electronic communication with parents. Parents are able to respond to these messages and they will be picked up by the school admin team. Parents should respond to these messages only where they do not require an immediate response as the School Gateway inbox is checked only once each day.

### 6.5 Marvellous Me

Staff will share information about positive behaviour via the Marvellous Me app. Parents will be provided with a join code when children enter the school. For further information, please see the Positive Behaviour Policy.

### 6.6 Choosing Which Member of Staff to Contact

Families may contact the school with a range of queries. As outlined in our Communication Charter:

I want to...	Speak to my child's teacher	Find out about a school event	Speak to a member of the admin/attendance teams (about absences, payments, school trips, etc)	Learn more about a school policy/practice	Speak to a member of the pastoral or senior team	Inform school of an appointment or day's absence in advance
Call the school (phone)	✓		✓		✓	✓
Check School Gateway app		✓				
Arrange a meeting by phoning school office					✓	
Contact school admin team via School Gateway/email		✓	✓	✓		✓
Contact teacher by email	✓					
Look on the website		✓		✓		

## 7. Absence

If a child is absent, families are asked to contact the school as soon as possible on the morning of the absence; for full details please refer to the attendance policy which can be found on our website.

## 8. Meeting with Families

We value relational, solution-focused conversations. Families may request a meeting by contacting the school. Should a meeting be requested:



- Requests are acknowledged by the school within 2 working days and logged on CPOMS.
- Meetings should model empathy, calmness and mutual respect.
- If emotions run high, we may reschedule the meeting to ensure a productive, positive discussion.

## 9. Social Networking

The school is currently reviewing its use of social media. It is not compulsory to subscribe to our social media accounts (currently @wellfieldmiddle on X) and therefore any key messages will be relayed through formal school communication channels.

## 10. Reports and Progress

Families receive an interim progress report and a full annual report to provide information about their child's progress in each academic year.

In addition, families have the opportunity to meet their child's teachers twice a year at parent consultations. Families should contact the school if there are issues arise about their child's progress or wellbeing. **The first point of contact should be the child's class teacher/form tutor.**

We welcome the presence of any other adult that a parent/carer wishes to invite to a school meeting (e.g for support or to act as an interpreter).

## 11. Accessibility

We will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary to enable a parent/carer with a disability to participate fully in a meeting, as well as to receive and understand a communication.

The font mostly used in all printed communications is Arial 11. Documents printed using a larger font can usually be provided and requests should be made via the school admin team.

If a translation of a document is required, in the first instance parents/carers should access Google Translate and a link to this will be included in the main languages of the school community in documents sent out to parents. Key information will be translated into community languages, where appropriate and possible. When required, a translator will be provided to ensure effective communication. Our accessibility policy can be [found here](#).

## 12. School Website

The school website ([wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk](http://wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk)) provides a range of information about the school, including:

- Inclusion and SEND Information



- Pupil Premium information
- Homework
- Uniform list
- Curriculum Information
- Policy Information
- School events
- Holiday dates
- School prospectus

The website is used to promote the school to a wider audience and is updated regularly by the admin team and IT technician.

### **13. Google Classroom**

Google Classroom supports flexible, independent learning and strengthens the home-school partnership. It provides pupils with greater choice and flexibility about when and where they complete their learning while encouraging parent/carer involvement in learning, especially with extended tasks.

Home learning may be accessed through Google Classroom. All pupils have been trained to use this and are advised to check it daily.

Parents can also have access to data about their child's progress on the app via requests made to the school office.

### **14. Communication Between Pupils and Staff**

Two-way communication between pupils and staff is an important aspect of school life. The school welcomes and encourages pupils to engage in conversation with all members of staff within the school.

Pupils and staff are expected to:

- Maintain eye contact when appropriate
- Use polite language and respectful tone
- Listen without interrupting
- Address staff formally (Mr/Ms/Mrs/Dr Surname)

When communicating with pupils, staff should use pupils' first names and full names of staff (Mr Surname and Ms/Mrs Surname) in front of pupils. Pupils may also email staff on their school accounts in relation to their learning. All pupils are taught email protocol (see Appendix 3):

- Complete the subject line
- Use Ms/Mrs/Mr and Surname as salutation
- Use Standard English
- Avoid abbreviations
- Sign off with Thank you or Kind regards



Correspondence is to remain professional at all times. Staff are never permitted to use personal email accounts when communicating with pupils. Pupils are expected to check their emails daily and delete/archive regularly.

## **15. Communication Between Wellfield Staff**

### **Verbal:**

Staff are to use first names when communicating with each other and full names (Mr/Dr/Ms/Mrs surname) in front of pupils. A weekly briefing will be held to communicate plans for the week. Staff will discuss issues with children respectfully and not to use derogatory terms in any situation.

### **Email:**

Staff will consider whether an email is appropriate or whether face-to-face communication may be more conducive. Staff will keep emails concise, using standard English at all times and bullet points, if necessary (Appendix 4). Staff should check emails twice a day and use group emails as appropriate. Email groups are as follows:

- All Staff
- Wellbeing Staff
- Teaching Assistants
- Teachers
- Subject Leads
- SLT
- Lunchtime Supervisors
- KS2 Teachers
- KS3 Teachers
- Governors

Staff should be mindful when sending email 'out of hours' and should use the scheduling tool when possible. Staff are strongly encouraged not to respond to emails before 8am and after 8pm.

## **16. Dealing with the Media**

A member of the Senior Leadership Team team will liaise with the local authority. The school Emergency Policy can be found on the school website.

## **17. School Trips, Visits and Activities**

In line with our Poverty Proofing ethos, we work proactively to minimise financial pressure on families. Wherever possible, we publish all proposed trips, visits and activities on the school calendar at the start of each academic year. When events involve a cost, giving early notice helps families plan and budget ahead with confidence. Letters will be sent as early as possible to outline details of any trip or activity a pupil may wish to take part in.



We recognise that enriching opportunities sometimes arise unexpectedly during the year. When this happens, the school is committed to informing families promptly so that they have adequate time to make arrangements. All events - planned or additional - are organised with a continued commitment to our Poverty Proofing ethos and to ensuring that every pupil can participate fully in school life.

### **18. Severe Weather and Emergency Closure**

In the event of an emergency closure, communication will be made to families via text or email. Families should also tune in to local radio and check the school website and social media channels (e.g. X). For further information, refer to the Emergency Closure Policy, which can be found on the policy section of the school website.

### **19. Prospective Families**

The school prospectus is available on our website, and prospective families may request a printed copy if needed. As part of the transition process, key information is also shared with pupils and their families to support a smooth and positive start.

Each October, families considering Wellfield Middle School are invited to our Open Evening and offered opportunities to join scheduled tours, allowing them to see the school in action. In July, prospective families and their children are welcomed to an induction evening, where we introduce our main communication channels and share essential information for the year ahead.

### **20. PTA (Parent Teacher Association)**

Friends of Wellfield is our equivalent to a Parents Association. This is led by current parents and their focus is to provide a social forum for parents of Wellfield Middle school pupils and to run events and activities. Fundraising is an important aspect of their work but is not their sole focus. The Friends of Wellfield meet with a representative of the teaching team half-termly.

### **21. Supporting Families of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

At Wellfield, we place great importance on building positive, trusting relationships with the families of all pupils with additional needs. In line with the SEND Code of Practice, we are committed to communicating with families in a way that is supportive, clear and accessible. Every member of staff plays a role in ensuring that communication is calm, respectful and rooted in our shared values of inclusion and partnership.

We recognise that families know their children best. Staff will work closely with parents and carers to help them understand how they can contribute to their child's learning, and to ensure they are confident about their rights and responsibilities. Information will always be shared in a way that is easy to understand and respond to.



When a pupil with special educational needs is not making the progress we expect, or is experiencing additional difficulties, we will increase the frequency of communication and meet with families more regularly so that we can work together to plan the right support. We encourage families to contact us as soon as they have a concern; further information can also be found on the Inclusion section of our website.

Support plans are reviewed collaboratively with families three times a year. Families also have the opportunity to meet with form teachers at least twice a year and can meet with the SENCo at regular opportunities, including during SEND parent consultations. Our SEND parent alliance provides further opportunity for support.

## **22. Communication with Other Schools and Outside Agencies**

Before pupils join Year 5, we carry out transition visits to help us get to know each child as an individual and to ensure we can support them effectively as they move into Wellfield Middle School. We recognise that pupils have diverse strengths and needs, and when appropriate we work closely with a range of professionals - such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, health practitioners, local authority teams and Children's Services - to make sure every pupil receives the right support at the right time.

We are committed to providing a safe, secure and nurturing environment for all children. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility, and we follow the procedures set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, available on the school website.

In order to support pupils' learning, wellbeing and development, the school holds essential information about each child. At times, and only when necessary, we may share relevant information with trusted agencies for educational purposes. All personal data is managed carefully and lawfully in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and our Data Protection Policy, also available on the school website.

## **23. Investigating Incidents**

When investigating an incident involving pupils, staff will speak with all pupils involved and may ask them to provide a written account. Any information that could identify a pupil will only be shared in line with data protection legislation and the school's policies, which are available on our website.

## **24. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will review this policy at least every three years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

The next review is due: Jan 2027



## Communications policy

If you have a general query or concern, not specific to your child, please contact the school office on 0191 252 9486 or email [admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk)

If your query or concern is about your individual child, please contact your child's form tutor or subject teacher as a first point of contact. If necessary, an email or concern can be escalated to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Wellbeing Team for further help and support. Staff emails can be found on the school's website [here](#).

If, following the communications route above you are still dissatisfied with the response you may complain to the school, please refer to the school's complaints policy available [here](#).



Strategy	Stakeholder audience	Purpose	Frequency	Means of communication	Person (s) Responsible
<b>Communicating the school ethos and values</b>					
Open Evening	Y4 prospective families	School vision/ethos shared with prospective parents. To showcase the Wellfield curriculum, facilities and staff.	Annually	School site open to families. Presentation by headteacher. Individual classrooms open; staff run sessions linked to area of the curriculum	All staff
School Prospectus	Families	To share information about the school (including ethos, vision, curriculum offer, school days timings, uniform, expectations etc)	Updated annually	Physical or downloadable booklet	HT/DHT/ Office staff
School Signs	Families, pupils, visitors	To promote core values (e.g. WE CARE, 5Cs)	As needed	School sign, signs around school, logos	HT (ordering) Caretaker (installing) SLT
School Website (core content)	Families, pupils, visitors, public	To share information about the school (including: ethos, vision, curriculum offer, school days timings, expectations etc) To give detailed curriculum information and share statutory information/policies	As needed (checked termly)	Website (information pages, photographs, videos, links to policies, reports and curriculum documents)	HT/SBM IT technician
Pupil planners	Pupils, families	To share key reminders and messages (e.g. WE CARE, 5Cs, uniform/ equipment reminders, study tips )	Annually	Physical double page week planner	DHT
<b>Communicating school Information and events (outward)</b>					
School Newsletter	Families, Pupils, Public	To share and celebrate the	Termly	Digital document (shared via	HT (all staff able to contribute)



		achievements in school		X and School Comms)	
X (formally Twitter )	Families, public	To share and celebrate the achievements in school; to share key dates and reminders	Regularly (as needed)	Twitter posts (school hashtags used to comment key info and link to school values)	All staff IT technician
School Comms (texts/letters)	Parents/ carers	To share letters, forms and key date reminders	As needed	Digital letters, forms and links	Office staff
<b>Communicating school information, events and key messages (inward)</b>					
Weekly staff briefing	All staff	To read through the diary for the week, highlight key dates/events and share key information and messages	Weekly	Verbal information shared; Google calendar shared and minutes taken and shared emailed out	HT/DHT/AHT
Emails	All staff	To share information, key reminders and information	As needed	Digital information/email	All staff can send when needed
Shared Google calendar	All staff	To collectively store dates and events happening in school (overview)	As needed	Shared calendar/drive	All staff (overseen by DHT)
<b>Communicating Pupil Information &amp; Progress</b>					
Parents Evening(s)	Families	To share updates on pupil behaviour, achievements and progress / allow parents to ask questions	Termly	Face to face & virtual option offered	All teachers IT technician – bookings
Reports	Families	To share information about a child's progress, attainment and achievements	Annually (Interim Feb/ End of year July)	Printed report	All teachers IT technician – printing/collating
Positive parent emails/postcards	Families	To share and celebrate positive achievements of pupils	As needed	Handwritten postcard or email	All staff
Marvellous Me	Families		As needed	App/digital message	All staff (overseen by Behaviour Lead)



## Wellfield Middle School Communication Charter



We are committed to making sure that all communications are:

- Clear
- Comprehensive and accurate
- Two way
- Timely
- Respectful and Responsible
- Friendly

Please address non-urgent general questions and concerns to [admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk). Please allow up to 2-3 working days for a reply. A same day response may not always be possible and should not be expected. Safeguarding and child protection issues will be prioritised.

Parents may also contact their child's teacher using their direct school email address. Parents should be aware that communication in this form will not receive an immediate response as all staff have full time teaching commitments. Staff will endeavour to respond within 2-3 days during the working week (8.30am – 5.30pm) and are not expected to reply at weekends. Parents should be aware that if communication is urgent, or a child protection and safety issue, they contact the school by telephone.

*Schools work best when teachers and families work in partnership, on behalf of the child's best interests.*

*Please note that unreasonable, abusive or offensive communication is not tolerated. This is very rare in our school and we are very grateful for your support.*

**Electronic Communication:**  
School Gateway  
Marvellous Me  
School Website  
X  
Telephone/Email

**Written Communication:**  
Reports  
Newsletters  
Curriculum letters  
Two way notes

**Face to Face Communication:**  
Book Looks  
Parent consultations  
Meetings  
Open events

### Staff Will:

- ensure that there is regular, proactive communication about your child's achievement and wellbeing.
- respond to emails, phone calls or requests for meetings usually within two to three working days
- ask an appropriate member of staff to deal with an issue as soon as possible if it is an urgent matter.
- display polite, professional conduct in both written and verbal communications.
- contact families where they have a concern (e.g. about behaviour, needs, etc.)

### Families Will:

- ensure that any communication with the school is polite and respectful.
- make use of information channels in place, such as School Gateway, for keeping up to date with routine information.
- ensure emails are brief and clear.
- understand that a teacher or member of staff may be unable to respond on the same day on which a query is made.
- understand that teachers or other school staff will not respond outside of school hours, i.e., evenings, weekends and school holidays .
- refrain from making complaints personal and/or airing grievances online.



0191 252 9486



[admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk)



[firstname.lastname@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk](mailto:firstname.lastname@wellfieldmiddleschool.org.uk)

I want to...	Speak to my child's teacher	Find out about a school event	Speak to a member of the admin/attendance teams (about absences, payments, school trips, etc)	Learn more about a school policy/practice	Speak to a member of the pastoral or senior team	Inform school of an appointment or day's absence in advance
Call the school (phone)	✓		✓		✓	✓
Check School Gateway app		✓				
Arrange a meeting by phoning school office					✓	
Contact school admin team via School Gateway/email		✓	✓	✓		✓
Contact teacher by email	✓					
Look on the website		✓		✓		

### Appendix 3 - Communication Summary (Pupils)

When speaking to anyone in school we must always be:

- kind
- polite
- respectful

You can email a member of staff if:

- you need to ask a question
- you need some help or support with something

When you send an email to a member of staff you should be **polite** and follow the **email etiquette**.

**HOW TO EMAIL A TEACHER**

- 1 Subject Line**  
Your subject line should be a short summary of your email (2-6 words)  
**EXAMPLE**  
Missing Assignments  
Technical Difficulties  
Late Work
- 2 Say Hello**  
Just like you would do so in person, say hello first.  
**EXAMPLE**  
Good morning, Mrs. Gracey  
Aloha, Mr. Ellis  
Greetings from above!
- 3 Why?**  
Tell the teacher why you are emailing them. Include details.  
**EXAMPLE**  
I am emailing because...  
I can't find...  
Can you please help me with...
- 4 End Your Email**  
Close your email with a simple goodbye.  
**EXAMPLE**  
Thank you for your help.  
Have a nice day.  
See you in class.
- 5 Include Your Name**  
Names are important, including yours! Let's use it.  
**EXAMPLE**  
Pat Momes  
Geno Smith, English 2  
Mina Caines, SID#100257

**TIP: DON'T SHOUT!**  
Use sentence case when writing emails.  
**I NEED TO RETAKE MY TEST.**



## **Appendix 4 - Communication Summary (Staff)**

### **Outward communication**

Professional, polite and courteous tone
Correct salutations used (e.g. Miss, Mrs, Mr...)
Acknowledged within 2 days, reply within 10 working days
Professional sign off

### **Inward communication**

Professional, polite and courteous tone
Avoid 'reply all' is not relevant; use 'schedule send' if out of hours
Use group email addresses All Staff Wellbeing Staff Teaching Assistants Teachers Subject Leads SLT Lunchtime Supervisors KS2 Teachers KS3 Teachers Governors
Purposeful



## Communications policy