



Education & Children's Services
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Communications Policy



Ruthvenfield Primary School



Communications Policy

January 2024

1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

- 1.1 This policy seeks to define the means by which the school maintains good communications with parents and other stakeholders. It should provide an overview of what parents can expect of the school and, in turn, what the school will expect of parents/carers.
- 1.2 This policy complies with relevant Perth and Kinross Council policy documents, including the [Customer Service Standards](#) (July 2010).
- 1.3 This policy reflects that the school's 'DREAM BIG' vision, along with our Positive Relationships Policy, focuses on the importance of communication with our community and cultivating trust and respect. It is an important principle that the views of all are listened to so that together we can build the best possible experience for our young people.

2. PARENTAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL

2.1 Enquiries

2.1.1 Parents are welcome to raise matters with the school by visiting reception, by email (ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk) or by telephoning the school office on 01738 452990. In many cases, including where a message has to be passed to a pupil, such enquiries can be dealt with directly by the school office staff. Where another member of staff is required to respond, the following will apply:

- **Non-urgent enquiries** - In such cases, a message can be left with the office staff who will forward it to the relevant member(s) of staff. In line with the **Council's [Customer Service Standards](#)**, general correspondence (letters, emails and enquiries) will be responded to within **15 working days**. In many cases, however, particularly where there is a time factor, responses will be quicker and are usually within 24-48hrs.
- **Matters requiring an immediate response** - Where a matter is of such urgency that it requires an immediate response, it will be passed to the most appropriate member of staff who will usually be a member of the school's Senior Management/Leadership Team. In some cases, the member of staff will be available to deal with such enquiries at the time of contact. If not, they will advise you when you will be contacted; usually the same day or within 24 hours.
- **Logging of enquiries** - All enquiries (in person, by telephone, in writing or via email) that require a member of staff to respond to a parent are passed on to the relevant member of staff with details of the time and nature of the enquiry.
- **Enquiries by email** - All enquiries by email should be directed to the school's generic account: ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk

This will allow enquiries to be logged for the purpose of quality assurance and for them to be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff, with line managers copied in as appropriate.

- 2.2 **Letters to the school** – Parents/carers will often use letters or emails to communicate relevant information, such as reason for absence. In general, any letters should be given to the class teacher or handed in to the school office. Any emails requiring a response should, in the first instance, be emailed to the school email account:- ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk. Please call the school in the event of more urgent enquiries.
- 2.3 **Social Media** – Parents/carers are reminded not to use social media personal/private messaging to contact members of staff.
- 2.4 **Parental complaints** - Should a parent wish to make a formal complaint about any aspect of the school, this should be addressed to the Headteacher. The school follows the [Perth and Kinross Complaints Procedure](#). Such complaints can be made by email, letter, telephone or in person.
- 2.5 **Subject Access Requests (SAR)** – the Data Protection Act 2018 protects individuals from possible misuse of their information, while giving them legal rights to gain access to the information held about them by an organisation or individual within it. If a parent wishes to access information about themselves or their child(ren) this should be submitted in writing to the Council's Data Protection Team at: DataProtection@pkc.gov.uk
- 2.6 **Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests** – Members of the public have a legal right under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 to access information held by the Council. If you wish to request information from the Council, please contact the Council's Freedom of Information Team at: FOI@pkc.gov.uk

3. THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN GOOD HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 Communication between the school and home is at its most effective where parents are clear of what is expected of them. The following are key ways in which parents can support the work of the school in terms of communication:

3.2 Pupil absence

3.2.1 The school's over-riding obligation is to ensure the safety of the young people entrusted to it, and it is of the highest importance that reasons for any pupil absences are established as a priority each morning. It is therefore essential that parents notify the school as early as possible by telephone where circumstances are likely to result in their child being absent from school. This should be communicated by 9:30am on the day of absence.

3.2.2 Where no such notification has been received, parents will firstly receive a call from a member of a school staff. If there is no answer a message will be sent through **Groupcall** (see 4.3.1 below) asking for such information. Parents are requested to respond to such messages as a matter of urgency, as the school will continue to pursue absences until such time as it has established a reason for an absence. This can lead to the involvement of the social work department and the police.

3.2.3 It is also very important that parents provide the school with absence notes or emails, when appropriate, following medical absences.

3.3 Information Returns

3.3.1 Throughout the session parents/carers will be asked to make returns to the school by a stated deadline. These could be for a number of reasons, such as information data

updates, confirmation of attendance of a pupil on a school trip or activity, feedback on reports etc... We appreciate parents/carers adhering to the deadlines as this considerably eases the required administrative procedures.

3.4 Updating the school on personal matters

3.4.1 All of our pupils can be affected by things going on at home or in their personal lives and these in turn can have an impact on their learning. It is very helpful for the school to be made aware of anything that a young person may be experiencing away from school that could be having an impact on how they are feeling in school.

3.5 Updating the school in the event of change of contact details

3.5.1 It is very important that the school has current contact details for parents and other relatives. Parents/Carers are requested to always notify the school office of such changes, both to their own contact details and those of relatives. This can be a particular problem for the school when it comes to mobile phone numbers. **Please contact the school office if you need to update any contact details:- Telephone 01738 452990 or email ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk.**

3.6 Use of Social Media

3.6.1 Consideration should be given regarding the nature of comments made about members of staff on social media platforms. Where a parent has a concern or complaint this should be raised with the school directly so this can be addressed through the complaints procedure (see 2.4 above).

4. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND PARENTS/CARERS

4.1 The School Handbook

4.1.1 A school handbook is made available to all parents through the school website and is updated by December of each year. This handbook meets the requirements of the Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 and its purposes include:

- providing a welcome for new parents to the school;
- helping parents to choose a school; and
- helping parents to prepare their child for school.

4.1.2 The handbook should serve as a practical guide to families about school, authority and national policies and how these will impact on their child's experience at the school. It should also give them a good 'feel' for the sort of school that we are.

The school handbook is also available on the school's website or in hard copy upon request. [School Handbook | Ruthvenfield Primary School \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](http://glowscotland.org.uk)

4.2 Standards and Qualities Report

4.2.1 The school is required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc (Scotland) Act (2000) to publish an annual report including key performance measures such as those relating to attainment and attendance. This report is published on the school's website in September.

4.3 General Communications to all parents

4.3.1 The school uses a variety of methods to communicate with all parents on matters of interest. These include:

- **Groupcall / Email** – it is mainly the email facility that is used within GroupCall to send information and newsletters to our families. Groupcall also allows the school to send short text messages to parents. This will only be used for matters that require urgent attention such as unexplained absences, school bus or club cancellations or severe weather closures.
- **Newsletters** – newsletters, emails and Seesaw posts regularly share school and community activities with families, along with school calendar dates.
- **Seesaw** - Seesaw is your child's digital learning journal. This platform enables your child to create a digital portfolio of their learning and next steps. It allows pupils to reflect on their learning and share pictures, videos etc... of the learning process with parents/carers. Your child will be able to add a range of items throughout the year. This will include learning your child is really proud of, learning that your child found challenging along with next steps, games/activities your child enjoyed etc... Parent/Carer comments on Seesaw should relate to the work and targets that your child has shared on Seesaw. Any comments/feedback should be constructive and continue to help to motivate your child to learn, supporting them to work towards their next steps in learning. If you comment on a piece of work which is posted only to your child's journal then only you, the staff and the pupil will see this. If you add a comment to a group or class post then all families in the class will see this. Teachers approve all comments before they appear on Seesaw. Only appropriate comments will be approved.

Any parent/carer queries, concerns or pupil appointments should continue to be communicated through the school office (ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk or 01738 452990) and not on a child's Seesaw learning journal.

- **The School Website** – the school website is a useful resource for parents. The website contains useful information about the school for families. This includes the school handbook, school newsletters and other key documents. The school website also provides clear details for parents on how they can contact the school. (Ruthvenfield Primary School | Perth and Kinross Tel: 01738 452990 Email: Ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk (glowscotland.org.uk))

4.4 Communication regarding the curriculum/learning and teaching

- **Primary** - There are two parents' nights per year for primary pupils and a summary report towards the end of term 3. Primary staff are usually available for brief, informal discussion at the end of the school day, however formal appointments can also be arranged if required. Seesaw is used to share curriculum learning each term.

5. SEEKING PARENTS' VIEWS

5.1 The Parent Council

5.1 The Parent Council, which meets termly and is attended by the headteacher, is a key vehicle for parents to share their views with the school leadership. These meetings are also used by the school leadership to provide parents with updates on a wide range of issues, ranging from small changes to procedures to very significant government policy changes. The school is committed to harnessing the potential of the Parent Council as a key forum for interaction with parents and will always seek to support initiatives raised through this body.

5.2 Parental Involvement in school self-evaluation and annual planning

5.2.1 The school is also keen to involve parents, as well as other stakeholders, in its annual processes of self-evaluation and planning. Parent/Carer representatives are welcome to take part in school self-evaluation activities and annual school planning.

5.3 Consultation on proposed change

5.3.1. The school is committed to consulting parents wherever possible, particularly in cases where significant changes in policy or procedures are under consideration. As well as pupils themselves, parents are key stakeholders within the school community and their views are valued and will be taken into consideration in the making of decisions.

5.4 On-going evaluation of events

5.4.1 The school is also committed to seeking regular feedback from parents/carers in a number of ways: through informal discussions, meetings, parent council meetings, school events and we also issue evaluation forms to seek parent/carers views on how things can continue to improve for our learners.

5.5. Annual parental survey

5.5.1 In addition to these methods of seeking parental views, the school also conducts a formal parental survey, covering a wide range of the school's functions, towards the end of each academic session. These questions largely remain the same each year which allows the school to note trends – either positive or negative – in terms of parental responses. A summary of this survey is shared annually with the Parent Council and views on next steps are sought.

6. SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS:

- Email: Ruthvenfield@pkc.gov.uk
- Phone No: 01738 452990
- Website: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/pk/ruthvenfieldprimary/>
- Ruthvenfield PS Parent Council Facebook Site:-
<https://www.facebook.com/share/1YxUCQAwDu44bhWw/?mibextid=K35XfP>
- Address: Ruthvenfield Primary School, Ruthvenfield, Perth, PH1 3JP