



Communication procedure

At Vernon Primary School we believe that effective communication will ensure that you and your child have a positive experience during their primary school years. To ensure that this communication is effective we outline below the procedure should you need to communicate with the school.

Stages of the Procedure

The majority of communication will be between you and your child's teacher directly or via the school office. If you have a quick message you need to pass to your child's teacher they will generally be able to speak to you briefly at drop off or pick up time. Please note that this may not be the case during the Covid-19 Pandemic, depending on current advice and guidelines from Public Health and Cheshire East Local Authority. During this time, email and telephone call are used as a means of communication. You can also speak to a member of the school office team by phone or email and they will be able to pass your message on. Due to the school day being so busy, it is not possible for teachers to allocate sufficient time to speak with you about your child when you are volunteering in school. Please note that during the Covid-19 pandemic, volunteers in school may not be permitted and when restrictions ease, the decision to have volunteers in school will depend on advice from the Local Authority and specific circumstances.

If you feel that you need to speak to your child's class teacher for longer than a short conversation, they can call you or meet with you (using a remote platform if during the Covid-19 pandemic) at a mutually convenient time. This can be arranged via the school office by phone or email admin@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk. Your child's class teacher will make every effort to contact you within 2 working days to discuss your concerns or arrange an appointment (unless there is a safeguarding concern, in which case a response will be sooner than this). Most issues can be resolved quickly and informally through the class teacher.

The purpose of the meeting should be to establish the nature of the concern and to seek a realistic solution to the problem. The teacher may, if they consider it appropriate, or if so directed by their line manager/headteacher, refer you to a more senior or experienced member of staff who will try to resolve your concern informally. If your child's class teacher is the subject of the concern you may choose to discuss this with another member of staff. This can be arranged, again via the school office.

If your concern is not resolved through such discussion, you should seek an appointment with the Headteacher or with a member of the senior leadership team, a Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. The purpose of this meeting is to establish the nature of your ongoing concern and to hopefully resolve it to your satisfaction. It is for the Headteacher to determine which staff members should attend any such meeting. Should you contact the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership team via email, they will respond within 2 working days. This may be a holding email if they are required to carry out any form of investigation, subject to the nature of the complaint.

An appointment (either face-to-face or using a remote platform) will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable and it may not be possible for you to meet with the relevant member of staff immediately. If initial attempts to resolve your issues informally are unsuccessful and you remain dissatisfied, you may wish to invoke the formal complaints procedure.

In the event of prolonged communication with the school regarding a particular issue, a designated point of contact may be used. This will usually be Mrs Louise Currall, School Business Manager, via email. She will pass the details to the relevant member of staff and respond to the email within 24 hours. This again may be a holding email.

In the majority of cases, issues can be resolved during informal meetings. If however you do not feel that a resolution has been reached, you may wish to invoke the formal Complaints Procedure.

We have this procedure outlined so that everyone is aware of the process. The timescales for reply are in place to ensure that expectations are kept realistic.

In line with our complaints procedure, the school may judge your complaint to be pursued in an 'unreasonable manner' where your frequency of contact with the school hinders the consideration of the complaint and/or impedes the ability of the Headteacher and school to meet the needs of all pupils equitably.

Where the Headteacher, and/or Chair of Governors, or other nominated governor judges a complaint to be frivolous or vexatious, having considered all the relevant circumstances, s/he will take such actions as they consider appropriate which may include rejecting the complaint and/or restricting contact between you and the school.

Approved by Governors September 2021