

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Parent/Carer Partnership and Communication Policy</b>
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### Equality Impact Assessment

The school aims to design and implement services, policies and procedures that meet the diverse needs of our provision, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at an unreasonable or unfair disadvantage over others. We are confident that this policy does not place anyone at an unreasonable or unfair disadvantage, and is compliant with relevant equalities legislation.

Where the school or staff are referred to, the policy and the following procedures apply to all staff working for Corbets Tey School on all sites.

### Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change
1	November 2021	Sue Hillier	New document
2	May 2022	Sue Hillier	Annual Review Updates

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To support students to achieve the highest standards through closer partnerships between home and school.
- To ensure that all staff, governors, parents and carers are able to support the development of children and young people effectively at all stages of their school life at Corbets Tey School.
- To actively involve parents and carers in the education and progress of their child or young person.
- To inform, clarify and communicate the breadth of work between families and the school.

### **Introduction**

At Corbets Tey School, we recognise and value the importance of parental involvement in the life of the school. We believe that education is a collaborative enterprise involving amongst others, parents and carers, staff and students. As a school we are therefore committed to establishing and maintaining an effective and purposeful working relationship between the school and home.

Effective partnership between home and school is key to these aspirations. Parents and carers are the most important influence in a child or young person's life, and the school needs to listen to and communicate with parents and carers more effectively, to build the trust and understanding needed for students to achieve their best. The school needs to be a resource for the community it serves.

This policy seeks to inform and broaden the further development of home/school links and communication at Corbets Tey School. It identifies our rationale and the approaches used to promote and support the development of communication between students, parents, carers and staff.

### **Scope**

Corbets Tey School is an all aged special school that caters for students with complex learning needs and a high percentage of students have communication difficulties. The school holds specialist status for Communication and Interaction. Communication underpins all learning in the school and we are committed to providing a total communication environment. This encompasses:

1. How we support communication development in our students,
2. How we communicate information to parents and carers about the school and their child or young person's progress,
3. How staff communicate.

This policy covers how the school promotes and maintains a positive and constructive relationship with parents and carers through a strong communication process between school and home.

### **How we communicate with parents and carers**

In our school, we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and carers. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values, through keeping parents and carers well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents and carers play in supporting the school and their child or young person's learning.

Parents and carers are always welcome to see their child or young person's class teacher to discuss progress by pre-arranged appointment. Parents and carers who come to the school must sign-in at reception on arrival.

If required, an appointment can be made to see the Head Teacher or Deputy Headteacher if there are any unresolved issues.

Good communication between the school and the home is essential; children and young people achieve more when schools, parents and carers work together.

The school encourages parents and carers to share any issues about their child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

### **Home/School Diary**

A daily dialogue between class teacher and home is important to ensure that relevant information is relayed each day to parents and carers who can respond or provide information about their child or young person that they want to pass on.

Each class teacher or tutor designs an effective method of home-school communication suitable for the needs of their class, students, parents and carers. This is to ensure that they are as student-centred as possible.

Parents of younger students may find a diary page with symbol supports useful to aid discussion between parents and carers and their young people. These can be used as a prompt for parents and carers to communicate with their child or young person about their activities and feelings on how their day went.

Some parents and carers may prefer a daily communication by email or a paper diary sent home in students' bags.

### **Telephone**

Parents and carers are welcome to telephone the school with urgent messages that need to be delivered immediately to staff. Urgent calls may be put through to the most appropriate or available person. If it is not possible for a parent or carer to speak to class staff, a message will be taken and delivered for contact to be made within a reasonable time. Non-urgent calls to class staff should be kept to a minimum at times of the day where teaching and learning may be disrupted. This includes before school where lessons are being prepared.

### **Texts and Email**

It is preferred that parents and carers do not contact staff by text.

Parents and carers should not expect staff to:

- return calls after work hours
- answer email in the evening or weekends

### **Home School Agreement**

Since March 2015, a Home School Agreement is no longer a statutory requirement for schools. However, the school still values the use of a Home School Agreement (Appendix 1), which sets out the school's responsibilities towards students, the responsibilities of parents and carers and what the school expects of students. It is designed to help achieve a supportive, communicative and effective partnership and is sent to parents and carers annually.

### **Newsletters**

The school newsletter is sent to parents and carers at the end of each school week and added to the school website. It contains general details of school events and activities. We send other letters of a general nature when necessary.

### **Parent/Carer Surveys**

The school distributes a parent and carer survey once in the Summer Term each year to establish the views and opinions of parents and carers on the school performance. This is analysed by senior management and governors and this data is used to provide a focus for wellbeing initiatives and school improvement.

### **School Closure Communication**

Any communication on school closure will be posted on the school website. Parents and carers are asked to check the school website [www.corbetsteyschool.org.uk](http://www.corbetsteyschool.org.uk) as we will post information here, via an Open Check notification, when available. If parents and carers do not have access to the Internet, they are asked to try to obtain contact details of someone who can check this for them.

### **ParentComms App and AutoText Service**

1. Any Open Check notification will be automatically sent to everyone who has a free smartphone app called **ParentComms** installed on their mobile phone. Parents and carers are asked to install this app on their phones and select 'Open Check' and then subscribe to Havering, then to Corbets Tey School from the drop down lists. Any changes to the Open Check message will then appear on mobile phones, as soon they are uploaded to the school website.
2. The school will use a service called **AutoText** to send text messages to parent or carer contact numbers that have been supplied to the school. This service will ensure that a text is sent to the first main contact to advise them that the school is closed. If this person has the **ParentComms** App installed on their phone and has assigned their mobile number to the app, this message will appear as a notification via the app at no cost to the school. See Appendix 2 for instructions on installing the app and assigning a mobile number to the **ParentComms** App.

### **School Website and Prospectus**

Our school has a website [www.corbetsteyschool.org.uk](http://www.corbetsteyschool.org.uk) with up to date information on the school and links to various policies for parents and carers and also includes progress on equality plans and how we are spending Pupil Premium, Year 7 Catch-Up and Primary PE Funding. The school prospectus is also available on the school website.

### **Annual Reviews**

All students have an annual review to evaluate and develop an action plan regarding all aspects of the student's life with a view to updating their Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) as appropriate. In Year 9 students, will participate in a person centred review which will have contributions from our Educational Psychologist and Careers adviser. Representation from all professional services working with the family can be invited to attend as appropriate.

### **Parents/carers Evenings**

Staff meet with parents and carers as soon as it is possible in each new school year. Parents and carers will be invited to a 'Meet the Teacher' session in the Autumn Term of each academic year. Two parents and carers evening meetings per year will be offered in addition to the annual review meeting. These meetings are used to explain areas of our curriculum and discuss progress. Parents and carers may also be invited into school prior to residential visits regarding the planning and content of the visit.

### **Annual Reports**

In the Summer Term, the school will provide an annual written report to parents and carers on their child or young person's progress. This will include information on students' Learning Pathways (if applicable), individual skills achieved as well as any other additional assessments, and it will be maintained with progress updated throughout the year.

### **Absences**

If a child or young person is going to be absent from school, parents and carers should telephone the school office before 9.30am to advise with regard to the reason for this absence. If the school does not receive any notification it will therefore have no indication of the reason for a child or young person being absent from school, the school and will contact a parent or carer (by telephone, if possible), to find out the reason for the absence. Please see the Attendance Policy on the school website for further information regarding student absence procedures.

The Family Practitioner Team are available to provide support to parents and carers where necessary and can act as a link to other members of staff and external professionals or support services. The team are responsible for organising training opportunities for parents and carers throughout the year, which will be promoted and communicated by letter and school newsletter, or by personal invitation in the case of training opportunities relating to a particular student.

The Safeguarding Team and Family Practitioners offer positive, proactive and flexible support to identified families through a variety of interventions, for example: home visits, advocacy and parent and carer information sessions. Both practitioners act as a natural extension to the pastoral role of each class

teacher to foster positive relationships between home and school and promote the safeguarding of children, young people and their families.

We offer meeting spaces with resources, for training and opportunities for parents and carers to learn more about how to support their child or young person. Facilities are available for parent and carer use by prior arrangements. Resources can be loaned during parent and carer drop-in sessions which are currently every Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning. The purpose of the drop-in sessions is to provide an opportunity for parents and carers to meet, to socialise and chat about issues affecting them. Each session is supported by the team whenever possible.

### **Associated Policies and Documents**

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Separated Parents Policy

 <b>Working Together To Do Our Best!</b>		<b>As a school we will...</b>	<b>As a student I will...</b>	<b>As a parent or carer I/we will...</b>
<b>CORBETS TEY SCHOOL HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT</b>	<b>Aims...</b>	Provide a purposeful, safe, secure, positive environment in which students can reach their full potential.	Work hard and do my best.	Talk positively to my child or young person about their school day and participate where appropriate in their school life.
	<b>Work...</b>	Provide a creative and engaging curriculum appropriately matched to the needs of all students	Try hard to join in all activities.	Support my child or young person with their work and encourage them to do their best.
	<b>Home/School Links...</b>	Provide opportunities for open dialogue between school and home about student progress, individual target setting and assessment.	Talk to my parents/carers about my school day.	Work in partnership with the school. Do my best to attend meetings and school events and share relevant information with the school.
	<b>Behaviour...</b>	Teach the difference between right and wrong. Model, promote, encourage and reward good behaviour. Be responsive to student need in developing behaviour plans. Identify student challenges, triggers and motivators. Develop personalised, positive, preventative approaches to managing student behaviour.	Follow the Golden Rules	Support the school's high behaviour expectations through effective communication and reinforcement at home and modelling good behaviour. Ensure that all communication within the community, including online, supports a positive image of the school and if I have questions or concerns I will discuss them with the school.
	<b>Attendance and Punctuality...</b>	Monitor attendance and punctuality regularly and discuss concerns with parents/carers.	Come to school on time every day if I am well enough.	Ensure my child or young person attends school regularly and on time. Let the school know by 9.30am if my child or young person cannot attend school.
	<i>Signed...</i>	Teacher: _____ Date: _____	Student: _____ Date: _____	Parent or Carer: _____ Date: _____

## The Golden Rules

1. Do be gentle
2. Do be kind and helpful
3. Do be honest
4. Do work hard
5. Do look after property
6. Do listen to people
7. Don't hurt anybody
8. Don't interrupt
9. Don't hurt people's feelings
10. Don't cover up the truth
11. Don't waste time
12. Don't waste or damage things

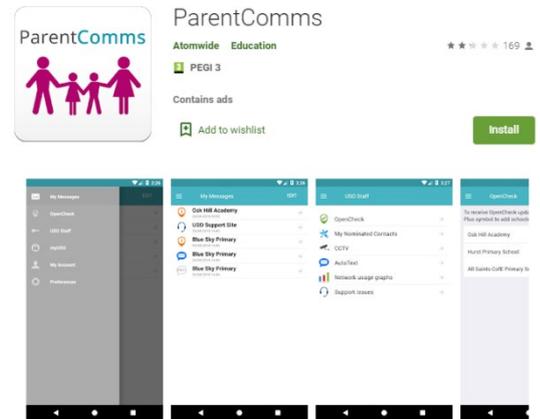
Appendix 2

**Parent Comms App**

If you would like to receive whole school alerts to tell you, for example, that the school has had to be closed due to extreme weather, you will need to install a free app called **ParentComms** on your mobile phone.

First install the app

1. Go to the App Store
2. Search for **Parent Comms**
3. Install in the usual way
4. Subscribe to **Havering** and **Corbets Tey School** via the Open Check menu option. You will begin to get any **Open Check** alerts about school closures through this app.
5. Register your mobile number on the My Account menu option, you will be able to receive information messages from the school via the app.



**Auto Text Communication System**

We use a communication system called **AutoText**. **AutoText** allows us to keep you up-to-date with any important information about your child or young person, any class, group or whole school information via your mobile phone or by email.

From time to time, the school may send you text messages through **AutoText**. This uses the contact information that you have already supplied to the school. Each text message costs the school for every text sent, but if you have your mobile phone number associated with the **Parent Comms** app then messages will be received through this and they are free to send. You will need to complete a short set up procedure for this to happen from within the **Parent Comms** app.