



## 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.

### **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.

## **Student Absence**

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 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.