



The Sherwood School

Communications Policy

Our Mission Statement:

We are dedicated to providing the best possible education for every pupil in a safe, inclusive and stimulating environment. UNICEF's convention on the Rights of the Child is embedded within our ethos and curriculum and is valued and supported by our staff, children and families.



Status	Frequency of Review	Approval	Next Review
Ratified	3 yearly	September 2026	September 2029

Communication Policy 2026-29

1 Introduction

At The Sherwood School we believe in parents and staff working in close partnership, to achieve the best outcomes for our children. Excellent communication is key to this. This policy sets out a framework and expectations for communication at The Sherwood School. We expect all members of the community to behave respectfully at all times. Misinformation (or information that is inappropriate) being shared by members of the school community can cause unnecessary distress to children, as well as adults. Parents/carers are also requested to ensure their correct contact details are shared with the school office.

A home / school relationship, based on mutual respect and trust, is the cornerstone of a good education and is in the best interests of all children and young people. Staff will work to the best of their professional ability to support the delivery of each child's education. All staff at the school are professionals working within school, local authority and relevant professional codes of conduct.

We ask that all parents and carers treat school staff courteously and reasonably at all times. The school takes it very seriously if a member of staff is treated in an abusive way. The school adopts the principles of the government's 'zero tolerance' initiative, which was put in place to protect health service staff. This recognizes that public sector staff have a right to care for others without fear of being abused in person, on the phone or online. Taking photographs or videos of children or staff on school grounds is strictly prohibited unless you have the express permission of the headteacher.

Our staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of each parent. We respectfully remind parents / carers that staff are frequently managing many varying and sometimes difficult tasks and situations, all at the same time. Staff understand that parents/ carers who are feeling stressed will not always act in an entirely reasonable manner and school staff will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint. Aggressive behaviour, however, will not be tolerated in any eventuality. In rare and extreme cases, this could result in parents / carers being barred from school premises and, in the most extreme cases, where a suspected crime has been committed, police would be contacted.

We ask all parents / carers to read and note the types of behaviour that would be unacceptable. This applies whether behaviours are engaged in in person, by phone, email, letter or online. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse towards staff in any form, including a raised angry voice, swearing or verbally insulting staff.
- Physical aggression towards any member of staff.
- Abuse which targets a staff member's gender, race, culture, religion, disability, sexuality, identity or professional standing.
- Intentionally ignoring staff.
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff; requests will be met wherever possible and explanation given when they cannot.
- Pursuing staff out of work.
- Causing damage to or stealing from school premises.
- Bullying or intimidating behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated, and this includes the conduct of parents towards staff, e.g. making threats or taking photographs / recording conversations without prior agreement.

2 Methods of Official School Communication

School newsletter

This is produced every two weeks and contains useful updates and news stories. It is sent via MCAS.

Curriculum Letters

These are sent from each class at the start of each term. These include school dates, which may be subject to change. For the latest dates please check the school website.

School Website

www.thesherwoodschool.co.uk

This shares information about our school including school policies, curriculum information, statutory data etc.

Instagram

The Sherwood has a school Instagram account which will be used to share day to day news about the learning that takes place here. Please feel free to follow @sherwoodprimary. Please see the "Social Media" section of this policy for further information.

Telephone calls

School may contact parents (and vice versa) via telephone, these calls may be recorded for quality assurance. The school number is 0208 764 5100. Please refer to the protocol below.

MyChildAtSchool

Updates on events and other useful information is sent via MCAS (MyChildAtSchool). Parents who do not have access to an email account should advise the school office and paper copies will be sent.

In person

To make an appointment to speak with a teacher or senior leader in person/by telephone, parents/carers should contact the school office. Teachers are also available after school most days at pick up time.

In the morning, parents should leave messages at the school office, or with a member of staff on the playground (in an envelope marked confidential and/or urgent as appropriate).

Emails

Parents/carers may email our school office at any time, but are requested to make a telephone call if the matter requires immediate attention (0208 764 5100). We will endeavour to respond to emails within two working days of receipt.

adminoffice@sherwood.merton.sch.uk

Excessive/inappropriate communication

Rarely, parents/carers engage in excessive or inappropriate communication. Support will be offered to parents/carers should the school consider this to be the case. The School reserves the right to protect the work/life balance and wellbeing of staff in such circumstances.

Notes on Social Media e.g: WhatsApp Groups, Facebook

The Sherwood School does not have an official Facebook account, WhatsApp account or any other social media account not listed above. However, School recognises that social media can be a useful tool for parents.

Please note:

1. Out of respect for other children and their families, parents/carers must not discuss their child (or other children) on WhatsApp/social media groups.
2. Misinformation (or information that is inappropriate) being shared by members of the school community does cause unnecessary distress to children as well as parents/carers and staff.
3. Parents/carers are advised to contact School should they have any concerns regarding their child.
4. School requests that any comments shared on social media be kept factual and supportive, with links to the official School information where possible.
5. Parents/carers/children should never attempt to contact School staff via social media. This supports both our safeguarding policy and the professional integrity of our staff.
6. Parents/carers with concerns that these rules (designed to support all families) are not being followed should take 'screenshots' and contact School for support.

3 The Sherwood School Communications Policy Quick Reference 2021

Query	Topic	Channel
General Information	Term dates, uniform policy, clubs, who's who, procedures, policies	Website: www.thesherwoodschool.co.uk
Administration	School meals, payments, medical issues, absence requests.	School office: • In person • Call school office on 0208 764 5100 • Email: adminoffice@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
Absence Reporting	Absence from school	School office: • Call school office on 0208 764 5100, Option 1, then leave a message
Child-specific	Anything relevant to day-to-day class activities should be raised with your teacher.	• In person • Call school office on 0208 764 5100 • Email: adminoffice@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
Class events / trips	Trips, events, teacher collections, other class-specific or year-specific issues and activities	MCAS Direct with class teacher
PTA	Cake sales, fairs, other events	TBC
General News	Head, school, PTA, governors	Issued via MCAS. Any queries, please contact the school office in person or call 0208 764 5100
SEND	All information, issues or concerns should be raised with the class teacher in the first instance. For children on the SEN register, or who access pupil premium funding, the SENCO is the first point of contact.	• In person • Call school office on 0208 764 5100 • Email: senco@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
Serious Concerns	Safeguarding, pupil welfare, bullying of any nature including: racist, trans/bi/homophobic	• In person • Call school office on 0208 946 6666 • Email: adminoffice@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
Sports	Sporting clubs and events	• Information on website www.thesherwoodschool.co.uk
Music	Music clubs, events, peripatetic tuition	www.mmf.org.uk
Staffing	Change of teacher, thanks for (or concerns about) a staff member. Either the class teacher, phase leader or assistant/head	• In person • Call school office on 0208 946 6666 • Email: adminoffice@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
Thanks or complaints	First instance: discuss directly with person involved. If not resolved: letter to Andriana Samouel, Headteacher via school office.	

	Complaints regarding the Head: Email Chair of Governors, Antonia Palmer at: antonia.palmer@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
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4 Protocol for telephone calls to parents/carers (Updated 27.09.21)

We recognise that it may be necessary to keep in touch with some parents/carers via telephone during school closures. We have updated our communications policy to include the following:

Senior staff at school may call parents/carers for a number of strictly professional reasons including:

- Support for the academic progress of pupils
- Support for the emotional/mental wellbeing of pupils/families
- Support with additional services that school can offer or signpost to parents/carers

Staff will:

- Remain professional, polite and courteous at all times
- Make audio calls only (e.g. no video unless booked via SchoolCloud for parents' evenings)
- Use school phones wherever possible
- Use personal phones to contact parents/carers when it is not possible to use school phones, withholding their number on all such occasions (141)
- Seek to speak to the parents/carers immediately during any call to the home.
- Speak to pupils only with parent/carer prior consent and via loudspeaker (in the presence of a parent/carer)
- Write notes on every call made to parents/carers in a confidential school document, including who was spoken to and any key points from the call.

Senior leaders will:

- Draft policy changes
- Monitor confidential documents that include notes on calls
- Receive positive or negative feedback from parents/carers via telephone or:
adminoffice@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
- Investigate complaints in line with school policy

Governors will:

- Approve and/or amend policy
- Receive positive or negative feedback from parents/carers via telephone or:
antonia.palmer@sherwood.merton.sch.uk
- Investigate complaints in line with school policy