



# **Milford Haven School**

## **Communications Policy**

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Policy created and reviewed by: Headteacher

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### **Communications and meeting requests.**

The following outlines the school policy for written communication and requests for meetings between home and school, including email communications.

### **Email and written communication: All communication must respect the dignity of the recipient.**

1. Within 48 hours – receipt of letter or email will be acknowledged (during term time but not over a weekend or bank holidays).
2. Within 5 working days – provide a response to the letter / email by telephone or in writing (including by email). This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response. In this case staff should indicate a time frame in which a response should be sent.
3. If a member of staff cannot deal with the matter directly or it is more appropriately managed by someone else, they will pass it on to that person and inform the sender that they have done so.
4. Staff are not expected to monitor or respond to emails out of their normal working hours 8.30am - 4pm (including weekends, bank holidays and published school holidays). To safeguard the welfare and workload of staff, we ask that emails are not sent outside of normal office hours.
5. If a member of staff receives an email which is aggressive, sets unreasonable demands or could otherwise be interpreted as harassment, they will refer this to a senior line manager in the school, who will decide if further communication will be managed under the school's policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints.

### **Requesting a meeting**

A parent or carer may request a meeting with an appropriate member of staff to discuss any matter relating to their child's education or welfare. Parents may not demand a meeting with a specific member of staff or for a meeting to take place at a specific time, nor can a parent arrive at school and expect to meet with a member of staff immediately.

A request for a meeting can be made in writing via a letter, email or by telephone. All requests should include the reason or subject to be discussed at the meeting and the name or Job Title of the persons you would like to meet; see template at the end of this policy. The request should be made to the school office who will forward it to the most appropriate member of staff. This may not be the member of staff you requested to meet, but the most appropriate person to respond to your request or their line manager.

Your child's House Tutor or Head of House would be the most appropriate person to meet if it is about the child's welfare, well-being or general progress. If it relates to a specific subject or lesson, then the class teacher or the Director is the most appropriate person.

A member of the admin team will normally contact you to agree a time, date and venue for a meeting. Staff will do their best to accommodate any reasonable request for a meeting and for this to be at a mutually convenient time. Meetings would generally be expected to take place at school, during the working day or within 30 minutes of the start of the day or no more than one hour after the end of the day.

Where appropriate you may be asked to complete and return the document in Appendix A. This ensures that the purpose and objectives of the meeting are clearly understood by all parties in advance.

### **Protocols for the meeting**

The start time and the expected duration of the meeting should always be observed. If it seems that a meeting will need more time than expected, the meeting should be adjourned and continued at another time. It is never acceptable for a teacher to be delayed from attending to their other duties due to a meeting which overruns.

At the end of a meeting, those involved should ensure that there is a clear agreement and understanding of the outcomes of the meeting. This may include: no further action, a written record of the meeting or agreed actions. Where actions are agreed then these should include dates for completion, monitoring or follow up.

Meetings may not always reach an agreed conclusion. When this is the case, the school will make sure that all those involved are clear about "the school's" position on the issue, even when others may not support or agree with that position. This will help to provide unambiguous clarity for future reference.

The secret recording (video, audio or other electronic format) of a meeting is not allowed. If a note taker is not available a meeting may be recorded, but only with the knowledge of those present. Notes made in a meeting by any individual do not form a part of the official record, and remain wholly and solely the property of the person making the notes, unless that person's role in the meeting is to act as clerk or note taker.

In this case the person will provide all attendees with a set of notes or minutes of the meeting (or part of a meeting which they attended), if they request them.

### **Unacceptable Behaviours**

In line with school and county policy, every person has a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff are school employees and therefore have employment rights which protect them from harassment, abuse, assault, intimidation or any other form of unacceptable behaviour at work.

If any member of staff experiences unacceptable behaviour (towards them or a colleague) they will close the meeting, request that the person leave the school site and report the matter to their line manager or a senior leader. If necessary, the police will be contacted to remove offenders from the school site.

If a parent, carer or other attendee at a meeting believes that a member of staff's behaviour is unprofessional or otherwise unacceptable, this should be reported and the matter will be dealt with under the school's complaints procedures, and if appropriate Staff Discipline procedures.

Aggressive or abusive behaviour towards any member of staff is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. If this occurs the person will be instructed to leave the school site and the incident will be reported to the police. Any further communication or meetings will only take place if the Governors believe the safety, welfare and dignity of staff can be assured.

### **The Unacceptable Actions**

Pembrokeshire County Council "The Unacceptable Actions by Complainants Policy" explains what the PCC and MHS School Governors consider unacceptable actions from anyone communicating or making a complaint, and how the school will communicate with those concerned.

## Appendix A: Pre-Meeting Request Template

Prior to attending a meeting, please complete and return the following document. This helps ensure that the purpose and objectives of the meeting are clearly defined and understood by all parties beforehand.

<b>Your name</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Last name</b>
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Phone number</b>	<b>Daytime</b>	<b>Mobile</b>
<b>Contact email address</b>		
<b>Name of pupil</b>		<b>Year group</b>
<b>Relationship to pupil (if applicable)</b>		
<b>Name of person you want to meet</b>		
<b>Reason for meeting</b>		