PARENT COMMUNICATIONAND PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Reviewed:	August 2026
Next Review Due:	August 2027
Applies To:	Whole School
Owner:	Head of School
Approved By:	Board of Directors

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
To inspire our children to reach their full potential by fostering curiosity and an interest in learning, awakening their minds and illuminating their world.

Vision
To create an affordable international secondary school with a high standard of education where children learn through practical and project-based work. To develop our students' moral and intellectual capacity, and to encourage creativity and adaptability.

Aim
An education that is broad, balanced and challenging, with an emphasis on developing strong connections to our host country, Uganda.

Values
Desire for lifelong learning; an ability to adapt; be innovative and reflective thinkers; open minded, and empathetic while achieving high academic success according to individual potential.

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1. Policy Statement

At 7Hills International School (7Hils), we believe that strong relationships between home and school are essential to student success, wellbeing and personal development. Effective education is built upon partnership, trust, mutual respect and shared responsibility between students, families and the school.

As a relatively small international school community, 7Hills values approachable, relational and respectful communication between families and staff. We recognise that students achieve best when parents and school work together consistently to support learning, wellbeing, behaviour, attendance and personal growth.

Our community includes families from a range of cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds. The school therefore aims to ensure communication remains inclusive, professional, supportive and culturally sensitive, while maintaining clear expectations and professional boundaries.

At 7Hills, communication is intended not only to share information, but to strengthen relationships, encourage collaboration and support the holistic development of every student.

This policy outlines the school's approach to communication and partnership with families and establishes clear expectations for respectful, constructive and solution-focused engagement across the school community.

2. Guiding Principles

Communication at 7Hills should reflect the values, culture and relational ethos of the school. The following principles underpin all home–school communication.

Respect - All communication should remain courteous, calm and professional, even where concerns or disagreements arise. Students benefit most when adults model respectful communication and collaborative problem-solving.
Partnership - Parents and school staff share responsibility for supporting student wellbeing, learning, safeguarding and personal development. Effective partnership relies upon trust, openness and a shared commitment to positive outcomes for students.
Clarity - Communication should be clear, accurate and purposeful. The school aims to ensure families receive timely information that supports organisation, understanding and engagement with school life.
Responsiveness - The school values responsive communication and seeks to address concerns fairly and constructively. At the same time, families are asked to recognise that some matters require investigation, consultation or leadership involvement before a full response can be provided.
Safeguarding and Confidentiality - All communication must prioritise student welfare, dignity and confidentiality. Sensitive information will be managed carefully and shared only where appropriate.
Professional Boundaries - Positive partnership relies upon healthy professional boundaries. Staff are entitled to respectful communication, reasonable response times and appropriate separation between professional and personal time.

3. Building Positive Parent Partnership

At 7Hills, parent partnership extends beyond responding to concerns or sharing academic information. We aim to build a connected school community in which families feel informed, involved and valued as partners in their child's educational journey. Strong partnership helps students to develop:

- confidence and resilience
- positive learning habits
- responsibility and independence
- emotional wellbeing
- respectful relationships
- engagement in school life

The school seeks to strengthen partnership through:

- regular and transparent communication
- parent information sessions and workshops
- student-led events and exhibitions
- reporting and progress discussions
- pastoral and wellbeing collaboration
- community events and celebrations
- opportunities for parent feedback and consultation
- shared support for attendance, behaviour and safeguarding expectations

As a school community, we recognise that positive relationships between home and school contribute significantly to student wellbeing, belonging and long-term success.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Positive communication relies upon shared responsibility between school staff, students and families.

4.1 Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for:

- ensuring communication systems are effective, professional and accessible
- promoting a culture of respectful and solution-focused dialogue
- supporting strong relationships between families and the school
- overseeing implementation and review of this policy

4.2 Senior Leaders and Heads of Department

Leaders are responsible for:

- supporting effective communication within their areas of responsibility
- responding to concerns professionally and constructively
- supporting staff with complex or sensitive matters
- ensuring communication aligns with school values and safeguarding expectations

Leaders are also expected to model calm, respectful and professional communication at all times.

4.3 Staff

All staff are expected to communicate with parents in a professional, respectful and constructive manner. Staff are responsible for:

- maintaining positive working relationships with families
- communicating concerns sensitively and factually
- responding to communication within reasonable timeframes
- maintaining confidentiality and professional boundaries
- ensuring communication prioritises student wellbeing, learning and safeguarding

At 7Hills, staff are encouraged to communicate proactively with families, not only when concerns arise, but also to celebrate effort, progress, participation and achievement. Staff will normally respond during core working hours or their contracted working hours. To support professional boundaries and staff wellbeing:

- staff are not expected to respond during evenings, weekends or school holidays
- immediate responses should not always be expected
- some matters may require consultation or investigation before a full response can be provided

4.4 Parents and Carers

Parents are expected to:

- communicate respectfully with all members of staff
- raise concerns calmly and constructively
- support school expectations relating to behaviour, attendance and communication
- work collaboratively with the school in the best interests of their child
- ensure students attend school punctually and consistently
- support healthy routines, organisation and readiness for learning

Parents are encouraged to communicate concerns early so that issues can often be resolved before they escalate. Communication on behalf of other families or students will not normally be accepted unless formally authorised.

4.5 Parent Community Committee Executive (PCCE)

The Parent Community Committee Executive (PCCE) is the elected representative body of the 7Hills parent community. The PCCE consists of six parents who are elected annually by the wider parent body to support and strengthen parent engagement, communication and partnership with the school.
The PCCE comprises the following elected positions:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Well-being Liaison
- Events Coordinator

The PCCE is responsible for:

- providing a structured channel for communication and collaboration between the parent community and the school;
- representing broad parent perspectives and raising matters of shared community interest;
- encouraging constructive parent participation in school life;
- supporting community-building activities, events and initiatives;
- promoting the well-being and inclusion of families within the school community;
- coordinating with Parent Class Representatives to identify common themes, suggestions and areas of interest;
- supporting effective communication between families and school leadership; and
- contributing to initiatives that strengthen the wider school community.

The PCCE works collaboratively with school leadership but does not hold governance, management or operational authority. Matters relating to individual students, staff members, safeguarding, admissions, finance, curriculum or confidential complaints must be addressed through the school's established policies and procedures.

4.6 Parent Class Representatives

Parent Class Representatives are parents who volunteer to represent and support the parent community within their child's class. They provide an additional channel for parent participation, communication and community engagement.

Parent Class Representatives attend monthly meetings to discuss general matters, share ideas, identify common themes and contribute to the continued development of the school community.
Parent Class Representatives are encouraged to:

- promote positive relationships among families within their class;
- welcome and support new families;
- encourage participation in school activities, events and community initiatives;
- share school-approved information and reminders through agreed communication channels;
- gather general feedback, suggestions and matters of shared interest from families;
- contribute constructively to monthly Parent Class Representative meetings;
- communicate relevant themes and suggestions to the PCCE and school representatives; and
- promote respectful, inclusive and solution-focused communication.

Parent Class Representatives do not replace direct communication between parents and the school. Individual academic, pastoral, behavioural, safeguarding or confidential matters should be raised directly with the appropriate member of staff through the school's established communication procedures. Parent Class Representatives should not investigate complaints, mediate individual disputes or share confidential information relating to students, families or staff.

5. Communication Channels

The school uses a range of communication channels to ensure parents remain informed about school life, student progress and important updates.
Parents are encouraged to check communication platforms regularly to remain informed and engaged with school life.

5.1 Email

Email is the primary communication tool for most routine matters, including:

- academic updates
- curriculum information
- meeting arrangements
- reports and progress updates
- pastoral communication
- school notices and announcements

Staff will endeavour to acknowledge emails within a reasonable timeframe.

5.2 Telephone Communication

Telephone communication may be used where:

- concerns are sensitive or urgent
- wellbeing or safeguarding matters arise
- discussion is likely to be more effective verbally
- clarification is required quickly

Where staff are unavailable due to teaching or operational responsibilities, a call-back or meeting may be arranged.

5.3 WhatsApp and Messaging Platforms

As an active and connected school community, 7Hills may use messaging platforms such as WhatsApp for:

- urgent operational updates
- transport or timetable changes
- reminders and notices
- emergency communication

Messaging platforms should not replace formal communication channels for serious academic, behavioural or safeguarding concerns. Parents should not expect staff to engage in ongoing informal communication through personal messaging accounts or outside reasonable working hours.

5.4 Newsletters and Whole-School Communication

The school provides regular updates relating to:

- student achievement and success
- school events and activities
- wellbeing and pastoral initiatives
- curriculum developments
- important dates and operational updates
- wider community opportunities

The school aims to celebrate student participation, growth and contribution alongside academic achievement.

5.5 Reports and Progress Communication

Parents receive regular information regarding student progress and wellbeing, including:

- progress reports
- assessment and examination updates
- parent consultation meetings
- pastoral and wellbeing communication where appropriate

Additional meetings may be arranged where concerns arise regarding learning, attendance, wellbeing or behaviour.

5.6 Website and Information Platforms

The school website and digital platforms provide access to:

- policies and procedures
- calendars and term dates
- curriculum information
- announcements and updates
- contact information
- school expectations and values

Parents are encouraged to check available information before contacting the school regarding general operational matters.

6. Meetings with Parents

The school values face-to-face discussion and recognises that some matters are best addressed through professional conversation rather than extended email exchanges. Meetings may be arranged where:

- concerns require detailed discussion

- wellbeing or safeguarding matters are involved
- collaborative planning or support is required
- previous communication has not resolved concerns

Meetings should be arranged in advance wherever possible and may include relevant pastoral, academic or leadership staff depending on the nature of the concern. The school reserves the right to end meetings where behaviour becomes aggressive, abusive or inappropriate.

7. Respectful and Acceptable Communication

7Hills International School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and professional environment for all members of the community. The school will not tolerate:

- aggressive or threatening behaviour
- abusive or insulting language
- harassment or intimidation of staff
- repeated unreasonable communication
- hostile social media commentary targeting staff, students or families
- discriminatory or defamatory remarks
- covert recording of meetings or conversations
- behaviour that undermines the safety or wellbeing of others

Where communication breaches expected standards, the school may:

- limit communication channels
- require communication through leadership only
- suspend meetings temporarily
- issue formal warnings
- restrict access to site
- involve external authorities where necessary

The school will always seek to act proportionately, fairly and in the best interests of student wellbeing and community safety.

8. Social Media and Public Communication

The school recognises that social media can positively support communication, celebration and community engagement. However, concerns relating to students, staff or school operations should be raised directly with the school through appropriate channels. Parents are expected to:

- communicate concerns through appropriate school procedures
- avoid sharing confidential or misleading information
- avoid publicly criticising students, families or staff
- model respectful online behaviour consistent with the values of the school community

Public commentary that damages professional relationships, spreads misinformation or targets individuals negatively affects the wider school culture and sense of community.

9. Accessibility and Inclusion

7Hills is committed to ensuring communication remains accessible and inclusive for all families within our diverse international community. Where appropriate, the school may support:

- translation or interpretation
- adjusted communication formats
- culturally sensitive communication approaches
- additional meeting support where required

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if communication adjustments or support are needed.

10. Complaints and Resolution of Concerns

The school recognises that concerns may occasionally arise and is committed to resolving issues fairly, professionally and constructively.

Parents are encouraged to raise concerns initially with the most appropriate member of staff so that issues can often be resolved informally and quickly. The school encourages concerns to be addressed:

- early
- respectfully
- directly
- with a focus on resolution and student wellbeing

Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, parents may follow the formal Complaints Policy.

11. Staff Wellbeing and Professional Boundaries

7Hills recognises that healthy communication systems must also support staff wellbeing and sustainable working practices. The school therefore seeks to maintain professional boundaries that protect staff from unreasonable expectations regarding:

- response times
- availability outside working hours
- excessive communication
- inappropriate use of personal contact details

Parents are respectfully asked to recognise that staff have professional and personal responsibilities beyond the school day. Supporting respectful communication and healthy professional boundaries contributes positively to staff wellbeing, retention and the wider culture of the school community.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of School and Senior Leadership Team to ensure continued alignment with:

- school values and culture
- safeguarding expectations
- CIS accreditation expectations
- operational and communication needs
- evolving communication technologies and practices

The school reserves the right to amend this policy in response to operational developments or emerging needs.

13. Distribution and Access

This policy is available to staff, students and parents through the school website and internal communication systems. Printed copies may be requested from reception.