

EUROPÄISCHE SCHULE FRANKFURT AM MAIN • Praunheimer Weg 126 • D-60439 Frankfurt



Communication Policy European School Frankfurt

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1 Aims/objectives of the communication policy

In order to ensure successful learning and teaching and sound working environments, transparent effective and efficient communication among all members of the school community is essential. Effective communication is more than just exchanging information, the message as such and the “how” are equally important. We all rely on clear, respectful and correct language and on efficient methods/communication channels. The protection of personal data is guaranteed.

At the same time it is important not to overload members with information that is not needed. All stakeholders/members of the school community must, however, have access to the information they need in due time.

2 Addressees

- Students
- Parents
- Teachers
- Administrative Staff
- School partners
- Other stakeholders

3 Modes of communication

3.1 Direct personal contact

Individual Meetings

Whenever possible students, parents and teachers discuss problems arising between themselves first. As far as questions of learning and teaching are concerned, the subject teacher is the next person to contact, before the class teacher, the pedagogical advisors, the deputy head and/or ultimately the director are addressed. If e-mail exchanges are long and complex an individual meeting between the involved parties is advisable.

The management team of the school is contacted if issues are of general interest to the whole school community or parts thereof.

Issues among the administrative staff are handled similarly. Only after discussions with the directly involved stakeholder should the Deputy Directors or the Director be contacted.

Group meetings

Formal staff meetings are convened whenever necessary; they are announced in the school calendar well in advance. In general staff meetings, class conferences, subject conferences, various committee meetings and/or subgroups information is passed on to the stakeholders involved. Exchange of ideas is important in order to take decisions involving all parties concerned.

In general parents’ evenings, topic-related parents’ evenings (choice of subjects, BAC, class trips, etc.) or interest-specific meetings information is passed on and ideas exchanged with parents.

Student meetings are convened according to the various needs: general meetings, sub-groups, year-groups, language sections, etc.

Group meetings are planned and communicated via the school calendar and all parties involved are invited to contribute to the agenda. The agenda is usually available at the latest 3 working days before the meeting. The time frame for the meetings is communicated with the invitation. The minutes of the meetings focus on decisions taken in the meetings. (*Ergebnisprotokoll*)

3.2 Written contact (e-mail)

Communication via e-mail is the regular channel of everyday communication. On the one hand, events and initiatives are communicated via e-mail, on the other hand e-mails are a quick and efficient way of exchanging ideas/opinions. E-mails can, however, not replace face-to-face contact when this is required.

All stakeholders respect the rules set out in the internal ICT regulations. Staff check their e-mail account on a daily basis during school time.

E-mails are kept short and concise and are answered within the shortest possible time. Long e-mails are avoided, in those cases a face to face meeting is recommended. The e-mail addresses of teachers and all staff members are published on the website of the school. E-mails should only be sent to the parties directly involved in the exchange/discussion. No action will be taken on the basis of a cc in an e-mail. The subject line of an e-mail should clearly indicate the topic of the message.

3.3 Information on info boards, website, in newsletters, announcements, etc.

Events, initiatives, projects, information on a variety of topics is published/disseminated via a wide range of means: info boards for teachers, students, staff members, info-brochure for new teachers at the beginning of the school year; Friday Memos for teachers; newsletters for parents; policy documents; school calendar (internal and external); info on the website of the school about a variety of different events. (Website – see separate section)

4 Internal communication

4.1 Students

Students – Students

- Communication via class representatives
- Communication via posters – info on pin boards
- Communication via social media (facebook, youtube account, instagram)
- Communication via O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint)

Student (s) – Teacher (s)

- Face-to-face meetings with the subject teacher – the class teacher – pedagogical advisor – the director of the Primary/Secondary School
- Communication via the U-Drive, e-mails, O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint)

4.2 Teachers

Teacher – Student(s)

- Face-to-face meetings, class meetings, year group meetings, career guidance meetings, etc.
- Communication via the U-Drive, O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint), e-mails, assemblies

Teacher – Parent(s)

- Individual meetings organized or scheduled by the class/subject teacher on the progress of the student(s)
- Individual meetings requested by parents
- Flexible meeting times accommodating working hours of parents and teachers
- Regular parents' evenings (as foreseen for the individual cycles), subject groups (SWALS), year groups
- School reports (as foreseen for the individual cycles)
- Info in the School Management System (SMS) accessible by the parents (S1-S6 performances, homework, absences)
- Timely communication with parents in the event of a specific incident related to children
- Liaise and exchange of information with child-minders when necessary
- Committees
- O365 (TEAMS)

Teacher – Management/Administration

- Individual meetings (face to face), regular group meetings (teacher representatives), librarians, ICT lab assistants, nurse, psychologist
- Communication via short e-mails

Teacher - Teacher

- Pre-Primary Teachers and Assistants
 - Clear and regular communication between the class teacher and the assistant has to take place to keep both on the same level of information. This is important in particular in the case of replacements.
 - Information has to be shared among all pre-primary groups on a regular basis.
 - Regular meetings with all staff and the management (pedagogical days, twice a year)
 - Meetings also possible via TEAMS
- Primary Teachers
 - Clear and regular communication and meetings between different groups (class teachers of a year group, language group, particular subjects, etc.) – personal meetings or exchange of information via e-mail/O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint)
 - Regular meetings with the representatives
 - General information accessible to all teachers, e.g. minutes of meetings centralized on O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint)
 - Peer visits
- Secondary Teachers/Staff
 - Clear and regular communication and meetings between different groups (class teachers of a year group, language group, particular subjects, etc.)
 - Personal meetings or exchange of information via e-mail/O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint)
 - Regular meetings with the representatives

- General information accessible to all teachers (e.g. minutes of meetings centralized on the U-Drive/O365 (TEAMS, Sharepoint))
- Peer visits

4.3 Parents

Parents – Parents

- Exchange / meetings, cultural and social events, pedagogical and social conferences; online parents portal, etc. organized by the Parents' Association

Parents – Teacher (s)

- Individual meetings organized or scheduled by the class/subject teacher on the progress of the student(s)
- Means of communication: short e-mails; telephone calls
- Individual face-to-face meetings requested by parents and/or teachers, also via TEAMS

Parents – Management/Administration

- Information from the Website (calendar on dates and events, enrolment forms, links, curricula, various official documents on rules and regulations regarding Safety & Security, general school life, events, exams, etc.)
- E-mail to directors after discussion with subject teachers, class teachers and/or pedagogical advisors
- Personal meetings if required (also via TEAMS)
- Digital newsletters, announcements (via SMS – School Management System))
- Access via the School Management System to see marks/absences of their child (Secondary School)

4.4 Administrative Staff

- All staff are well informed in order to be able to inform teachers, students, parents, new parents
- Channels of communication are respected
- Meetings within the individual departments and between the departments in order to exchange information take place on a regular basis, also via TEAMS
- Communication to parents is sent out via e-mail or announcements (to the guardians)

4.5 Management

Management - Teacher(s)

- Individual information: short e-mails, face to face meetings if required, also via TEAMS
- Group information: group meetings
- General information to all staff members: general staff meetings
- Working Groups and Committees (Culture Committee, Library Committee, ICT, etc.)
- Coordinators

Management – Parent(s)

- Individual information: face to face meetings, short e-mails, also via TEAMS
- Group information: group meetings, parents' information evening (for individual classes/year groups)
- General information to all parents: general parents' evening, info via e-mail or announcements
- Working Groups and Committees (Culture Committee, Library Committee, School Advisory Board, Pedagogical Committee, etc.): take place regularly, invitations sent out timely
- Round table discussions with parent reps, also via TEAMS

Management – Administration

- Individual information: face to face meetings, short e-mails
- Group information: Meeting with one department, also via TEAMS
- General information to all staff members: On the occasion of general staff or PAS meetings
- Working Groups and Committees (Culture Committee, Library Committee, Evaluation Group, etc.)

5 External Communication

5.1 Contact/Meetings with stakeholders

- Administration Board
 - The Administration Board Meeting takes place twice per year with the dates being set by the Central Office in Brussels. All stakeholders are informed about the decisions taken by the Administration Board.
- SAC
 - The School Advisory Council is convened twice a year. The SAC makes proposals and gives opinions with a view to the setting of the school's priorities and objectives as the basis for the Annual and Multi-Annual School Plan of the school. The SAC is an advisory body.
- Pedagogical Committees
 - The Pedagogical Committees (Pre-Primary and Primary/Secondary) meet twice a year to discuss pedagogical issues of the respective cycle.

5.2 Website

Main source of information:

- provides clear and up-to date information
- provides contact data
- is user –friendly - users are able to access relevant and important information quickly and easily
- gives an accurate impression of the school and its diverse activities
- reflects the spirit of the school and its community
- provides general information about ES in general
- provides general information about ES Frankfurt:
 - Internal part: forms for teachers and staff members
 - External part: Important data (forms, contacts, rules & policies, links to curricula)
 - School calendar (holidays, parents' evenings, projects, deadlines, ...)
 - Social events
 - Awards/Honours, BAC performance, career guidance
 - Students news and experiences
 - Projects
- First source of information regarding regulations on **COVID-19**, hygiene plans and school openings or closures based on the decisions of the Federal Government, the Hessian State Government or the Hessian Ministry of Education.
- FAQ

5.3 School Management System (SMS)

- Most important tool for administration and teachers to communicate daily with the school community
- Accessible also from outside the school
- Announcements to parents and students

5.4 TEAMS Meetings and communication during a pandemic

- Communication via TEAMS is the communication channel during a pandemic to maintain distance and observe hygiene rules. It is a way to exchange ideas and opinions when face-to-face meetings are not possible.
- All parties respect the school's internal ICT and data protection regulations as well as the personal rights of all parties (pupils, parents, teachers, staff and management).
- Important information to the school community is published on the school website.
- For planned information meetings and ad hoc meetings, a short agenda should be sent to all participants at least 2 days before the meeting so that an appropriate preparation for the meeting is possible.

6 ESF and other partners

For meetings of the directorate with representatives of the partners listed below, appointments and agendas should be made well in advance to ensure adequate preparation for the meeting.

- Parents' Association
- EuroKids GmbH
- ECB, EIOPA, EUMETSAT, ESA
- City of Frankfurt
- Land Hessen
- Representatives of the Federal Ministry of Education
- Other schools

7 Complaints Procedure

7.1 Students - Students

Students who have a conflict should first contact their subject or class teacher, or their pedagogical advisor (for Secondary students) or the Counselling Team to get support to deal with and solve the conflict.

7.2 Students - Teachers

1. Students who wish to make a complaint should first approach the subject teacher and then the class teacher and/or the pedagogical adviser (Secondary School).
2. If the complaint has not been resolved, students should raise the matter with the Counselling Team.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved and the students wish to pursue the matter further, it should then be raised to the respective Deputy Director. A member of the Counselling Team may accompany the student.

4. The Deputy Director will arrange a meeting with the parties involved.
5. Following the meeting the Deputy Director will inform all parties involved about the decision taken.
6. Students may be accompanied by another person to this meeting e.g. by a member of the Counselling Team.

7.3 Parents - Teachers

1. Parents who wish to make a complaint should first approach the subject teacher and then the class teacher and/or the pedagogical adviser.
2. If the complaint has not been resolved, the parents should raise the matter with the deputy head of the respective cycle.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parents wish to pursue the matter further, it should then be raised to the Director.
4. The Director will arrange a meeting with the parties involved.
5. Following the meeting the Director will inform all parties involved in writing and in due time about the decision taken.
6. Parents/guardians may be accompanied by another person to this meeting e.g. class and/or pedagogical representative or a member of the Parents' Association Board.

7.4 Teachers and Administrative Staff

1. Teachers or administrative staff who wish to make a complaint should first approach their respective representative.
2. If the complaint has not been resolved, the teacher/administrative staff should raise the matter with the respective Deputy Director.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved and the teacher/administrative staff wishes to pursue the matter further, it should then be raised to the Director.
4. The Director will arrange a meeting with the parties involved.
5. Following the meeting the Director will inform all parties involved about the decision taken.
6. The teacher/administrative staff may be accompanied by another person to this meeting e.g. the representative.

8 Evaluation

The Communication Policy of the ES Frankfurt is constantly revised and monitored. The Working Group will collect suggestions and remarks from all stakeholders and update the document when necessary. The Working Group will meet at least once per term.