



Communication Policy

Acorns International School is very proud of the positive relationships it builds with our students' families. We believe that connection, communication, and understanding between home and school is one of the most effective ways to promote a child's education.

Inspiring & Empowering

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Acorns Vision

To inspire and empower each other to achieve our personal best.

Acorns Mission

To build an accessible, inclusive learning community of global citizens that pursues academic excellence in a holistic, inquiry-based environment that develops lifelong learners with the attributes to shape a better and more peaceful world.

Acorns Core Values



IB Learner Profile



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.	OPEN-MINDED We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
KNOWLEDGEABLE We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.	CARING We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
THINKERS We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.	RISK-TAKERS We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
COMMUNICATORS We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.	BALANCED We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
PRINCIPLED We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.	REFLECTIVE We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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“IB learner profile”

Communication Policy

1 Purpose

Acorns is very proud of the positive relationships it builds with our students' families. We believe that connection, communication, and understanding between home and school is one of the most effective ways to promote a child's education.

2 Scope

The Acorns Communication Policy details the methods, mediums and procedures for communication between home and school.

**This procedure does not apply to Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns, complaints or reporting. Acorns will follow the procedure laid out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.*

Reporting of Staff Misconduct will follow the Acorns Code of Conduct and the Human Resource Policies Disciplinary Procedure.

3 Definitions

HoD

- Abbreviation for Head of Department

DHoS

- Abbreviation for Deputy Head of School

HoS

- Abbreviation for Head of School

Acorns Senior Leadership Team

- Members of school staff in top leadership positions, ie, Academic Heads, Curriculum Coordinators, Administrative Heads, etc. These members are listed on the school's website.

Homeroom Teacher

- In Early Years and Primary, the homeroom teacher(s) refers to the class's lead teacher and teaching assistant.
- In Secondary, the homeroom teacher is assigned to each student for Homeroom lessons.

Subject Teachers

- In Early Years and Primary, subject teachers are those who teach specialised subjects. Ie, French, PE, Visual Art, PSPE, Library, etc.
- In Secondary, subject teachers are all those who are not the homeroom teachers to a student.

4 Avenues of Communication Between Home and School

We provide multiple avenues for family members and teachers to communicate:

- Phone and Email
- Toddler Family, Student, and Educator Apps
- Student Diary (PYP Only)
- Meetings with Staff, Teachers and Senior Leadership
- Newsletters

- Coffee with Curriculum Coordinators(CCC)
- Website
- Social Media Pages

Phone and Email

The Acorns Administration Office reception phone number is shared and updated via our website, letterhead footer, business cards, and newsletters.

All school staff are given an official school email @acornskisaasi.com

Updated lists of email addresses for the Acorns Senior Leadership Team and the phone number for the Acorns Administration Reception are provided at the beginning of every year for family members in the first newsletter. Family members can feel free to use them at any time to contact the main school line or a HoD.

All Acorns Staff have school emails, which they can share with family members. Teachers are not expected to give out their personal phone numbers/email IDs to family members. Family members wishing to speak to staff members should follow the instructions in the section #Meetings with Staff.

In the event of an urgent matter, family members should contact the Administration Reception phone number. The Receptionist will be able to involve the appropriate staff more promptly.

Toddle Family, Student, and Educator Apps

The Toddle app is specifically designed for IB Schools. Using 3 apps (Toddle Educator-Toddle Family-Toddle Student), it simplifies and enriches the collaboration experience. Designed to cater to the diverse needs of the school and families, it offers a comprehensive platform for seamless communication and collaboration among family members, the school, and students.

Frequently used features include:

- Announcements
- Attendance and Excusals
- Homework
- Calendars
- Task Lists
- Progress Reports
- Family Messaging
- School Policies

Upon enrollment, all families will be given their specific login information for both the Toddle Family App and the Toddle Student App. It is a requirement that all students and selected family members sign into the Apps. Per the student's admissions form, only parents or legal guardians will be given access to the Toddle Family App; emergency contacts will not be given access unless requested by the parent/legal guardian. *See section 7 Authorised Contacts for Student Communication for more information.*

Student Diary (Primary Only)

All students in the Primary Department are provided with a diary, which they should bring to school every day and bring home every night.

The diaries' main purpose is for students to record their significant achievements and information throughout the week.

Teachers can use the diaries to communicate short notes to the students or to families. Family members should also use the Diaries to notify teachers of any needed information. Teachers are to check the diaries every morning so that information from family members can be noted.

Meetings with Staff, Teachers and Senior Leadership

Calendared throughout the school year are four opportunities for conferences between the teachers, family members, and students. We highly encourage family members to attend these sessions to stay up to date with their student's progress. However, if there is a matter to be discussed, there is no reason to wait until these calendared meetings.

Appointments to discuss concerns or feedback with Acorns staff should be scheduled during office hours (please refer to the website and/or signage at the main entrance for timings).

While Acorns staff should make themselves available for meetings, a person requesting a meeting should not expect staff to neglect their designated duties. Meetings should not interrupt lessons and designated duties.

Families should note that after-school staff have varied responsibilities. Club supervision, after-school care, collaborative planning, professional development, department meetings, etc., are all valid reasons staff may be unavailable for an impromptu meeting after school.

Meetings should take place on campus and during working hours.

To set a meeting with a staff member, send an email to their Acorns email or a message through Toddle Family messaging.

Coffee with Curriculum Coordinators(CCC) and Parent Information Meetings (PIM)

These calendared events are an interactive platform encouraging open dialogue between our parents and curriculum coordinators. These meetings strengthen home-school partnerships, promote curriculum transparency, and facilitate collaborative understanding of IB frameworks, ensuring alignment between academic goals and parental support in student learning.

Newsletters

Acorns produces newsletters at the beginning/end, and mid-term of each academic term. These newsletters highlight past events, student and staff achievements and important community information, such as programme updates, the need for parent involvement and schoolwide changes.

Full newsletters are posted in Toddle under the "School policies and resources" tab. Acorns families are encouraged to read each newsletter to stay up to date with our community.

A version of the newsletter is published on the school website, however, some information may be redacted from the website version.

Website

<https://acornsschools.com/> - Website for Acorns Group of Schools. Visit the Acorns Group of Schools website to learn more about company updates for all branches.

<https://acornskisaasi.com/> - Website for Acorns Kisaasi. Visit our Kisaasi branch website for more specific information on this campus. Our website not only contains information about our vision, mission and core values; it is also kept updated with our school calendar, policies, child protection and safeguarding information, and more.

Social Media Pages

Acorns actively uses Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Youtube to share updates, celebrate student achievements, and highlight daily life on campus. Our social media platforms offer a dynamic and engaging way for families to stay connected to what's happening at school.

While social media does not replace formal communication methods, it is a valuable supplementary tool for staying connected and engaged with the school community.

We encourage all families to follow our official school accounts to stay engaged and involved. Platform handles and links can be found on our school website.

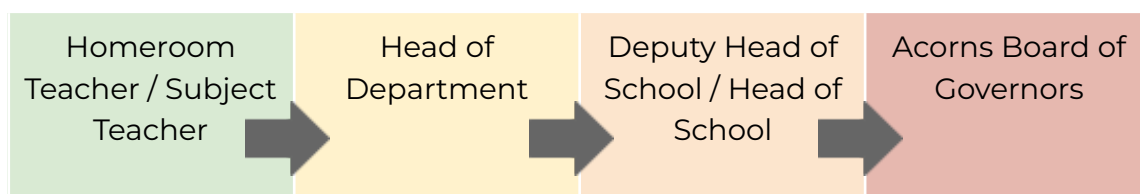
5 Family Complaint Procedure

While we hope that all the forms of communication between home and school are effective, we understand that from time to time, misunderstandings and complaints are going to arise.

It is always the goal to reach an understanding with one another quickly. However, if either party feels the problem is not resolved, they can escalate the matter. Below is the procedure for family members (students, parents, or legal guardians) and staff communicating complaints and the guidelines that should be followed at each step:

**Reporting of Staff Misconduct will follow the Acorns Code of Conduct and the Human Resource Policies Disciplinary Procedure.*

The procedure for staff complaints is found in the Acorns Human Resource Policy.



Step One: Homeroom Teacher or Subject Teacher

Family communication should always start at this level, and it is the intention that most matters are communicated and resolved between families and the homeroom teacher(s) or subject teacher.

Family members and teachers should both take advantage of opportunities for communication. Meaning, both parties should not wait until there is a problem to communicate with each other for the first time. As stated above, there are many ways to communicate about matters to resolve miscommunication on the part of both the teacher and the family member. However, it is possible that a complaint or a private matter needs to be discussed, and a formal meeting can be requested by either the family member or the teacher.

Guidelines:

- Teachers should respond to a family member's request for a meeting with suggested timings within three working days.
- Teachers should feel free to request a formal meeting with family members in order to discuss various matters.
- Family members should feel free to request a formal meeting with the homeroom teachers in order to discuss various matters.
- Change should not be expected immediately. It is also important to note that for both the teachers and family members, it is crucial to allow time for change after a matter is discussed. Change on behalf of either party or the student may not happen immediately.
- Family members and teachers should keep in contact regarding communicated matters so that additional feedback can drive further decisions.

Step Two: Communication with the Head of Department

If a family member or teacher feels that, after communicating as outlined in Step One and allowing time for progress, a matter is not resolved, they may approach the Head of Department (HoD).

Similarly, to teachers, HoDs are on school grounds during school hours and are able to meet spontaneously or for a scheduled meeting. HoDs have obligations that keep them from meeting spontaneously, so the same guidelines for setting a meeting outlined in Step One apply.

HoDs can be approached for a meeting in person, through email, or by calling the main office.

Guidelines:

- Family members and teachers must first communicate as outlined in Step One before involving a HoD.
- Family members can approach the HoD for a meeting.
- Teachers can approach the HoD to set a meeting with the family members.
- The HoD should give family members suggested timings for meetings within three school days.
- Upon hearing the reason for the complaint, the HoD should investigate the situation to reach a full understanding.
- These meetings should include all appropriate members. Therefore, HoDs may or may not invite other HoDs, class teachers, and/or may require both family members to be present.
- The goal of the meeting should be to reach an understanding and set a path forward. All members of the meeting should attend the meeting with this intention.

Step Three: Communication with Deputy Head of School/Head of School

After following through with both Step One and Step Two and allowing time for progress to be made, the family members or teacher may find it necessary to contact the Deputy Head of School(DHoS) and/or Head of School(HoS) to request a meeting.

This meeting is only available upon formal request. No spontaneous meetings will be granted to either family members or teachers.

Meetings will only be granted after the teacher or family member has written a formal request for a meeting in the form of a letter or email. Upon reviewing the complaint and speaking to involved parties, the DHoS/HoS holds the right to grant a formal meeting or ask that the respective HoD handle the complaint.

Guidelines:

- Whoever is requesting the meeting should write a letter/email request for a formal meeting. The DHoS/HoS will not be expected to take walk-in meetings of this nature.
- The letter/email requesting the meeting should include the details explaining the issue and how it has not been resolved after taking both Steps 1 and 2.
- The DHoS/HoS should review all complaints and provide feedback to the filer of the complaint within three school days. This may be granting a formal meeting or asking the respective HoD to handle the meeting.
- These meetings should include all appropriate members. Therefore, the DHoS/HoS may or may not invite HoDs, class teachers, and/or may require both family members to be present.
- The goal of the meeting should be to reach an understanding and set a path forward. All members of the meeting should attend the meeting with this intention.

At the end of this meeting, the DHoS/HoS will have to make a final decision to resolve the issue and move forward. If the family member or teacher feels the resolution made during this meeting is unfair, they can appeal to the Acorns Board of Governors.

Step Four: Acorns Board of Governors

If a complaint that has been raised by a teacher or family member has been attempted to be resolved through the teacher, HoDs, DHoS/HoS, and still is not resolved, it can be brought to the Acorns Board of Governors.

This meeting is only available upon formal request. No spontaneous meetings will be granted to either family members or teachers.

Meetings will only be granted after the teacher or family member has written a formal request for a meeting in the form of a letter or email. The letter must detail all relevant information about the complaint and previous steps taken to resolve the issue. After the letter/email is submitted to the Administration Office or emailed to the Board of Governors, it will be reviewed by the related party. Upon reviewing the complaint and speaking to involved parties, the Board holds the right to grant a formal meeting or ask that the Head of School again tries to resolve the complaint.

Guidelines:

- Whoever is requesting the meeting should write a letter/email request for a formal meeting.
- The letter/email requesting the meeting should include the details explaining the issue and how it has not been resolved after taking Steps 1, 2, and 3.
- The Board should review all complaints and provide feedback to the filer of the complaint within ten school days. This may be granting a formal meeting, asking the DHoS/HoS to hold another meeting with the filer, or responding via email.
- If a meeting is held, it should include all appropriate members. Therefore, the Board may or may not invite the DHoS/HoS, HoDs, class teachers, and/or may require both family members to be present.
- The goal of the meeting should be to reach an understanding and set a path forward. All members of the meeting should attend the meeting with this intention.

If, after this final step, the conflict is not resolved and the involved parties cannot come to an understanding over the issue, it may be best that there is an agreement to part ways.

6 Family Communication with Students While on Campus

To maintain a focused and secure learning environment, the school has established the following expectations regarding communication between students and family members during school hours.

While on campus, students are expected to be fully engaged in the academic and co-curricular life of the school. As such, family members should not expect to have direct contact with students during the school day. This includes phone calls, messaging, or in-person communication without prior arrangement through the school.

Should a family member need to reach a student during school hours, they can email the HoD or call the main office line in case of urgent matters. School staff will then relay the message or facilitate communication with the student as necessary.

If a student needs to get in touch with a family member during the school day, they may request permission from their Homeroom Teacher(s) or HoD to use the main office phone. Personal mobile phones or other communication devices should not be used for communication during school hours unless specifically authorised by school administration. **Note the Acorns Electronic Device Policy for further guidelines on student access and permissions in regards to electronic devices.*

In the event a student is unwell, our school nurses will assess the situation and communicate directly with the student's family as needed. Parents and guardians will be contacted promptly in line with our Health, Safety & Security Policy.

These guidelines are in place to protect the learning environment and ensure that all communication during the school day is handled in an orderly and respectful manner.

7 Authorised Contacts for Student Communication

Upon enrollment, families are required to complete an admissions form identifying the student's parents or legal guardians, as well as emergency contacts. Parents/legal guardians will be the only

ones the school communicates with regarding student matters. This includes participation in meetings, access to Toddler Apps, academic or health records, and involvement in school-related decisions.

Communication In Case of Emergency

Emergency contacts will only be contacted by the school in the event of an emergency where attempts to reach the parents or legal guardians have been unsuccessful. If none of the listed contacts can be reached during an emergency, the school will act in the best interest of the child and proceed with the most appropriate course of action.

Please note that any expenses incurred as a result of such decisions will be the responsibility of the parents/legal guardians, and bills will be sent to them directly.

Updating Your Student's Contact Information

It is critical that all student contact information stays up to date and relevant.

Should there be any changes to the individuals the school is authorised to communicate with, parents or legal guardians, or emergency contacts, they must send a formal request via email to admissions@acornskisaasi.com. The school will only update contact records upon receiving this written request.

In line with the Acorns Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, if both parents or legal guardians are leaving the country and the student(s) will be under the care of an adult who is not registered with the school, it is mandatory to inform the school in advance.

8 Relevant International Baccalaureate (IB) Standards and Practices

- Student support 3.4: The school promotes open communication based on understanding and respect. (0202-03-0400)
- Student support 5: The school builds relationships with the wider community that are a source of wisdom and expertise to strengthen the implementation of its IB programme(s). (0202-05)

9 Relevant Council of International Schools (CIS) Standards and Criteria

- H1. Effective communications foster a productive home-school partnership and a positive learning community.

10 Citation

- "IB learner profile" [Sso.ibo.org](https://www.sso.ibo.org/resources/ibo.org/data/g_0_iboxx_amo_1702_2_e.pdf), resources.ibo.org/data/g_0_iboxx_amo_1702_2_e.pdf.

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