



Rushmere Hall Primary School  
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### ParentMail – Coming Soon

Dear Parent,

Over the last few years we have been using Teachers2Parents software to communicate with Parents at this school. The software allows us to send email messages to all parents on our system, text messages and recently the company have introduced the additional feature of a smart phone app. The new additional feature has been particularly well received although a number of parents report flaws in the system.

This year the developers of Teachers2Parents have significantly increased the price of their service. In fact, the figure has literally doubled! We made contact with the company to discuss the rapid increase and they were far from flexible about making any concessions. In fact their response was quite arrogant and disappointing.

Therefore, we took the time to explore some of the competitors and have agreed to move over to a programme called ParentMail. ParentMail is utilised at a number of Secondary Schools in the locality. Three of my previous schools used this programme and at two of the schools where our business manager used to work also had this system.

ParentMail has an number of benefits over our current system. The platform itself is significantly **more robust** and the **smartphone apps are stronger** and work much **more efficiently** and are **more user friendly**. Some of the biggest benefits to ParentMail are its capability to:

#### TRIPS

- Allows parents to make payments online for school trips.
- Allows parents to complete consent forms online .

#### PARENTS EVENING

- Allows parents evening bookings to be made – quicker, faster and more user friendly than our current version.
- Allows appointments to be easily modified, cancelled or checked after they have been booked.

#### CLUBS

- Allows clubs to be booked online and will include a waiting list option when clubs are full.

#### MESSAGES

- School messages can be sent via the app.

There is one significant drawback and that is the ability to send text messages. Emails can still be sent as per normal but text messages cannot be done. All messages will be sent to the app and so can be set to appear as notifications in the same way a text message would appear on your phone. A small number icon will also appear in the corner of the app's icon as you would get if you had notifications on facebook etc.

Over the last few weeks, we have investigated what we use the text messaging for and on 90% of the occasions the messages were just reminders about things that already appear on the newsletter or the website.

Many schools locally that use ParentMail or similar have adopted for **a one line of communication approach**. E.g. they only use emailing to communicate directly to parents. Northgate, for example, are very clear about this being the approach they use and that any information that parents need to know will be in the emails sent. This reduces the issues of parents not knowing exactly where to find this information. If the school only communicate key events through one source, that would be the best place to look.

The school have been able to identify that any time a text message has been used; the same message could have been sent using email or in some cases by a phone call directly to the parent.

The school is proceeding with this new software and we will keep you fully informed throughout the whole process.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Fykin

**Head teacher**

**Recently you would have checked and updated your personal details with us. If these were correct, you do not need to take anymore action. If your email address has changed, please contact the school office so that we can update our records.**