


St Joseph's Catholic Primary School - Wesham

Communication Policy 2023-2024

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| Policy Author | Louise Freeman |
| Groups Involved In Discussion | Headteacher Governors All Staff |
| <h3>Mission Statement</h3>  <p>St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a welcoming Christ centred community where God's love is present in all that we think say and do.</p> <p>Our school is a safe, happy place where every child is cherished, respected and valued. We inspire and guide each other to be the best we can be.</p> <p>Through Christ's love, we embrace our sense of community, our faith, our children, our families and our opportunities to learn.</p> <p>"Aspire not to have more, but to be more"</p> <p>Saint Oscar Romero</p> | |

Revision History

| Document Revision | Reason For Change | Date | Date Of Next Review |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Version 1 | New Policy | 28.09.2023 | 01.10.2025 |

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“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” James 1:19

1. Introduction

The School Leadership Team recognises the importance of clear and effective communications with all stakeholders (pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors, the local and wider community outside agencies, etc.), and is committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school. The key stakeholders for a school are parents, carers and pupils and this Policy addresses the main ways in which the school will ensure there is effective two-way communication between home and school. Parents and carers have a key role to play in their child's education. The school will make every effort to encourage and make arrangements for parents and carers to contribute to creating a shared view of their child's needs.

2. Rationale

To support St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in its aim to become a thriving and successful school we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider school community (including other professionals). We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

3. Definition of Communication

Every member of staff has a responsibility to support effective communications and needs to recognise that the quality of their communications reflect on the school's reputation. Parents and carers, governors and pupils also have a part to play in reflecting the school's reputation. We strive to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and effective in their purpose.

Communication is as much about attitude and behaviour as it is about message. We should also remember the importance of listening.

4. Principles

- St Joseph's Primary School uses a number of different methods to maintain effective communication with parents and carers, other schools, the wider community and outside agencies. Depending on the nature of the communication, the school will use the most practicable means to contact the recipient.
- Communication on issues that affect the safety and wellbeing of a pupil will be treated as a priority. The school holds emergency contact details for all pupils and families are asked to alert the school immediately if contact information needs to be revised.
- Staff will always seek to establish positive relationships with parents and carers but they will ensure relationships are professional and parents will be addressed in a formal manner. Staff are to avoid developing close

relationships with parents and carers. The use of a parent, carer or staff member's first name is not appropriate, therefore all communications will be to and from Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr etc.

- Communication will be open, honest, ethical and professional. Staff will ensure where possible communication will be jargon free and easily understood by all.
- Communication originating from the school will take into account relevant school policies in particular Equal Opportunities and E-Safety and be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Mission Statement.
- Correspondence received into school will be acknowledged within five working school days (term time) between 8am and 5pm. Urgent communication e.g. child's absence, late pick-up, must be phoned through to the school office.

5. Communication between school and parents/ carers

- Staff will always reply to a letter/email from parents and carers as quickly as possible. A response to acknowledge receipt of a letter/email will be made by telephone, letter or email within 5 working days and responded to within 10 working days. Letters to parents/carers must be processed through the school administration team and approved by a member of the Senior Leadership Team before posting/emailing. Letters/emails being sent out to all parents/carers should be approved by a member of the senior leadership team. Copies of correspondence with parents and carers will be placed on pupil files (CPOM). Any letters of concern or complaint should be dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy (copy available on the school website).
- Whole school information is included in weekly newsletters, published on Friday's. An electronic copy of this is sent to all parents and carers via the schools email app as well as being published on the school website. Hard copies of the newsletter are available from the school upon request.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to provide the school with a current email address for prompt and effective communication. However, If we are unable to obtain a current email address for any parent or carer, communications will be delivered home in hard copy by their child or sent by post.
- The correct salutations must be used when writing to or emailing parents/carers/partnerships. The use of a parent, carer or staff member's first name is not appropriate, therefore all communications will be to and from Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr etc and sign off is always full name Ms/Mrs/Mr/Dr Teacher Surname. The Headteacher must be copied into letters or emails.

E-mail

- E-mail is a quick, effective way of communicating necessary information and is the school's preferred method of communication. Emails received

will be treated in the same way as letters: acknowledged within 5 working days and responded to within 10 working days. Emails should be short and clear and the same care and consideration should be given as when sending a letter

- Parents and carers may wish to contact the school via email for a general enquiry as an alternative to telephone or letter. The school email address is: bursar@st-josephs-kirkham.lancs.sch.uk
- Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils or parents and carers using their own personal email address.

Telephone Calls

- Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers may be teaching full-time and running clubs or working with pupils at lunchtime or after school. Parents and carers may be frustrated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been no available opportunity for the member of staff to reach a telephone to return a call. In a non-emergency a return call will be made within 2 working days, with any follow up action from the request /query/problem being dealt with within 10 working days. Staff will make a record of a telephone conversation with a parent/carer on CPOMS
- Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils or parents and carers using their own mobile phones.

Texts

- The school uses text messaging sparingly, but will use it to inform parents of emergency closures, if their child has been nominated for the Headteachers Award and reminders of key events.

Social Networking Sites/Blogs etc

- Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as their "friends". The exception to this rule would be Class Dojo's, and the official school X account (formerly Twitter).

Written Reports.

- Three times a year the school provides written reports to each child's parents on their progress (December, March and July). This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development.

Absence

- If a child is absent, parents and carers are asked to contact the school as soon as possible on the morning of the absence by either calling the school office (01772 683009) or emailing the school at bursar@st-josephs-kirkham.lancs.sch.uk .

Meeting with Parents and carers

- Parents and carers wishing to meet a member of staff must contact the school to make an appointment. This request should be responded to within 2 working days.
- Parents are offered two formal meetings a year with their child's class teacher to discuss progress, strengths and areas for development.
- Parents and carers should report to the school reception. A member of staff may ask a senior colleague to accompany them.
- Staff should call a meeting to a close in the event of the parents or carers becoming angry or abusive. This should be reported immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

6. Internal Communications between staff

Email

- consider whether an email is appropriate when face to face communication may be conducive
- avoid exclusive email correspondence without requesting or organising a face to face meeting
- avoid send or reply to all unless necessary
- Ensure line managers are copied in
- keep emails concise, use Standard English and bullet points if necessary
- Staff to check emails daily
- Use group emails as appropriate
- Emails that may be sent at weekends or out of office hours are sent at times that suit that member of staff and will be read at a time that suits the recipient. There is no expectation on staff that they will respond to emails outside of 8am to 5pm on working school days.

Meetings

- These are formal and may be between a group of staff or individuals (see Appraisal Policy).
- There is a weekly Staff Meeting after school which focuses on School Development areas, staff CPD, monitoring or other school priorities. These start at 3:30pm and will last 1 hour 30 minutes.
- Twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday there is a staff briefing at 8:30am lasting no more than 5 minutes. The purpose is to exchange any quick messages to aid smooth running of the school.

Noticeboard

- This has key events for the week for all staff.
- Any key messages or reminders are displayed.

Bulletin/Dates

- The Headteacher will email all staff a Bulletin with key reminders, information and news along with a brief overview of the week. This is sent by Sunday 6pm and staff are expected to read it by Monday 12pm.
- The staff use Teamup app to share dates of CPD and events including groups of children.

Whatsapp

- The school recognises the relationships between colleagues and there is a staff Whatsapp group.
- This is an informal method of communication and may include staff celebrations, e.g. birthdays.
- Staff may also share useful links, websites etc.
- Staff are not expected to monitor this.
- No information will be shared about pupils, parents or other colleagues through this method.

7. Communication to the wider community, external stakeholders and other professionals

Governors

- There are three full Governing Body meetings a year with the Headteacher. These are preceded by a Resources and Environment Committee meeting and a Standards, Education and Curriculum Committee meeting. In total 9 formal meetings a year.
- Governors also make visits to school in order to quality assure aspects of the school for which they have specific responsibility for in terms of monitoring the strategic impact e.g. spending of the PE & Sports Premium in action.
- To communicate using school email addresses or through Governor hub any school specific /sensitive information. Personal emails may be used whilst moving to these new systems.
- Governors may make informal visits to check on staff welfare and discuss issues with senior leadership team.

School Visits (annual)

- The Reception staff may arrange visits in the Summer Term to collate information on pupils entering St Joseph's Reception Class.
- Staff from High School may come to meet with the Year 6 teacher to discuss individual pupils in order to aide smooth transition.

DFE/Local Authority/ Diocese

- The school receives daily updates through the portal of any key information or County Policies.
- Individual staff may receive emails or post from the local authority dependent on their role in school.
- Confidential communication between school and official external agencies is through encrypted emails, cloud apps or other secure systems e.g. SIMS.

- Lancaster Diocesan Education Service emails or phones the Headteacher directly.

Professionals working with Individual Pupils

- These may be face to face, video calls and written reports. These are formal and confidential.

PTFA

- This is a group of parents, friends and teachers (staff) who organise social events for the pupils and families of the school.
- Communication is through meetings and emails between the Headteacher, Chair of the PTFA and Secretary of the PTFA.
- Events are communicated through a variety of media and the PTFA also have a Facebook page.

School Website

- The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.