



HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

ST THOMAS' CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Approved by:

[M Boyle]

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1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs
- The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:
 - Explaining how school communicates with parents/carers
 - Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
 - Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate

Monitoring the implementation of this policy

Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy

Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30 – 3.30), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and may choose to respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times

Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance

Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner

Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our [parent code of conduct](#).

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30 – 3.30) or during school holidays.

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up to date with their child's education and what is happening in school. Parents should monitor all the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

3.1 Home-school communications app (Parentmail)

We use Parentmail to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

3.2 Phone calls

We will call parents about:

- Emergency situations, when a child is unwell or has had an accident
- To check when a child is absent and we have not informed. Absence reporting must be completed daily, even for ongoing illness, unless agreed otherwise with school staff.
- To request a meeting with you, when there are concerns about a pupil's wellbeing; their learning, achievement & progress; or their behaviour.
- If a parent requests a conversation with a member of staff and is not available to meet in person

3.3 Reports

- Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:
 - An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
 - Termly progress reports
 - A report of statutory tests – including Phonics check, Multiplication Times table Check & KS2 SATs

3.4 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening in the Autumn & Spring terms. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern. These meetings may be in person, via telephone or video call.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

3.5 School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

School times and term dates

Curriculum information

Important policies and procedures

Important contact information

Information about before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.6 Email

We will respond to any communication we receive from parents via email, unless a meeting or phone conversation is requested.

3.7 Class Dojo

Class teachers will often share information with parents relating to any changes to the timetable, information about school trips or visitors and often provide parents with updates on the children's learning in school. This platform is an informal way of keeping parents up to date with class or year group specific information.

Please note that whilst comments and interactions are appreciated on posts; Class Dojo is not monitored throughout the school day. It must not be used for messages about attendance, medical needs, urgent issues, or concerns about learning or wellbeing.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

We process personal information in line with the UK GDPR and our Data Protection Policy.

Communication should not include sensitive personal information unless requested by school staff or necessary for safeguarding or welfare purposes.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within a working day during term time, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within three working days. During school holidays, emails will not be monitored. Messages sent during holidays will be responded to when school reopens.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office, and the relevant member of staff will contact them within three working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within a day of your request, whenever possible.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

Family emergencies

Safeguarding or welfare issues

If a parent has a safeguarding concern about a child, they should ask to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Our DSL is Mrs Royal, and Deputy DSLs are Mrs Cavill, Mrs Toher and Mr Boyle.

Safeguarding concerns must not be sent via Class Dojo or email.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1) or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within three working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

Any concerns they have about their child's learning

Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

4.4 Speaking to a member of staff at the school office

The school office can be extremely busy at peak times when pupils are dropped off and collected. Whilst many questions can be answered swiftly by a member of our team, sometimes the volume of traffic can mean parents have a long wait. We would suggest that in these situations where a matter is not important you call or email the office. If you do require a conversation with a member of the office staff, we suggest coming into school before the start or end of the school day.

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) in English. This can be adapted on request to a different language for families whose first language is not English. Parents who require alternative formats (such as large print, verbal explanations, or support due to SEND or literacy needs) can request support through the school office.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

School announcements and communications translated into additional languages

Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We will attempt to make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every year. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

This policy works alongside the school's safeguarding, attendance, data protection, staff code of conduct, parent code of conduct and complaints policies. In the event of any conflict, statutory safeguarding duties take precedence.

7. Complaints

Concerns should normally be raised informally with the appropriate member of staff in the first instance before initiating the formal complaints process.

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

[St Thomas' CE Primary School - Compliments & Complaints Policy](#)

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

In the first instance, any queries or concerns relating to your child's learning or wellbeing should be directed to their class teacher. Being the member of staff who works most closely with your child, they are best placed to support you. You can speak to them at the start or end of the school day and arrange a suitable time to discuss your query or concern. You can also contact the school office to arrange a phone call or conversation at a mutually convenient time.

If after speaking with the class teacher, you feel you would like to discuss the matter further we would ask that you contact the school office by phone 01942672730 or email enquiries@admin.leighsaintthomas.wigan.sch.uk

For emails, please put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line. We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff.

Please note, we aim to respond to all emails within three working days during term time.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/lessons/homework	Class Teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Mrs L Cavill
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform/lost and found	School office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01942672730 [followed by option 1]
Safeguarding concern	Mrs C Royal
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Mrs E Delvard
Before and after-school clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	School Business Manager
PTA	School office
Governing board	Mrs A Davies
Catering/meals	School office