School Communication Policy

Contents

Ambition, learning, and enrichment for all

1. Introduction

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 the 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 (08.45am – 3.15pm), 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 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 addressed promptly in accordance with the procedures outlined in Appendix Two.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (08.45am – 3.15pm)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 of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

3.1. Email

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

- Weekly Newsletter
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

3.2. Text message

We will text parents about:

In-App text messages will be sent to parents:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3. School calendar

Our [school website and weekly newsletter] includes a full school calendar for the current term. We also use the calendar function on Arbor to share key events with parents.

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).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4. Phone calls

We may phone parents about:

• Incidents and accidents
• Illness in school
• Concerns for a child

3.5. Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- We avoid paper communication where possible.

3.6. Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

• Termly progress reports via Arbor (autumn and spring)
• An end-of-year report (summer) covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance, as well as outcomes of internal and any external national statutory assessment We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.7. Meetings

We hold two parents' evening(s) per year. 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.

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.

3.8. School website

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

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- 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.

4. HOW PARENTS AND CARERS 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.

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 [two] working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within [three] working days.

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 [two] 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 [three] days of your request.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Accidents or illness

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 [10] 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

5. Inclusion

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

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 can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

6. Unacceptable behaviour

The school is committed to ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all staff, students, and parents/carers. Unacceptable behaviour, including verbal abuse, physical threats, harassment, or any form of disrespectful communication towards staff, will not be tolerated. Any incidents of such behaviour will be taken seriously and addressed promptly in accordance with the procedures outlined in Appendix Two. The school reserves the right to take appropriate action, including restricting communication or banning individuals from school premises, to maintain a positive and safe environment for everyone.

Associated policies

- ICT and Acceptable use
- Code of conduct
- Parent and Visitor Conduct Policy
- Complaints

APPENDIX ONE – Who to Contact

<mark>Amend as appropriate, include who to contact and by what means</mark>

I have a question about	Who you need to talk to
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Class teacher in the first instance via the school office email – admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Class teacher in the first instance via the school office email – admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Payments	School Office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
School trips	School Office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Uniform/ lost and found	School Office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Attendance and absence requests	School Office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher in the first instance via the school office email – admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk Unresolved issues should be referred to the headteacher via the school office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
School events	School office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Special educational needs	SENCO – via the school office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Before and after school clubs	Funclub@stpeters.co.uk
Safeguarding concerns	Headteacher via the school office admin@stpeters,ycst.co.uk
The PTA	fosp2015@yahoo.co.uk
The governing board	Chair of Governors via the school office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk
Catering/meals	School kitchen via the school office admin@stpeters.ycst.co.uk

APPENDIX TWO: Managing challenging behaviour from parents/carers

This section outlines the procedures for managing and addressing challenging behaviour from parents/carers towards school staff, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all.

Definition of challenging behaviour

Challenging behaviour includes, but is not limited to:
- Verbal abuse, including shouting, swearing, or making threats.
- Physical abuse or threats of physical harm.
- Written abuse, including abusive emails, letters, or social media posts.
- Harassment, including repeated unwanted contact or communication.

Reporting challenging behaviour

- **Immediate reporting**: Staff should report any incidents of challenging or abusive behaviour to the headteacher or a designated senior leader immediately.

- **Documentation**: The incident should be documented in detail, including the date, time, location, individuals involved, and a description of the behaviour.

Response to challenging behaviour

- **Initial response**: The headteacher or designated senior leader will assess the situation and take immediate action to ensure the safety of staff and students. This may include asking the parent/carer to leave the premises or ending the communication.

- **Follow-up**: The headteacher or designated senior leader will follow up with the parent/carer to address the behaviour and outline the school's expectations for respectful communication.

Consequences of challenging behaviour

- **Warning**: The parent/carer will receive a formal warning outlining the unacceptable behaviour and the consequences of continued abuse.

- **Restricted communication**: The school may restrict the parent/carer's communication with staff, such as limiting communication to written forms only or requiring all communication to go through a designated senior leader.

- **Banning from premises**: In severe cases, the school may ban the parent/carer from entering school premises. This decision will be communicated in writing and reviewed regularly.

- **Involvement of authorities**: If the abusive behaviour constitutes a criminal offense, the school will involve the appropriate authorities, such as the police.

Support for staff

- **Counselling and support**: Staff affected by challenging or abusive behaviour will have access to counselling and support services.

- **Training**: The school will provide training for staff on managing and de-escalating challenging situations.