



# Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## School Communication Policy



**Executive Headteacher:** Mr David Miller

**Headteacher:** Mr Sam Keys

**Chair of Governors:** Mr David Low

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**Date for Review:** November 2026

*Living, loving and learning together with our eyes focused on Jesus*

## School Communication Policy

### 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 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.*

### Roles and responsibilities

#### **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.

#### **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 8.30am – 4.30pm, 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**.

#### **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, or during school holidays.

### **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.

### **School newsletter**

Parents are kept informed about the following things via the regular newsletter which is published on the website:

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

### **School calendar**

Our school newsletter includes a diary dates section for the term.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including nonuniform 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.

The school calendar is also available digitally via the school website.

### **Phone calls**

Parents will be contacted by phone for the following reasons:

- In the case of pupil illness while in school.
- To clarify collection arrangements.
- To discuss behaviour incidents (Yellow or Red cards).
- To discuss concerns.
- To provide updates where previously agreed as part of a SEND Support Plan.

### **Letters**

The following letters are either sent home or published on the school website regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter

### **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.

- Interim Pupil progress reports (Autumn and Spring).
- A report on Key Stage KS2 SATs tests (Year 6).
- Phonics Screening Check (Year 1).
- Multiplication Tables Check (Year 4).

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

### **Meetings**

Parents are invited into school during the autumn term for an open evening where they have the opportunity to discuss how well their child has settled into the new year group. In the spring term, parents are invited to make an appointment to speak to their child's teacher about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern. Parents may also request a meeting in the summer term to discuss the end of year report with the class teacher.

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.

### **School website**

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

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Curriculum information and information about before and after-school provision

**Parents should check the website before contacting the school.**

### **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.

### **Non-urgent issues (email or phone call)**

Parents should always email the school admin. address or the main office in the first instance.

- Emails or phone calls will be acknowledged within **2 working days**.
- A full response will be received within **5 working days**.
- Where a meeting needs to be arranged, this will take place within **10 working days**.

**However, if the school receives a high volume of communication threads from one parent and/or family, it may be reasonable and proportionate for the stated timescales to be extended.**

### **Urgent issues (family emergencies, safeguarding or welfare issues)**

Parents should phone the school number: 0191 373 0355

In order to determine whether the issue requires an immediate response, you will be asked for details so that the concern can be directed to the right member of staff. **Anything discussed will be kept strictly confidential.**

- We will respond within **1 working day**.
- Serious concerns will be passed on to a senior member of staff **immediately**.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

For clarity, welfare issues here relate to external professional involvement (police, social work, medical etc.). For example, if the welfare enquiry relates to a water bottle, this will be deemed a non-emergency, and the appropriate communication timeline will be followed.

### **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 sometimes available at the start or end of the school day for urgent matters, their priority at the start of the day is to settle the class and begin teaching, so this is not always possible. We recommend that parents contact the school office to book an appointment to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning.
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

### **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.
- Documentation enlarged so that the print is easier to read.

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

### **Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Acceptable use of IT systems policy
- Parent code of conduct
- Employee code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing

### **Monitoring and review**

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years. The policy will be reviewed by the LGC in November 2026.

## Appendix 1: School contact list

### Who should I contact?

**Remember:** check our website first, much of the information you may need is posted there.

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Contact the school using the official email address – class teacher email addresses will **NOT** be shared.
- Include your child's full name in the subject line.

I have a question about	Who you need to talk to
My child's learning / class activities / lessons / homework	Class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Class teacher
Any SEND related query	SENDCO via the dedicated SEND email address <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:send@olqmstj.bwcet.com">send@olqmstj.bwcet.com</a>
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher
Attendance and absence requests	Contact the school office if you need to report your child's absence or would like to request approval for term-time absence: <b>Telephone:</b> 01207 503982 <b>email:</b> <a href="mailto:olqmstj@olqmstj.bwcet.com">olqmstj@olqmstj.bwcet.com</a> <b>email:</b> <a href="mailto:stju@olqmstj.bwcet.com">stju@olqmstj.bwcet.com</a>
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform / lost and found	School office
Before and after school clubs	School office
School events / the school calendar	School office
School meals / catering queries	School office
Local Governing Committee	School office
Special Educational Needs (SEND)	School office
PTA	School office

### **Complaints**

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in the BWCET Complaints Policy. A copy of this can be found on the school website.