

"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. WHOEVER FOLLOWS ME WILL NEVER WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT WILL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE." JOHN 8:12



# ST. PETER'S CE PRIMARY



Pride



Effort



Teamwork



Empathy



Respect



Spirituality

LIKE ST. PETER, WE BUILD UPON THE ROCK OF JESUS TO ENABLE US TO SHINE: ACHIEVING OUR GOD GIVEN POTENTIAL AND LOVING OURSELVES, OTHERS, THE WORLD AND GOD.

*firm foundations, shining bright*

# ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, HESWALL

## Communications Policy

Date Adopted: 26.09.23

Date of Review: Autumn 2024

Committee: FGB

## **Key Objectives:**

All communications at St Peter's CE Primary School should:

- ✓ Keep staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders well informed
- ✓ Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- ✓ Use jargon-free English and be easily understood by all
- ✓ Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context and audience
- ✓ Either be neutral or offer a balanced presentation of political views

## **Communication with parents and other important stakeholders**

Effective communications enable us to share our school aims and values as well as keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the vital role that parents play in supporting the school and their child/ren.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, it is essential that relationships are professional and parents are addressed in a formal manner in all written communication, whatever the form.

St Peter's CE Primary School aims to make our written communication as accessible and inclusive as possible, we will ensure that all of our parents can access a form of communication, making alternative arrangements where necessary (e.g. EAL, SEN, IT access or literacy issues). We will seek parental feedback on the school communication via our annual parent survey.

## **Communication Procedures**

The school office can be contacted between 8.30am and 3.45pm on school weekdays.

Postal Address	Telephone	Email
Thurstaston Road, Heswall, Wirral, Merseyside, CH60 4SA	0151 342 2556	schooloffice@stpeters-heswall.wirral.sch.uk

Message, Queries, Concerns	Person to Contact
If your child is absent from school...	Please notify the school office each day of absence by 09.30 am either by telephone on 0151 342 2556 (where you can leave a message) or in person. Please note that this notification does not guarantee that absences will be authorised.
If you have a quick message for your child's teacher...	Seesaw should be used to communicate with your child's class teacher. Messages can be passed on at the end of the day to the adult in charge of the class, or in the morning via one of the adults on gate duty.
If you would like to talk about your child's learning progress...	Seesaw should be used to request a meeting with the class teacher. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant Phase Lead teacher.
If you are concerned about social behaviours or bullying...	Seesaw should be used to request a meeting with the class teacher. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant member of the school's Senior Leadership Team.
If you would like to discuss something related to your child's teacher...	Make an appointment to meet with the Deputy Headteacher via the school office.

If you would like to discuss your child's special educational needs...	Make an appointment to meet with the SENCO via the school office. Our school SENCO is Mrs Buckle.
If you would like to find out about after school clubs or have a query...	Check the school website, email the office on schooloffice@stpeters-heswall.wirral.sch.uk or ask at the school office.
If you have a query about Wraparound care...	Please contact S4YC directly on 07951 289437 or email stpeters@s4yc.co.uk
If you have a pay query ...	Please contact please contact the school office or access information via the parentmail booking system
If you have a school dinner enquiry...	Please contact the school office directly.
If you wanted to check if the school is open...	Please check the school website, your parentmail or Wirral school closures online.

If having followed the above the steps above, your question or concern is not resolved, please make an appointment with the school office to meet with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

If you would like to contact the Governing Body, they may be contacted directly, in writing, via the school office. All correspondence must be sealed and addressed to the Chair of the Governing Body, John Dowler.

### **Communication may be via the following forms:**

#### **Formal letters (sent via the school office)**

Staff will endeavour to reply to parents' letters as quickly as possible. Letters will be acknowledged in 3 working days from receipt and a reply sent within 10 working days. Letters must be approved by the Headteacher or a Deputy Headteacher before posting. Copies of correspondence with parents will be logged.

#### **E-Mail**

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information. However it does not replace face-to face meetings where some discussion is required. All e-mail should be treated as letters and should be checked carefully for technical errors and tone. Staff should acknowledge e-mail within 3 working days and send a full reply within 10 working days, unless the sender has been given a legitimate reason for the delay, such as consultation or investigation. **Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses or social media communications.**

#### **Telephone calls**

Staff should take notes about the content of telephone calls, as they would with meetings with parents. Notes from telephone calls, including main points of discussion and action required/taken should be logged.

If a child is absent from school and we have no indication of the reason, administrative staff will contact a parent on the same day, to find out the reason for the absence.

#### **Parentmail and/or daily email**

We encourage all parents to inform the school of their current e-mail address, to allow them access to Parentmail through our MIS, which is a quick, economic and efficient method for the school to communicate with parents. A

record of those who do not have access to Parentmail is maintained and they will receive a paper copy of any correspondence. Parentmail is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted group, or to all parents on Parentmail. The newsletter, information about whole school events and all letters relevant to the whole school are sent out to all parents on parent mail and in addition, some specific communications regarding trips and events are sent out to the relevant groups of parents. It is our aim to have 100% of parents signed up to Parentmail to facilitate paperless communication.

### **Meeting with parents**

We encourage parents to contact the school if issues arise regarding their child's progress or wellbeing. For everyday issues parents should contact their child's class teacher. For persistent or serious issues, parents should contact the class teacher in the first instance, and the school may then involve a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The subject requested in-person meeting that meeting should be shared in advance to help staff to be fully prepared to ensure the meeting is productive. Parents should not come to the school to talk to a member of staff without an appointment - staff members may be unavailable to meet should this happen. Parents (like all visitors) should report to reception prior to meeting with a member of staff. If the meeting is due to take place outside office hours, separate arrangements can be made. If a meeting with a parent is taking place outside normal school hours, the member of staff should try, where possible, to ensure that another colleague is nearby. It is perfectly acceptable to call a meeting to a close in order to allow time for further investigation. When a pupil is accompanying a parent for a meeting, it is acceptable to ask a pupil to remain out of the meeting for part of it, if deemed necessary by a member of staff. The teacher should not feel threatened at any time and is encouraged to stop a meeting should this be the case.

### **Planned meetings**

At the beginning of the school year class meetings are arranged to share the new class charters, curriculum, routines and additional information. Should a class teacher change during the year these meetings will be revisited where possible. Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents of planning, content and arrangements. A meeting for new F2 parents is held each year. Face-to-face Parents Evenings will be held in the Autumn term, and again during the Spring term.

### **Social Networking Sites/Blogs etc (See also E-Safety Policy)**

Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites nor accept them as their "friends".

### **Written reports**

Once a year, a full written report is sent to parents on their child's progress in each subject. The report identifies areas of strength and areas for further development. Pupils are also given the opportunity to comment on their own progress and parents are invited to make a comment. In addition, parents meet their child's teacher twice a year, at parents' evening. When pupils have special educational needs, or if they are making less than expected progress or experiencing behavioural or disciplinary difficulties, we may arrange to meet with parents more regularly.

### **School Website**

The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience and provide guidance on admissions for prospective parents and pupils. It also has a regularly updated information for current parents. In addition, it has up-to-date policies available for parents to view. Copies of all newsletters to parents and information guides are also accessible through the website.

## **Public Access Documents**

Curriculum information, policies and copies of recent letters will be available on the school website. Key dates for the year (where possible) are sent out in September and at the beginning of the subsequent terms. Additional information regarding dates will be shared as necessary. The school's Headteacher newsletter is published fortnightly and is sent to all parents, it is also available on the school website.

## **Home-school Communication**

All children are issued with a Reading Diary. This enables parents to record when a child has read at home. Seesaw is an easy and effective form of communication between home and school, and may be used by teachers to celebrate work with the children, or to pass on messages affecting the particular class. (For example, trip reminders, changes to PE day and other class-focussed announcements.) Google Classrooms is often used for homework, particularly in Key Stage 2.

## **Reasonable communication times (families)**

Unless an urgent matter, staff should not be contacted via email or seesaw before 07.30 or after 17.30, Monday to Friday. If communication is received outside of these times, teachers and school staff will not respond until the following working day.

## **Communication with other schools and outside agencies**

Before joining new pupils are encouraged to visit in the school prior to starting. We offer taster days/sessions. Following parental permission we will contact the previous school to help gather key information to aid this process. We will receive the individual pupil file from the previous school once that child is on roll.

## **Visits from External Agencies (See also Equality Information and Objectives Policy)**

As part of our curriculum and extra-curricular provision, we will regularly invite guests, experts and representatives from a range of organisations and institutions to the school to speak to and engage with our pupils. Prior to these visits, we will agree the terms and content of their input into the provision and ensure that it is in accordance with our policies. No group or individual will be allowed to present views which are contrary to our Equality Information and Objectives Policy.

## **Equality Information and Objectives Policy Safeguarding including child protection (See also Safeguarding Policy)**

We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment. If any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Leader, who may share this information with the Social Services. We are supported by and regularly communicate with various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on ways to meet pupils' needs, to ensure that all pupils can participate fully in school life. Support comes from such services as Educational Welfare, Educational Psychologists, Social Care etc.

## **Confidentiality**

We hold information on pupils in our school and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details will be sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. (Please see our data protection policy)

### **E-mail (See also E-Safety Policy and Agreement)**

The school gives all staff their own email account to use for all school business. Email can be an efficient way of communicating with colleagues and passing on information. However, it should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face contact and staff must consider whether it is the best way to communicate in each situation and understand that there is permanent record of any communication.

Teachers should ensure that they:

- ✓ Do not engage in private /personal correspondence with a pupil. This includes texting and social networking.
- ✓ Under no circumstances should they contact pupils or parents, or conduct any school business, using personal email accounts or text messaging.
- ✓ No chain letters are sent and no advertisements are embedded in any communication.
- ✓ Any political views are neutral or balanced.

### **Staff Briefings and Meetings**

Staff Briefings take place once a week. This is an opportunity to share any relevant information, for staff to get together and look at the school calendar for the next week. There is also a weekly leadership meeting and a weekly teaching staff meeting. It is important that staff have this opportunity for team working and to contribute to the school's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans. All meetings will be reviewed to ensure that they have had the desired impact.

### **Reasonable communication times (staff)**

Unless an urgent matter, staff should not send emails before 08:00 or after 17:30, Monday to Friday. Emails after 17:30 should be scheduled for the following day. Staff naturally have different working hours or preferences from one another, however scheduling emails around a common work pattern is one strategy to support staff wellbeing.

### **Staff Handbook**

A copy of the Staff Handbook is shared with all staff at the beginning of the academic year. A hard copy is available in the staffroom and updated annually. An electronic version is given to all staff and it contains essential information and should be read by all staff. This is annually shared in September.

### **Notice Boards**

Staff notice boards are located in the staff room. Care should be taken that any display which has as its focus a political issue, presents a balanced view or an overview that communicates about the diversity of opinion on this matter or indicates where alternative perspectives may be found.

## **Links with Other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- ✓ Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- ✓ E-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement for staff and pupils
- ✓ Safeguarding and Safe Recruitment Policy