



St James's Cof E Primary School

Faith Friendship Fulfilment

Home School Communication

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Ratified by: Matt Loftus

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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 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)
- Ensuring that all communications are treated as confidential within the school context.
- Ensuring that all communications are dealt with respectfully and with courtesy.

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication within 72 hours of receiving communications during core school hours, 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
- Refer to the communication flowchart included in this policy to ensure communications are sent to the right person/people.
- Read the key communication issued by the school through school spider app, including year group messages, the half termly newsletter, messages sent and letters. All communications for St James's School are sent through the school spider app. This is managed by the school admin team.
- 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 allow up to 72 hours for staff members to respond. They should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours, or their working hours if they are part time, 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 School Spider app

We use school spider 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
- Consent forms/permissions

- Accidents or incidents that result in first aid treatment

If parents are unable to connect to school spider app, email can be used as the next form of communication.

3.2 Text messages

School Spider is the main form of communication at St James's, however if this system is not working we will also use text messages to contact parents.

We will text parents about:

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

3.4 School calendar

Our half termly newsletter includes a full school calendar for the half-term/term. This is also loaded onto the school website.

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.

3.5 Phone calls

Telephone calls are one appropriate way to notify us that your child will be absent from school but our preference is that this is done through school spider.

Please telephone us to communicate brief information about your child that the school needs to know in an emergency, e.g. to let us know that you will be late collecting your child. We ask parents to telephone the school on **01384 818810**. The school office is open between 8.30am and 4.30pm, Monday - Friday during term-time. At all other times there is an answering service available to take your message.

3.7 Reports

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

- A mid- year report which contains a brief overview of effort and attitude across the curriculum and additional targets which will support the child further.
- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- A report on phonics, year 4 times tables and KS2 SATs tests

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

3.8 Meetings

We hold three parents' evening(s) per year:

Autumn term- formal face to face meetings where families have bookable appointments. During this meeting, 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.

Spring term- Optional meeting where parents can book if they have concerns from the mid-year report

Summer term- Optional informal meeting, families are invited to look at their child's workbooks.

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.

3.9 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 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.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Please see communication flowchart (appendix 1) included in this policy to know which email address to use.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within three 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 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 five 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

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 five 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 Home-school communications app

We encourage all parents to engage with the use of school spider app as this is the main form of communication provided by the school.

School spider is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted class or group, e.g. specific communications regarding class trips and special events, or to all parents, e.g. urgent messages such as an unplanned school closure.

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) available in the following languages:

- English

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. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every three years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints

- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

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

- Consult the communication flow chart
- Email the most appropriate address from the list below
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 72 working hours.

Parent Communication Flow Chart

- We know that when parents have a concern that relates to their child at school, whether it's pastoral, curriculum or staffing in nature, they often feel the best way forward is to ask to see the head or deputy head. In our experience many of these concerns can often be most quickly resolved by talking first to the most appropriate person. The flow chart below outlines who this will be.
- Our Chair of Governors, Mr Lee Salton-Mclaughlin is also here to support when a parent has a concern or complaint. He can be contacted through the school office.
- Our full school complaints policy can be found on our website or a hard copy can be obtained from the school office.

Commented [GU1]: Arrows have moved and can't move them.

Do we want to keep dyslexia in as an example even though Essex does not recognise this specific diagnosis?

Learning Concerns	Pastoral Concerns	Additional needs concerns	Issues relating to staff	Concerns relating to school administration
Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher in the first instance	Pastoral covers our support of your child's individual needs, their emotional well-being and any personal problems that they may be experiencing at school.	Where a concern is related to a special need and you feel an adjustment may be required to support successful learning e.g. issues related to ASD (autistic spectrum)	Please contact the office who will forward your concern to the phase leader or the most appropriate person.	Please speak to Mrs Page who is the school business manager

	Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher.	disorders), dyslexia or dyspraxia or physical disabilities		
		Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher.	↓	↓
If you feel that the class teacher is unable to please contact your child's phase leader	If you feel that the class teacher is unable to help for pastoral concerns please contact our Pupil and Family Support Worker Mrs Jones	Please arrange an appointment with our SENCO Miss Scott	↓	
Please make an appointment to see our Assistant Headteacher Mrs Plant or our Deputy Headteacher Miss Mason if you remain concerned following the steps above.				↓
Please make an appointment to see our Headteacher: Mrs Sefton if you remain concerned after following the steps above.				↓

Teachers are available after school for informal conversations and appointments can be made with all of the above by contacting the school office on 01384 818810 or emailing: info@st-james.dudley.sch.uk

If you are writing to the school it is really helpful if you give us as much information about the background of your concern or complaint as possible, including who it involves, and what you would like the outcome to be.

Useful email addresses

Parents should consult this list to use the correct email address for staff members. If a particular member of staff does not have an email address is not listed please use main school office email and include staff members name in the email subject. This will then be forwarded to the right person.

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
School Office	info@st-james.dudley.sch.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs Jones (Pastoral lead) Mrs Plant (Assistant Head/ Behaviour Lead) 	family@st-james.dudley.sch.uk

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miss Scott (SENCO) 	senco@st-james.dudley.sch.uk
Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants	
Reception Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6	reception@st-james.dudley.sch.uk year1@st-james.dudley.sch.uk year2@st-james.dudley.sch.uk year3@st-james.dudley.sch.uk year4@st-james.dudley.sch.uk year5@st-james.dudley.sch.uk year6@st-james.dudley.sch.uk
PTFA (Parent, Teacher and Friends Association)	ptfa@st-james.dudley.sch.uk

Complaints

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

The school complaints policy can be found on our website