



# **Communication Policy**

Date reviewed: Summer 2023

Date for next review: Summer 2025

## Introduction and aims

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

- › Gives families the information they need to support their child's education.
- › Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with families.
- › Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school to 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 families.
- › Setting clear standards for responding to communication from families.
- › Helping families 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 'families' to refer to both parents and carers.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Ensuring that communications with families are effective, timely and appropriate
- › Regularly reviewing this policy

### Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from families in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure families get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff **will not** respond to communications outside of school hours (8.30am – 4.30pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

### Families

Families 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, including information in the weekly news.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct, which can be seen on our website.

### How we communicate with families

The sections below explain how we keep families up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Families should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

## **ParentMail/Email**

We use ParentMail/email to keep families informed about the following things:

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

## ***Text messages***

We will text families about:

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

## ***School calendar***

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the year and highlights upcoming events.

Where possible, we try to give families 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).

## ***Zoom/Phone calls***

- Some family consultations will be conducted by zoom/telephone.
- Teachers will call families back at a convenient time on request.
- Teachers may call families after or before school to discuss a concern or query.

## **Reports**

Families 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.
- A report on KS1 and KS2 SATs tests.

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

## **Meetings**

We hold families meetings across the year

Autumn 1– meet the teacher,

Autumn 2 online family consultation sessions,

Spring - optional family drop in following reports,

Summer 2 - face to face families consultation sessions).

During these meetings, families 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 family to arrange meetings between families evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Families of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to support 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.
- Curriculum information.
- Important policies and procedures.
- Important contact information.
- Information about before and after-school provision.
- Information about school uniform.
- Information about school admissions.
- Families should check the website before contacting the school.

## How families can communicate with the school

Please 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.

### Email

Families should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. The email address to use is the class email (class name without St followed by @stmarysworthing.org.uk for example St Hilda class is [hilda@stmarysworthing.org.uk](mailto:hilda@stmarysworthing.org.uk) or the [office@stmarysworthing.org.uk](mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk) Emails sent to the office will then be forwarded to the relevant person.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 3 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

### Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 2 working days. If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 days of your request.

If your issue is **urgent**, please call the school office at 01903 234155.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies.
- Safeguarding or welfare issues.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office. The office staff will take messages for teachers and other staff.

### Meetings

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

We try to schedule all meetings within 2 working days of the request.

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

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

## **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 the English language.

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

- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls
- Support for families with literacy difficulties

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

## **Monitoring and review**

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

## **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

## 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:

Email the most appropriate address

Include your child's full name in the subject line, and the staff member you wish to speak to.

We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days and within office hours which are: 8:30am – 4:00pm, Monday to Friday term time only.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher. Please email via class email address
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	<a href="mailto:dsl@stmarysworthing.org.uk">dsl@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Inclusion Manager: Mrs O'Hagan
Payments	<a href="mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk">office@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Bursar: Mrs Weller
School trips	<a href="mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk">office@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Office team: Mrs Wiggins and Mrs Moss
Uniform/lost and found	<a href="mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk">office@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Office team: Mrs Wiggins and Mrs Moss
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: [01903 234115] If you want to request approval for term-time absence: <a href="mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk">office@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Headteacher: Mrs G Irvine
Bullying and behaviour	<a href="mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk">office@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Headteacher: Mrs G Irvine
School events/the school calendar	<a href="mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk">office@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> Office team: Mrs Wiggins and Mrs Moss
Special educational needs	<a href="mailto:lhady@stmarysworthing.org.uk">lhady@stmarysworthing.org.uk</a> SENCO: Mrs L Hardy

Before and after-school clubs

[office@stmarysworthing.org.uk](mailto:office@stmarysworthing.org.uk)

Office team: Mrs Wiggins and Mrs Moss

### **Complaints**

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy on our website which can be found on our website.