

St Clare's Catholic Primary School

Communications Policy

Aims

To support St Clare's Catholic Primary School in its aim to become a thriving and successful school we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider school community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Definition of communication

Effective communication is much more than the exchange of information. It involves the management of relationships and the need to involve people. Communication is as much about attitude and behaviour as it is about message. We should also remember the importance of listening.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to support effective communications and needs to recognise that the quality of their communications reflects on the school's reputation. For the purposes of this policy communication includes not only the message, but also how that message is communicated; not only the responsibility for communication, but also how effectively that responsibility is carried out.

Objectives:

All communications at St Clare's Catholic Primary School should:

- keep staff, pupils, parents, and other stakeholders well informed
- be open, honest, ethical, and professional
- use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- be actioned within a reasonable time
- use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message, and audience.
- be compatible with our core values as reflected in our school vision and values

Internal Methods of Communication Meetings

There is an integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff. All formal meetings should be structured, and members invited to contribute. It is important that time is put aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in teamwork and to contribute to priorities, activities, and future plans.

Email

Information and notification of initiatives are communicated through the use of email where appropriate. Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information. **However**, it does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required. All staff should seek face-to-face communications when email is not the most effective form of communication. We have a weekly briefing when the school events for the following week are communicated face to face. For the well-being of others please avoid copying in lots of people 'just for information' if it is an issue only concerning a few members of staff. E-mails can be saved if records are needed at a later date.

Emails may be sent at any time to suit the needs of staff but there is not an expectation that they will be read outside of the hours of 8am – 5:00pm.

Staff Mobile Phones

During trips and off-site provision, staff should ensure they can be always contacted by mobile phone. In school they need to be off or on silent but available for use in case of a lockdown.

Staff Briefings

Friday morning after staff prayer – the key items for the following week are explained alongside any key notices based on school policies. A weekly timetable of events is emailed to all staff, hard copies can be printed if requested.

External Methods of Communication

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Effective communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve. In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider

community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the significant role that parents play in supporting the school. We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial discrimination.

Communications with Parents/Carers

We are trying to follow Pope Francis' message to care for our world by reducing the amount of paper letters we send to parents and carers.

Text Messaging

We use text messaging to inform parents and carers of key information and to remind them of events or trip payments. Longer or more detailed information is sent via email to parents.

Letters and emails

Staff will endeavour to respond to parents' letters or emails within 3 working days of receiving them, if an issue has not been resolved or more information is needed then parents will be contacted to explain the delay.

Any letters of parental concerns should be referred to the HT. All letters or emails responding to parents concerns must come to the Head Teacher electronically (before they are sent), the exception to this is attendance and ParentPay letters. Any formal complaints from parents or carers must follow our school complaints policy.

Phone calls

Parents must call school if their child is going to be absent from school. If we do not receive a message a member of staff will call to find out why your child is absent.

Home visits

If your child is absent for more than two days and we have not heard from their parents because they are off, then on the third day members of the school staff will make a home visit to check the child is safe and well.

X (formally Twitter)

The school has a site at @StClaresVoice where we share photographs of our events and children's work.

Written Reports.

Once a year, we provide a formal written report to each child's parents on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. In addition, parents meet their child's teacher/s twice during the year for a private consultation at a Parents' Afternoon. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being. When children have particular education needs parents will be invited to meet with their child's teacher more regularly. We will also make reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand communication.

School Website

The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. 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

We recognise that children's protection is a shared responsibility, and that St Clare's Catholic Primary School should provide a safe and secure environment. If any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding lead who may share this information with Social Services.