

Communications

Policy



Policy

Reviewed: January 2022
To be reviewed: January 2025

St. John's C.E. (C) Primary School Communications Policy

Rationale:

St John's C E (C) Primary School prides itself on being recognised as a school at the heart of the community, providing an inclusive, safe, caring and stimulating environment in which children learn. Effective communication between all stakeholders has a significant role to play in ensuring that this continues to happen at St John's. Our Communications Policy outlines what you can expect from us, what we ask of you and our commitment to high standards and best quality. It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives. This is a non-statutory policy.

Aims and Objectives:

We will:

- Be polite, helpful and treat everyone fairly, equally and with respect.
- Provide a service that is friendly and efficient.
- Have the best interests of children at the heart of everything that we do.
- Ensure that you get the most accurate and up to date information from us.
- Ensure that all information is timely, clear and easy to understand.
- Listen carefully to understand your needs and the needs of your child.
- Inform you of the actions we have taken or will take or that the actions you need to take.
- Respond to all comments, feedback and suggestions promptly and professionally.
- Respond to any complaints by following the St John's C E (C) Primary Complaints Policy and Procedures.

Practice and Procedures:

Contacting the school: When you contact the school, we will try to respond within the agreed times below. Whatever method of communication you use, we hope to provide a response that answers all your questions, adheres to school policy and is factually correct, which is why on occasions response times may be longer.

Communication	Agreed Response Time
Request for a meeting with a member of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date arranged within 24 hours of contact been made. Please note this is 24 hours across term time working days only.• A meeting will be arranged for within 5 school days (1 week). School staff will determine the level of urgency at their discretion, to enable us to manage multiple demands.
Response to a phone call/answer phone message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response made within 24 hours (term time Monday – Friday only).
Response to an email.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledgement of the email sent to the office within 1 working day of message been read. Expectation is for emails to be read Monday – Friday, between the hours of 8am – 4pm, term-time only.• Response within 3 school working days from relevant staff member.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If needed, the Headteacher will be contacted via email using the office email address. This also applies to responses.
Response to a written letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response within 3 school working days of the letter being read – this response may be a written letter, phone call or an invitation to a meeting. • If we cannot deal with your enquiry in this time we will tell you what we are going to do, and how and when you can expect an answer.
Response to a Class Dojo message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response received within 1 school working day (term time only) of message being read. • Staff will not send messages between 7pm and 7am unless it is considered necessary and essential by the adult in school. • The Headteacher should be contacted via the Office Class Dojo account. Responses from the Headteacher may take longer than the timescale above due to the needs of the school.
Response to a Facebook message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no requirement for Facebook messages to be responded to. Facebook is used to inform you of events but not a communication tool. Please use one of the other named communication tools in this policy.
Response to a request for communication with a member of the Governing Body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of a disputed situation, in line with our Complaints Policy, the School Governing Body may need to be contacted. They can be contacted by phoning the school office and requesting a call back from a withheld number from the Chair, Vice-Chair or nominated member on their behalf. • Parent will receive a response within 24 hours but please be aware this could be the office staff confirming when a member of the Governing Body is next available. This should be within 3 school working days (term time) unless extreme and unfortunate circumstances occur. • If this is not sufficient and parents or staff have serious safeguarding concerns then the next stage of the school's Complaints Policy and Procedures should be followed.

Meeting with a member of staff:

Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff. Quick messages can be passed on the door at the beginning or end of the day or via the office. If you require a more formal meeting please contact the school office by phone or email. It is always helpful to let the office staff know what the meeting is regarding so they can direct it to the most appropriate member of staff.

Phone calls:

Please use the main office number (01924 325323) to leave a message for a member of staff to contact you. If staff are busy then there is the option to leave an answer phone message and we will return your call. We will do our best to provide quick responses to queries. If our office team can't provide an immediate response they will pass on a message to the most appropriate person who will relay messages to staff as soon as possible. If a call is urgent, please inform the office staff. Please note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

Email In the first instance:

All emails for any member of staff should be sent to the office email address, office@stjohnsdewsbury.co.uk marked for the attention of the member of staff. We will always acknowledge receipt of your email before it is forwarded to the named teacher. Teachers are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day and the school does not expect work email to be checked during a teacher's personal time during the hours of 4pm and 8am. We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and within three working days of the email being read. This means that part-time staff may take longer to reply.

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. In the first instance, please approach the class teacher/office and then following this the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team via the school office.

However, if you urgently need to see/speak to someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone the school office who will organise communication with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Senior member of staff.

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so, however, the majority of teachers' time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time.

Additional information about staff communicating issues related to school:

- There is no obligation for any staff to join any WhatsApp group although it is highly recommended staff join the main staff group for communication in an emergency.
- WhatsApp or personal numbers (texts or phone calls) should not be used for communicating with parents. If a staff member needs to use their own landline or mobile number then a withheld dialing code must be used at all times.
- Staff names and numbers must not be shared without consent e.g. staff names and numbers must not be shared unless prior consent on educational visits.
- Staff must not have Class Dojo on their personal mobile phones to promote a better work life balance. It can be on laptops and staff iPads.

What we ask of parents:

- Please check our website, <https://www.stjohnsdewsbury.co.uk/>, before contacting us as your question might already have been answered.
- Please check weekly letters and newsletters carefully for information, which are sent out by Class Dojo every Friday and are available on the website.
- You can enquire or leave messages by phone, letter, e-mail, Class Dojo or in person to the office. Please always state your child's name and class colour.
- State clearly what you want to know or how we can help you.
- Please treat our staff as you would expect us to treat you. We reserve the right not to reply to any forms of communication including emails, letters and phone calls that are offensive.
- Please return any responses to the office using the appropriate reply slip by the date shown.
- Send any monies via our electronic payment system, Parent Pay, by the date shown. Any cash donations or payments should be sent to the office in a clearly marked envelope with your child's name, class colour, amount enclosed and what the money is for.

Inclusion and Equality

In line with our duties under the Equality Act (2010) and as set out in our Equality Policy, we are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Everybody is valued, respected and challenged regardless of race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability. Our objectives will sit in our overall school improvement plan and therefore will be reviewed as part of this process.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed following the school's 3-year cycle routine or when there are any changes to the statutory guidance that warrant it. It may also be reviewed earlier should it no longer comply with school practice or the legal requirements of the school.

Policy produced by ..Aidan Blackburn..... Date: 04.01.2022.

Approved by (Chair of Governors): Date :

Review Date: January 2025

If you need further copies of this document, or would like the document in another format, such as enlarged print, audio tape or another language, please contact our Bursar, at the school.

Telephone: 01924 325323

Email: office@stjohnsdewsbury.co.uk