

Minute Number	Date	Signed	Amendments



# **St Oswald's C.E. Primary Home-school communication policy**

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At St Oswald's we nurture the tiny seed so it can grow into the mighty tree as described in the Kingdom of Heaven. We do this through 6 core values - respect, honesty, perseverance, friendship, hope and forgiveness.

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)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours 8.30am to 4.30pm 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
- › Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance- (i.e) class teacher or SENDCo
- › Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- › Checking all communications from the school

Abusive or aggressive behaviour - in person, by phone or email - will not be tolerated. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours- 8.30am- 4.30pm 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 Email

We use email 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
- › Monthly Newsletters
- › Emergency school closures
- › payments

### 3.2 School calendar

Our school website and monthly newsletters includes a full school calendar for the year with additional added half termly/ termly

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.

### **3.3 Phone calls**

We contact parents by phone if there has been a specific incident we feel would be better discussed via a phone call, or if a child has had emergency first aid in relation to a head bump.

### **3.4 Letters**

We send the following letters home regularly:

- › Letters about trips and visits
- › Consent forms which are linked to an MS Form
- › Our monthly newsletter
- › Half termly overview for the

### **3.5 Homework books/school planners**

Each child has a reading diary which goes home. It is expected that parents complete this when they hear their child read as the children progress through the school homework is also written into this and how to access various platforms which the children use at school.

### **3.6 Reports**

Adapt this section as appropriate.

Parents 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 KS2 SATs tests
- › A report on the results of public examinations

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

### **3.7 Meetings**

We hold parents' evenings each term. 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, attendance 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.

### **3.8 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, via Miss SIMons about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

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 2 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 2 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 2 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

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

### 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 5 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

## **5. Accessibility**

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

### **5.1 Parents with additional communication needs**

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- › All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats
- › All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- › Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website
- › Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- › School announcements and communications in accessible formats
- › Sign language interpreters for meetings where and when requested

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

### **5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)**

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- › English
- › Ukrainian
- › Polish

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 2 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
- › Social media policy

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## Appendix 1: school contact list

### Who should I contact?

Choose the introductory text that best reflects your school's procedure and make sure it reflects section 4 above, for instance, if you expect parents to email or call the school office add the relevant details below.

Option 1:

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

- › Email or call the school office on [insert school office email address and phone number]
- › Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- › We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

**Remember:** check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within [timeframe].

Option 2:

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

We try to respond to all emails within [timeframe].

Adapt this table to suit your school.

If you provide email addresses so parents can contact staff directly, we recommend you:

- › Create generic email addresses where possible rather than providing email addresses for individual members of staff (for instance, [ks1@myschool.com](mailto:ks1@myschool.com) or [history@myschool.com](mailto:history@myschool.com))
- › Include office hours, if relevant (so parents know when someone is likely to see their email)

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's [class teacher/subject teacher]
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	School office/insert staff member
Payments	School office/insert staff member
School trips	School office/insert staff member
Uniform/lost and found	School office/insert staff member

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: [insert phone number]  If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact [insert details]
Bullying and behaviour	School office/insert staff member
School events/the school calendar	School office/insert staff member
Special educational needs (SEN)	School office/insert staff member
Before and after-school clubs	School office/insert staff member
Hiring the school premises	School office/insert staff member
PTA	School office/insert staff member
Governing board	School office/insert staff member
Catering/meals	School office/insert staff member

## Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy. [Link to your complaints policy](#), or explain where this can be found.