



# St Sebastian's RC Primary School

## Home School Communication Policy

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| Names and Designation of Policy Author(s)            | Caroline Doyle, Headteacher   | Is this a Statutory Document?                           |     |
|  |   | No  |     |
| Approved by:   | SLT   |   |     |
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| Links to other strategies, policies, procedures etc. | Attendance Policy, Home-school Agreement Policy, Remote Education Policy, Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Parent Code of Conduct, Complaints Policy |   |     |

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## **Mission Statement**

As we walk in the ways of the Lord, we will:

- Keep Christ at the heart of all we do.
- Love learning and grow our gifts and talents
- Make lasting memories full of joy
- Understand our special place in the family of God
- Open our arms in love to all
- Live life to the full

## **Statement of intent**

St Sebastian's is committed to fostering a positive relationship with the pupils' parents. Crucial to this is building and maintaining effective ongoing communication between the school and the parents about the pupil's academic performance and personal wellbeing.

Nurturing a positive communicative relationship with parents can help to establish a relationship of trust and confidence for both the school and the parents. It can also help the pupil's attendance, attainment, and wellbeing, and better understand the individual needs, abilities, and interests of the pupils.

Having effective communication in place helps to ensure that parents are more involved in their child's life at school. Effective communication can also ensure that parents are involved in decision-making about their child's needs in the school, such as EHCPs or any other actions that impact on the child's educational experiences which require parental involvement.

From the school's point of view, communication with parents should be streamlined, appropriate and focused on the positives of the pupil's educational experiences. This policy outlines how the school puts appropriate systems in place to ensure that communication always remains professional, and that communication does not become excessive, unjustified or otherwise unengaging for the parents.

## **1. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to relevant guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2024) Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance
- DfE (2024) Working together to improve school attendance: guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that channels of communication between the school and parents are clear, effective, and understood by all.
- Ensuring that parents understand how they can best and most appropriately contact the school.
- Leading, developing and implementing any new strategies of communication between the school and parents.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Responding to queries, comments, and concerns from parents in a positive and proactive fashion.
- Initiating first contact with parents by introducing themselves to the parents of pupils at the start of each academic year (Meet the Teacher Meetings).
- Working closely with parents to best support their children in their educational experiences.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Reading the key communications circulated by the school and responding or acting on these when required, e.g. by attending parent-teacher meetings.
- Regularly checking the school website for detailed information about the school calendar, term dates, monitoring and assessments, school achievements and other useful information.
- Raising any issues or concerns they may have with the appropriate point of contact, e.g. contacting the class teacher with education-related issues.
- Ensuring that their contact details are shared with school and kept up to date.

## **3. Value of communication**

There are a myriad of benefits to the school developing and maintaining positive and consistent channels of communication between themselves and parents. The school will use effective communication to inform parents about its overall aims, ambitions and ethos, whilst using more targeted approaches to inform parents of more specific details pertaining to their children on a more individual basis.

The school, parents and pupils will benefit from there being a two-way communicative approach between the school and parents. That approach is one which will be built on consistency, transparency, respectfulness and valuing each other's contributions.

Parents want to know how their child is progressing at school, in both their academic performance and personal wellbeing, whilst teachers want to understand the needs and backgrounds of the pupils in their classroom. The school will employ an effective system of two-way communication to allow for these details to flourish.

Positive parental support will greatly impact on the pupils themselves. Supportive rapport between the school and parents will increase pupils' confidence and engagement in their learning. This in turn will help to increase how involved parents are in their child's education.

Teachers in turn will value a strong home-school communication thanks to the opportunities for personalisation in a pupil's learning. The school will use strong home-school communication so that the teacher can be made aware of any needs, interests or areas of concern for the pupil on an individual basis.

#### **4. How the school communicates with parents**

The school will utilise a variety of digital and physical mediums to communicate with parents. However, the school is committed to reducing its carbon footprint so will send communications electronically.

Channels include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The school website
- School Spider App
- Tapestry App
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Text messages
- The school newsletter (sent via School Spider App or email)
- Letters (sent via School Spider App or email)
- Facebook
- Face to face meetings

The school will avoid technical or complicated educational jargon when communicating with parents – instead emphasising accessibility for parents of all backgrounds. A warm, friendly, welcoming tone across all channels will be utilised to aid in fostering that trustworthy relationship. The school will always respond promptly to emails, letters, and phone calls from parents. If a parent contacts the school by email or leaves a phone message during school holiday times, the school will endeavour to respond within 36 hours of school term time resuming.

## **English as an additional Language**

The school will provide an impartial translator for parents with English as an additional language who request this. The school will also arrange an impartial translator for formal meetings including, but not limited to, SEND or behaviour.

## **5. Appropriate forms of contact**

The school will ensure that contact details are clearly signposted for the benefit of parents. The school has an email address and telephone number for general enquiries publicly available on the school website. Enquiries meant for specific staff members (i.e. class teachers, Family Liaison Officer, SENDCo) can then be referred to the appropriate member of staff.

The school will also feature a dedicated avenue of contact for complaints or concerns from parents in accordance with the Complaints Procedures Policy.

## **6. Excessive contact**

The school will avoid using excessive contact to minimise the risk of overwhelming or demotivating parents' interest in their children's education.

The school will prioritise efficient means of communication throughout all channels used to ensure that communication channels are simplified and fit parents' preferences and to solidify a positive two-way communication.

## **7. Parents responding to the school**

As natural role models for their children, parents will be required to model good behaviour when communicating and interacting with the school.

Parents may contact school via the school telephone number 0161 921 1625 or by the school email address [stsebastians.rcprimaryschool@salford.gov.uk](mailto:stsebastians.rcprimaryschool@salford.gov.uk).

When communicating with the school, parents will be expected to do the following:

- Act in accordance with the [parent code of conduct](#)
- Support the school's ethos through their behaviour and actions
- Treat all members of staff, other pupils and other parents with respect
- Work together with staff members for the benefit of their children

If parents display unacceptable behaviour towards staff, the school may take the following actions:

- Staff will end calls immediately if parents shout or swear
- Communication plans will be implemented including:
- Communication may be restricted to email only
- Communication may be restricted to a key member of staff
- Parents may be banned from the school premises/grounds

## **8. When parents should and shouldn't contact the school**

Parents will contact the school before the start of the school day if their child is going to be absent and provide reasons for the absence.

Parents will contact the school if they have a concern about their child, e.g. if a pupil is being bullied or bullying is suspected of taken place. The school will have procedures in place for when parents want to raise concerns with specific members of staff. In the first instance, parents should speak with the class teacher about matters regarding education and behaviour.

Parents will refrain from contacting the school if they intend on displaying inappropriate behaviour towards the school, particularly if this is in breach of the [parent code of conduct](#).

Parents will take the work/life balance of school staff into account by avoiding contact with the school or individual staff members outside of normal school hours. This will be with the exception of emergency situations, e.g. where a safeguarding concern requires immediate attention.