

**FEBRUARY 2024**



# **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY**

**ST EDWARD'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

*“TRUE MIND, TRUE HEART, TRUE SPIRIT;  
AS WE GROW IN THE IMAGE OF CHRIST”*

<b>Approved by</b>	K Methven
<b>Date</b>	February 2024
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**St Ralph  
Sherwin**  
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

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## 1. Introduction and aims

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 between 8am and 5pm, 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.

A copy of our IT Acceptable Use Policy can be found on our website:

[https://www.stedwardsswadlincote.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2022/04/SRS\\_IT-Acceptable-Use-Policy- Version-1- Publish -March-2022.pdf](https://www.stedwardsswadlincote.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2022/04/SRS_IT-Acceptable-Use-Policy- Version-1- Publish -March-2022.pdf)

### 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
- › Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- › Checking all communications from the school

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 (8am to 5pm) or during school holidays.

A copy of our Parent Code of Conduct can be found on our website

(<https://www.stedwardsswadlincote.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/09/St-Edwards-Parent-Code-of-Conduct.152723917.pdf>)

### **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
- › Charity fundraising
- › Newsletters
- › General school correspondence
- › General data collection forms

#### **3.2 Text messages**

We will text parents about:

- › Payments
- › Short notice changes to the school day
- › Notification if their child is not at school (request for reason of absence)
- › Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- › First Aid notifications (head bump)
- › Reminders of upcoming events (parents' evening, fundraising, own clothes days)
- › Links to online forms (Christmas lunch, Parents' Evening)

#### **3.3 School calendar**

Our school newsletter and website include a full school calendar for the year.

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.

#### **3.4 Phone calls**

Phone calls are made to parents/carers when there is something that needs to be discussed immediately, or by prior arrangement. Parents may be contacted to discuss the following:

- Medical needs
- To follow up the administering of first aid
- To discuss the behaviour of a child
- To discuss any concerns we may have about a child
- Parents' evening
- Following up reasons for absence
- To notify parent if a child is unwell

### **3.5 Letters**

We send the following letters home regularly:

- › Letters about trips and visits
- › Consent forms
- › Nursery place offers
- › School place offers
- › Our half termly newsletter

### **3.6 Homework books/school planners**

We have home school diaries that are used in every class in the school. Communication about a child's reading should be written in the diary. Staff check these diaries once a week and will respond to messages regarding a child's reading either in person or as a written message in the diary.

### **3.7 Reports**

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 Key Stage (KS) 1 and 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).

### **3.8 Meetings**

We hold two Parents' Evenings during the school year, one in the Advent term and one in the Lent 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, 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.

### **3.9 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.

### 3.10 Home-school communications app (ClassDojo, Eylog)

#### ClassDojo

The academy uses **ClassDojo** as part of the behavior system and communication in Y1-Y6. ClassDojo is primarily used as a way to celebrate good choices by children (in line with the school behavior policy). Staff use ClassDojo in school as a method of communication with the whole class by posting updates and messages onto the 'Class Story'. These updates may include:

- › Information on special events that happen in the classroom
- › Photographs of children's learning
- › Reminders of upcoming events
- › Information on the taught curriculum in the year group
- › General messages to the whole class

Staff can also send messages to individual parents on ClassDojo. Messages may include:

- › Updates on a child's learning or behavior
- › Celebrating a child's learning and work in the classroom
- › Individual reminders of events or meetings

#### Eylog

The academy uses **Eylog** as a communication and learning platform that is used in EYFS (Nursery and Reception). Staff can message parents directly on the app and post observations detailing a child's learning. Messages sent from staff to parents on Eylog may include:

- › Updates on a child's learning
- › Reminders of upcoming events
- › Information regarding the learning focus in the class
- › General messages to the whole class.

## 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, or the appropriate member of staff, 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 5 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 3 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
- › If you are running late to collect your child
- › If a different person will be collecting your child who is not on the list of adults who can collect.

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, however if the meeting involves outside agencies or multiple members of staff we endeavor to schedule these as soon as possible.

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

### 4.4 Home-school communications app

#### ClassDojo

The academy uses ClassDojo as an app/website for both the behaviour system and for communication between parents and staff. Parents can directly message staff on this app and should use it to:

- › Notify teachers of any information they may need to know pertinent to their child
- › Share success and achievements of their child in extra curricular activities outside of school
- › Share and celebrate news from home

ClassDojo should **not** be used to:

- › Notify school of a child's absence
- › Share safeguarding concerns about pupils or staff
- › Send negative messages to staff

#### Eylog

Eylog is used by both Nursery and Reception classes as a method of communication. Parents can add updates to Eylog detailing their child's learning and development at home as well as send and receive messages from staff. Parent communications on Eylog may include:

- › General messages about a child
- › Celebrating a child's achievements at home
- › Sending information regarding their child's learning at home

It should **not** be used to share:

- Safeguarding concerns
- Attendance or messages regarding appointments
- Negative messages to staff

When messages are sent on Eylog they are visible to all the staff who have accounts on the system. If you wish to raise any concerns or complaints please refer to our Complaints Policy.

## **5. 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.

## **6. Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Complaints
- Online safety policy



## 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 school office on [office@edw.srscmat.co.uk](mailto:office@edw.srscmat.co.uk) or call on 01283 216721
- 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 5 working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	School office, Mrs M Gibbs (Parent and family support worker), Your child's class teacher.
Payments	Office manager Mrs D Murphy
School trips	Office manager Mrs D Murphy, your child's class teacher, School Office
Uniform/lost and found	School office, your child's class teacher
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01283 216721  If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office.
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's class teacher, Deputy Head Teacher Mr S Ward, Head teacher Mrs K Methven.
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENDCO Mrs A Cashmore
Before and after-school clubs	Mrs S Morris, School office
Hiring the school premises	Business manager Mrs D Murphy
Governing board	Chair of governing body Miss D Eyre

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Catering/meals	School office, Business manager Mrs D Murphy

## Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

Complaints Policy: <https://www.stewardsswadlincote.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2022/06/Complaints-Policy-and-Procedure-NRCDES-EDW-2021.pdf>