



# Consultation and Communication Policy

Through God's Grace  
We Grow And Learn

Updated SpringTerm 2023

## **Introduction:**

This policy is a statement of how and when the management, governors and staff of the school will consult upon and communicate policy both between each other and with parents/carers and pupils.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school and its curriculum; class teachers are responsible for the running of their class/rooms under the direction of whole school policies. It is the Headteacher and class teachers who are professionally placed to make policy decisions however at St. Edward's we are committed to a consultative approach and value the opinions and ideas of both parents and pupils.

Parents/carers and pupils will therefore be consulted/their opinions canvassed on a variety of issues, particularly those having a direct affect/relation to the home. Following any such consultation, it is the Headteacher who will ultimately make decisions, which will always be based in the best interests of the school/pupils and the Headteacher's decisions are final.

Consultation and communication may be both formal and informal but professionalism and appropriate confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

## **Head/staff and pupils:**

Every pupil at St. Edward's is a member of their "Class Council" and each class will elect members to represent them on the "School Council" for a year.

Class councils meet once a fortnight with the School Council meeting the alternate weeks. Through these councils pupils can have a "voice" on any issue they wish to raise.

A member of staff acts as a "link teacher" to the school council, taking issues from the staff to the council and vice versa. The School Council has a "Suggestions box" in school which all pupils can use at any time.

In addition to discussions raised by the pupils, the council system is used to formally consult with pupils on various policies and issues which affect them, such as:

- the Behaviour Policy and reward systems
- school/class environment
- resources
- timetabling
- keeping them safe in school
- the Homework Policy
- the School Improvement Plan
- the Consultation and Communication Policy

Pupils are consulted, formally, on the curriculum and their attainment through:

- setting and reviewing personal targets with the teacher (SEND Pupils)
- writing a statement for their reports
- interviews with subject leaders/headteacher
- annual pupil questionnaires

At the beginning of each academic year, each class will write their own "class rules" - this enables every adult and child in the school to contribute to an agreed code of behaviour, to be clear about expectations and to have ownership of the code.

Morning prayers and weekly assemblies provide regular times for staff/pupils to communicate messages to the whole school.

#### **Head/staff and parents/carers:**

School staff consult and communicate with parents, informally, on a day-to-day basis, about a wide range of issues. In addition, parents' evenings, reports, open days, coffee mornings, newsletters/letters, termly Curriculum letters, PTA meetings, phone appointments with the SENDCo and information evenings on specific issues (eg. YF reading evening) provide opportunities for staff and parents/carers to consult and inform. There is also a "Suggestions Box" in the school foyer for parents to use at any time.

Parents/carers will be formally consulted (eg. sent a letter/policy and asked to respond in writing, or invited to an information/discussion evening) on various policies, which link home and school, such as:

- the Behaviour Policy
- the Anti-bullying Policy
- Homework Policy
- school meals and snacks
- length of the school day
- after school provision
- Health and Safety issues
- Drug Education
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)
- The Consultation and Communication Policy

An annual meeting for parents/carers of new Reception pupils is held and the School Prospectus is kept up to date with accurate information. Each class holds a meeting in September to go over routines/homework etc for the class for that year.

Individual meetings between the Head and parents/carers, or the class teacher and parents/carers, may be requested by either party, in order to discuss specific issues or concerns regarding a particular pupil. It is expected that these meetings are agreed to and take place, with parents/carers and staff working together in the best interests of the child.

Parents/carers are encouraged and advised to take issues/concerns, pertaining to the classroom/child's progress, to the class teacher, in the first instance. Where an issue continues or the class teacher cannot resolve the issue for the parent, the parent/carer should then discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

Parents/carers are asked not to speak to the teacher on a morning when they have a class to settle and registration to start promptly, but instead catch the teacher at the end of school informally, or phone school to make a more formal meeting with the teacher. Parents/carers can bring messages to the office or to the Headteacher on a morning, and can usually catch the Headteacher informally at both the beginning and the end of the day.

Parents/carers are asked not to email teachers directly due to emails having been sent out of hours (eg. late at night on a weekend) in the past. Parents/carers can send teachers emails via the school office email and these will be passed on quickly. In addition, parents/carers can leave a message in person via the school office, ring the school office to leave a message or put a note in writing to the school office/in a pupil's book bag.

Parents/carers who approach staff members in an aggressive manner, will be asked to leave the premises and discussion can take place at a later time, when the parent/carer is calm.

#### **Head/Subject Leaders and staff:**

Staff consult and communicate on day-to-day issues, as well as on policy, on a regular, informal basis. The Headteacher operates an "open door" policy where any member of staff may come to discuss any issue they wish. Formal consultation between staff takes place at/from:

- weekly staff meetings

- support staff meetings
- Inset days
- feedback from lesson observations
- feedback from scrutiny of work
- individual meetings
- Performance management meetings and reviews
- Return to work meetings
- Keeping in Touch meetings during maternity leave

Staff are able through these consultations to have input into a wide range of policies and decisions. However, at times, Subject Leaders, the Headteacher or Governors may make policy decisions without consulting staff, or may make decisions which some staff do not agree with (all decisions will be taken in the best interests of the school/pupils). All staff members are professionally bound to follow/implement all school policy, even in these circumstances, and will always be able to discuss any personal issues or difficulties in implementing policy with the Headteacher.

#### **Governors and Parents/carers:**

Governors will fulfil all their statutory duties with regard to consultation and communication with parents/carers. These include:

- making the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE Policy) available to parents
- making the minutes of the Governing Body meetings available
- providing a prospectus and publishing SATs results

The Governors will also send out, via the Headteacher, an annual questionnaire to parents/carers (as pre-Ofsted) which invites them to share their views on many aspects of school life. The responses to this questionnaire will assist the Governing Body in their monitoring role.

Governors will not discuss/correspond/listen with parents/carers on management issues/day-to-day running of the school, or on non-governor policy and procedure, but will direct parents/carers to take all issues/comments on such matters to the class teacher or Headteacher as appropriate.

#### **Governors and Head/staff:**

Governors will fulfil all their statutory duties with regard to consultation and communication with the Headteacher and staff of the school.

Communication and consultation between the Governors and Head takes place through:

- Governing Body meetings
- Committee meetings and meetings with sub-divisions of committees
- Meetings between the Head and Chair of Governors (may be formal or informal)
- The Head's termly report to the Governors (which will include all statutory requirements)
- Headteacher's Performance Management

In most instances, consultation and communication, between Governors and staff, takes place through the Headteacher.

The Governors will communicate directly with staff, other than the Head, through:

- the Governors cycle for monitoring (Governors should follow the Guidelines for Governors Visits)
- meeting with subject leaders

Governors will not discuss/correspond/listen with staff on management issues/day-to-day running of the school, or on non-governor policy and procedure, but will direct staff to take all issues/comments on such matters to the Headteacher.

Governors will not discuss/comment on staff performance or classroom practice (Governors to see Guidelines for Governor Visits).