

Communication Policy

St Aidan's CE Academy



Updated: December 2025

Review Date: December 2026

Communication Policy

Introduction

Our priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning. To support us in this, we believe in establishing a positive partnership with parents and carers so that we work effectively together for the benefit of our pupils. Good communication between home and school plays an essential part in this. Open communication between home and school enables us to deal with concerns and issues quickly and at an early stage. We work hard to ensure all communication between school and home is respectful, timely and accurate.

Aims

A strong partnership between home and school benefits every child. To build this we need clear communication between both parties that is:

- Sent in a reasonable time frame and at a reasonable time.
- Respectful and polite in tone and content.
- Promoting positive partnership between home and school
- Clear and simple to understand.
- Realistic for both home/school
- Mindful of school's duty of care to staff, ensuring staff workload is manageable.

Roles and responsibilities

Class Teachers: Class teachers must:

- Be polite and respectful in all communication, particularly written communication which is easily misinterpreted
- Be clear and concise in all communication
- Send out information on any event or activity at least two weeks prior, where possible
- Acknowledge a parent email within 48 hours (during term time but not over a weekend).
- Respond to a parent by telephone or in writing (including an email) within 5 working days. This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response. If this is the case, staff should indicate a realistic timeframe in which a response should be expected.
- Send a considered response
- Pass on to the most appropriate person anything they feel unable to deal with

Parents: Parents must:

- Be polite and respectful in all communication, particularly written communication which is easily misinterpreted
- Be clear and open in all communication
- Remember staff are not expected to monitor or respond to emails outside normal working hours (including weekends and school holidays). Parents may compose emails at times to suit themselves, but they will only be read once staff are back in school.
- Think carefully about how they ask for the information they need and understand that if a member of staff receives an email which is deemed to be inappropriate or aggressive it will be referred to the headteacher, who will decide if consideration needs to be given to dealing with it under the Parental Code of Conduct Policy'

Headteacher: The headteachers must:

- Work with staff and parents to enable positive communication
- Monitor the impact of the communication on staff workload and wellbeing
- Monitor the impact of communication on school improvement and parent partnership

Governors: Governors must:

- Monitor the impact of school communication systems on staff wellbeing
- Review the policy annually

Procedures

The majority of our communication these days is electronic, the immediacy of electronic communication can encourage us to expect an immediate response however the primary role of all school staff is the support of outstanding teaching and learning.

To avoid distracting teachers and senior leaders from this key priority we ask that parents email the office on office@saintaidans.org if they have a concern or query rather than teachers directly. This email will be forwarded to the child's class teacher and where necessary to a member of the senior leadership team including the Headteacher. Staff will email parents from the office email not their own email. Should staff receive an email from a parent directly they will send an automated response. (see appendix)

The school uses a range of methods to communicate with parents including

Emails:

- We will send them out in a timely matter with at least two weeks notice given for any events that are happening whenever possible.
- Will be used by both parents and staff to raise a concern or complaint
- Will be used by both parents and staff to request further information

Staff will not be able to answer emails during the school working hours as they will rightly be focused on teaching and learning. They will answer them as quickly as possible and within 48 hours of receiving them. Please remember some staff work part time and are not expected to deal with emails outside of their normal working hours.

Half-termly newsletter – This will:

- Provide dates on upcoming events in school
- Provide relevant and appropriate information
- Advertise out of school opportunities
- Celebrate what is happening in school.

The website – This will:

- Provide key information regarding the curriculum and important dates
- Be updated with topic webs and curriculum information each half term
- Contain relevant school and statutory policies
- Provide key information around staff

Our Facebook page – This will:

- Celebrate school events and highlight what classes are up to
- Provide key information and important dates reminders
- Advertise out of school opportunities

In-app messages– Our School Jotter App allows messages to be sent to and from school. Please make sure you have downloaded this and have it set to allow notifications. Our Jotter APP will be used where information needs to get out quickly for example in the event of closure or the cancellation of an event or club.

Letters – These will be:

- Used when a consent form is required or school requires information to be sent back.
- In addition to an email copy of the information, where possible

- Used by staff and parents when a more formal method of communication is needed; eg; making a complaint or informing parents about attendance or serious incident.

Phone calls – Phone calls will be used:

- To inform you that your child is ill or needs picking up quickly.
- To contact absent pupils when school has not been contacted to explain the absence.
- For parents to request a one-to-one conversation or meeting with a member of staff.
- When staff require a one-to-one conversation with a parent
- To notify parents if there has been a serious incident involving your child
- To notify parents if a child has been injured or requires medical attention
- To inform parents of serious ongoing concerns about behaviour or attitude to learning.
- To agree a mutually convenient time to speak

Parents are welcome to contact staff by phone but should remember that most staff will be in class teaching or will be marking or preparing for lessons. Senior leaders may also be busy with activities that enable the school to function well and continually improve. This impacts on the ability of all staff who work in school to speak to parents during the school day. Parents are welcome to phone and leave a message with office staff who will pass it on to the appropriate member of staff. Staff will try and return a call as soon as possible. This would normally be the same day. Please remember some of our staff work part time and they are not expected to deal with phone calls on the days they are not at work.

We also understand that sometimes phone conversations may be about subjects and areas that are emotive, however there is an expectation that any conversations between staff and home will be polite, calm and constructive. Staff will terminate a conversation if they feel it is becoming abusive or aggressive. They will ring back having given time for emotions to settle. If a member of staff is unable to deal with a query, they will pass it on to the senior leadership team who will contact home at their earliest convenience.

Face to face meetings – Parents are welcome to speak to staff on the door at the beginning of the day to request a meeting, but staff will be unlikely to meet with them immediately but will arrange a meeting at their earliest convenience. We know these meetings can be about subjects and areas that are emotive, however there is an expectation that any conversations between staff and home will be polite, calm and constructive. Staff should not be treated with aggression or abusively. If this happens the meeting will be stopped and arranged again when emotions have calmed.

Meetings may be held:

- To address something quickly and thoroughly
- To look at specific paperwork or information that may link to a child's educational needs
- At a mutually convenient time for both staff and parents.
- With enough notice to give parents opportunity to make arrangements to attend.
- To provide parents with information about their child's attainment and progress. The school aims to provide parents with timely and informative information concerning their child's progress throughout the year. Currently there are two parent teacher meetings a year.

Reports

- Teachers will provide parents with one full report each year
- Children with Additional Needs (SEND) may receive more frequent reports from a range of agencies. These will be shared with parents in a timely manner.

Monitoring arrangements:

Senior leaders will:

- Check staff communication is accurate, appropriate and timely and intervene if necessary
- Consider how often a single parent is in contact to ensure it is not becoming overwhelming, malicious or abusive
- Reserve the right to take further steps if a parent's communication becomes inappropriate or abusive including the right to block the parent's communication with school

Links with other policies

Parental Code of Conduct

Wellbeing policy

Appendix 1:

Dear Parent,

Thank you for your email.

Please can I remind you that emails should be sent to the office email address

office@saintaidans.org.uk

Office staff will then pass concerns and questions to the appropriate personnel and ensure that a response is given within a reasonable time frame. Alternatively, please ring the office and again admin staff will ensure the correct person responds to you. It is not school policy for teachers to get into individual email correspondence with parents.

Thank you