

Communications Policy (home and school)

Approved by: St Peter's LGB

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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 nurture 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 term-time core school hours 8-4pm 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.

Our ICT and acceptable user policy can be found on our website or a copy can be requested from the school office.

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
- Responding 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 (8-4pm) or during school holidays.

Please see our parent code of conduct on our website for more information. A copy can also be requested from the school office.

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 Parentmail and newsletter

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events and key dates
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Information about school life
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Payments and bookings for trips/wrap around and school dinners
- To notify you about routine first aid

3.2 Email

We will email parents directly about:

- Individual requests/notifications
- Overdue Payments
- Information concerning your child

- Booking appointments

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school outlook calendar for the year and is a live document so has the most up to date information. It can be added to your phone/ipad/device.

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 and/or the school newsletter.

3.4 Phone calls

We will call you if:

- Your child has an injury or first aid or is unwell
- Your child needs kit/equipment for an activity that day
- To arrange appointments
- To follow up on your child's absence

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly via parentmail:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter
- Class termly overviews of learning

3.6 Homework books/Reading diaries

Your teacher will explain the routine for using these. They will be used to:

- Allow your child a place to record and complete their homework
- Record reading practice done at home or school

3.7 Homeroom/Evidence Me (reception only)

We will use these platforms to:

- Share photos of the class learning
- Share homework information
- Give last minute reminders about class specific information (from teacher)
- Celebrate achievements and effort

3.8 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

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 2 parents' evening(s) per year and offer an optional third meeting after reports have been sent out in the summer 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
- Photos from recent events and trips

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, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 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 3 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 5 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 email 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 such as using audio captions and a language translator.
- 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

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

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 3 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

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

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

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below after checking the website, or need to speak to a member of staff, please:

- Email the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line
- We try to respond to all emails that require a response within 3 working days and urgent emails as soon as possible.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher cygnushomework@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk tucanahomework@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk phoenixhomework@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk pegasushomework@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher unless it involves safeguarding in which case the headteacher via a phonecall.
Payments	School Office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
School trips	School Office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
Uniform/lost and found	School Office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, please complete the section on parentmail or call 01993 842535. If you want to request approval for term-time absence, pop into the School Office for a form.
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher in the first instance in person at the end of the day or call office to arrange a conversation. 01993 842535
School events/the school calendar	School office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENDCo sendco@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
Wrap Around Care @ St Peter's (WASP)	School office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
Hiring the school premises	School office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
PTA - FOSPs	friendsofstpetersalvescot@gmail.com

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Governing board	Via: clerk@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535
Catering/meals	School Office office@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk 01993 842535

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy. This can be found on our website or you can request a copy from the office.