

Communications Policy



Love, Learn and Shine Together with Jesus

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Reviewed: September 2025 and

June 2026

Leader: Mrs. L Chamberlain

1. Statement of Intent

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that effective communication is essential in developing strong partnerships between school, parents, carers, governors, staff and the wider community.

We are committed to ensuring that communication is professional, respectful, timely and accessible whilst supporting the wellbeing of staff and maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding.

We believe that positive relationships built on mutual trust, respect and understanding help to secure the very best outcomes for children.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote effective communication between home and school.
- Ensure parents receive appropriate information regarding their child's education and wellbeing.
- Establish clear expectations regarding communication channels and response times.
- Support staff wellbeing by ensuring communication remains manageable and professional.
- Maintain safeguarding and site security.
- Promote respectful and positive relationships throughout the school community.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to:

- Education Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Freedom of Information Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of communication procedures.
- Ensuring information is shared appropriately with stakeholders.

- Supporting positive relationships between home and school.
- Ensuring staff follow the expectations outlined within this policy.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Communicating professionally and respectfully.
- Following communication procedures.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Recording significant parental communications where appropriate.
- Adhering to safeguarding requirements.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully with all staff.
- Use appropriate communication channels.
- Allow reasonable time for responses.
- Attend arranged appointments where possible.
- Support the school's communication procedures.

4. Communication with Parents and Carers

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School values positive, respectful and effective communication between home and school.

Strong partnerships between parents, carers and school are essential in ensuring the best possible outcomes for children.

Whilst the school will always endeavour to respond to concerns and queries promptly, parents and carers should be aware that staff have significant teaching and professional responsibilities throughout the school day.

These responsibilities include:

- Teaching lessons
- Delivering interventions
- Supporting pupils
- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Meetings with external agencies
- Leadership responsibilities
- Staff training
- Planning and assessment

The school is committed to maintaining positive relationships with families whilst also promoting staff wellbeing. Parents and carers are therefore asked to respect staff working hours and communication procedures.

The school reserves the right to determine the most appropriate member of staff to respond to a concern or query.

5. Access to the School Site During the School Day

The school operates a secure fob-entry system in order to safeguard pupils, staff and visitors.

Parents and carers are asked to carefully consider whether attendance at school during the school day is necessary and, wherever possible, limit visits to essential matters, emergencies or pre-arranged appointments.

Frequent access to the school site throughout the day can create safeguarding risks and interruptions to teaching, learning and the effective operation of the school office.

Where possible, messages for staff should be communicated via the school office, telephone, email or Class Dojo rather than through face-to-face visits.

A member of staff will provide access to the school site when required. Parents should not expect immediate access to the building, as office staff may be supporting pupils, visitors, telephone enquiries or other operational matters.

To support safeguarding arrangements, access to the site may be restricted during certain periods of the day, including playtimes, lunchtimes and other busy operational periods, unless there is an emergency or pre-arranged appointment.

The school reserves the right to review and amend site access arrangements in line with safeguarding requirements and operational needs.

6. Communication Channels

The school communicates through:

- Telephone
- Email
- Class Dojo
- Seesaw
- ParentPay
- School Website
- Newsletters
- Letters
- Parents' Evenings
- School Meetings

Personal contact details of staff will never be shared with parents.

Staff must not communicate with parents or pupils through personal social media accounts or personal communication devices.

7. Class Dojo Communication

Class Dojo is used to:

- Share reminders and information
- Celebrate achievements
- Communicate general class updates

Parents may send messages through Class Dojo.

However:

- Class Dojo is monitored during the school day only.
- Teachers will respond when they are not teaching.
- Parents should not expect immediate responses.
- Class Dojo should not be used for urgent matters.
- Collection changes must always be communicated through the school office.
- Safeguarding concerns must never be reported through Class Dojo.

Class Dojo should not be viewed as an instant messaging service.

8. Email Communication

Parents should contact staff through:

office@stmatthewscps.co.uk

or through agreed school communication channels.

Parents should be aware that:

- Teachers cannot continuously monitor emails throughout the day.
- Emails should not be used for urgent matters.
- The school aims to respond to non-urgent emails within five working days.
- Staff working part-time may require additional time to respond.

Parents should not expect responses during:

- Evenings
- Weekends
- Bank Holidays
- School Holidays

unless exceptional circumstances apply.

9. Telephone Calls

Staff are not always available to take telephone calls immediately due to:

- Teaching commitments
- Interventions
- Meetings
- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Leadership duties
- Professional development

Messages will be passed on and staff will respond as soon as reasonably practicable.

Whilst every effort will be made to return calls promptly, parents should be aware that staff may not be able to return calls on the same day due to teaching commitments, meetings, training, interventions, leadership responsibilities or absence from school.

10. Meetings with Staff

Parents wishing to speak to a member of staff should contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

Lessons will not be interrupted to accommodate requests to speak with teachers.

Parents should not expect teachers to be available for unscheduled meetings before, during or after the school day.

The beginning and end of the school day are busy periods where staff are responsible for:

- Safe arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Supervision duties
- Clubs and enrichment activities
- Staff meetings
- Intervention programmes
- Professional development
- Leadership responsibilities
- Safeguarding meetings
- External agency meetings

Where a discussion requires more than a brief exchange, parents will be asked to arrange an appointment.

For non-urgent matters, the school will aim to offer an appointment within five working days.

The school reserves the right to determine the urgency of requests and allocate staff accordingly.

11. Office Hours and Communication Outside School Hours

The school office is open:

8.30am – 4.00pm Monday to Friday during term time

Telephone calls may not be answered outside these hours.

Messages received outside office hours will be dealt with when the office reopens.

Parents should be aware that staff are not expected to monitor or respond to:

- Emails
- Class Dojo messages
- Telephone messages

outside their working hours.

In cases of emergency or safeguarding concerns outside school hours, parents should contact the appropriate emergency services or safeguarding agencies.

12. Respectful Communication

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School is committed to maintaining positive relationships between home and school, built upon mutual respect, professionalism and a shared commitment to achieving the very best outcomes for children.

The school expects all communication between parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the wider school community to be conducted in a respectful and courteous manner.

The school operates a zero-tolerance approach towards abusive, threatening, intimidating, aggressive, discriminatory or offensive behaviour towards staff, whether this occurs:

- In person
- By telephone
- Via email
- Through Class Dojo or other online platforms
- On social media
- In written correspondence

Where communication falls below the standards expected, the school reserves the right to:

- End telephone calls or meetings.
- Require future communication to be made in writing.
- Arrange meetings with a member of the Senior Leadership Team present.
- Restrict communication channels where appropriate.
- Take further action in line with the school's Complaints Policy, Parent Code of Conduct or relevant legislation.

The school recognises that there may be occasions when parents and carers feel frustrated, worried or upset. However, all concerns can be raised and addressed respectfully, and staff have the right to work in an environment where they feel safe, valued and respected.

13. Emergency Communication

In emergencies, the school may communicate through:

- Telephone
- Email
- Text Message
- Class Dojo
- School Website

Parents must ensure contact details are kept up to date at all times.

14. Accessing Information

Parents have the right to request access to personal data held about their child in accordance with UK GDPR legislation.

Requests should be made in writing to the School Business Manager.

Freedom of Information requests will be managed in accordance with the school's Freedom of Information Policy.

15. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

The policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, guidance or school procedures.

Next Review Date: June 2029

