



SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY



Approved by:	 Headmaster  Chair of Governors	Date: 11 th May 2023
Last reviewed on:	May 2023	
Next review by:	May 2025	

Note: This policy applies to all sections of the School including EYFS

This policy:

- Is non-contractual in nature;
- Applies to all members of staff except those who have not completed their probationary period;
- Can be adjusted by the School to suit specific circumstances;
- Can be varied unilaterally by the School.

1. Introduction and Aims

At Saint Nicholas School we recognise that developing excellent teacher and parent relationships is an essential part of ensuring excellent educational provision which we aim to provide. Ensuring clear and effective communications is fundamental to good home-school partnerships.

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 within 24 hours to communication during core school hours, 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 reply to a communication from a parent after 6pm or during weekend or holiday periods.

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 seriously and the School may decide to take appropriate action, which may include asking a family to leave the school.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.

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 including trips and residential
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- Emergency school closures
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Weekly newsletter
- Fees and Payments

3.2 Social Media

- Emergency school closures
- Updates on school trips and residential
- Updates on events in school
- Travel updates
- Upcoming school events including trips and residential

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar.

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) that have not been previously published on the school's public calendar.

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Telephone calls

- Incident involving a pupil
- Injury to a pupil
- Parental concern
- Teacher concern
- Pupil sickness/absence
- Disciplinary matter regarding a pupil

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter

3.6 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- A full written report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- Termly progress reports
- A report on the results of GCSE examinations and other 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 parents' evening(s) throughout the academic year. 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 Tapestry

The use of Tapestry, an online Learning Journal, helps develop a strong partnership with parents highlighting how their child is progressing against the EYFS developmental stages.

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 24 hours of receipt, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 3 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 24 hours.

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 2 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 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 3 working days of the request. Please note that scheduling a meeting with the Headmaster may take considerably longer so it is always advisable to meet with either one of the deputy or assistant heads in the first instance.

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
- Any concerns regarding their child's behaviour
- Any safeguarding concerns

- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the attached Appendix, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email the most appropriate address
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 24 hours of receipt during the working week in term time.

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

We try to respond to all emails within 24 hours of receipt during the working week in term time.

APPENDIX

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher contact office@saintnicholasschool.net for email address
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Senior school Mrs Howe a.howe@saintnicholasschool.net Lower school Mrs Martin s.martin@saintnicholasschool.net
Payments	feesandsalaries@saintnicholasschool.net
School trips	office@saintnicholasschool.net
Uniform/lost and found	office@saintnicholasschool.net
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01279 429910 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, submit a leave of absence form to heads_pa@saintnicholasschool.net
Bullying and behaviour	Senior school Mrs Howe (Assistant Head Pastoral) a.howe@saintnicholasschool.net Lower school Mrs Martin (Assistant Head Pastoral Lower School) s.martin@saintnicholasschool.net
School events/the school calendar	Heads_pa@saintnicholasschool.net
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENCO Mrs Thomas l.thomas@saintnicholasschool.net
Before and after-school clubs	office@saintnicholasschool.net
Hiring the school premises	Estates Manager Mr Jackson p.jackson@saintnicholasschool.net
PTA	office@saintnicholasschool.net
Governing board	Clerk to the Governors Julie Bradley heads_pa@saintnicholasschool.net
Catering/meals	catering@saintnicholasschool.net