

St Gabriel's C of E Primary School



Home-school communication policy

June 2026

Approved by:

Staffing and
Community
Committee

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1. Introduction and aims

Excellence with Compassion is at the heart of all we do at St Gabriel’s and is an integral part of our procedures and policies. As a Church of England School, Christian values are at the heart of all we do. We value our relationship with parents and all members of the school and local community.

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils’ learning and wellbeing 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 to communication during core school hours 8.30am – 4.30pm 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.

A copy of our IT Acceptable Use Policy is available on the school website.

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

Abusive or aggressive behaviour – in person, by phone or email – will not be tolerated. 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 8.30-4.30pm, or during weekends or school holidays.

The Parents Code of Conduct is available on the School website.

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up to date with their child's education, wellbeing 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

Being mindful that not all parents can always access email, we limit our email communication. However, email may be used to keep parents informed about the following things:

- › Upcoming school events
- › Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- › School surveys or consultations
- › Class activities or teacher requests
- › Communications from outside agencies (e.g. Early Help events, School Nurse communication)

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- › Payments
- › Short-notice changes to the school day
- › Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather, loss of key services such as heating)

3.3 School calendar

Our newsletters and website includes a full school calendar of term dates for the year term and year.

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).

3.4 Phone calls

Phone calls will be used for a variety of purposes. Phone calls will be made initially to the first contact name/number on the child's contact list. For example:

- › to determine the cause of a child's absence, if parents have not notified school already, calls will be made normally before 10am.
- › to arrange meetings with parents,
- › to clarify in the case of a miscommunication or query,
- › if a parent is late to collect a child,
- › to communicate incidences of poor behaviour (if a staff member has not been able to talk directly to the parent at the end of the day)
- › to celebrate a child's positive achievement,
- › to alert a parent to a head bump or other significant accident,
- › for safeguarding purposes,
- › Phone calls should be used at the earliest opportunity and as a matter of urgency to communicate with a parent if there is an issue regarding a child's safety for example during pick up or if there has been miscommunication with a child going home alone

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- › Letters about trips and visits
- › Consent forms
- › Our weekly newsletter
- › Termly class newsletters
- › Information letters (e.g. from the LA or public health) may also be periodically shared

3.6 Reading logs

Teachers check these daily and may write a note in them, parents also can write in the reading log

3.7 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 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' evenings in the Autumn Term and in the Spring 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.

There is one parents' evening held at the end of the summer term. Because parents will only just have received their child's end of year report, a parents evening could duplicate information shared in their child's report. Therefore, parents need only attend if they feel that they need to discuss their child's report.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour 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. Once a year, parents of children with EHCPs will be invited to attend the annual review meeting.

We hold other parent information meetings including but not limited to:

- Parents meet the teacher (in the first week of the school year, parents are invited to a meeting where their child's class teacher shares expectations for the school year, and what the children will be learning about.
- SEN parents sessions
- SATs information meetings
- Secondary transfer
- Nursery to reception transfer meeting for new parents
- Phonics
- Open afternoons (an opportunity for parents to visit their child's classroom and view their books)

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 Home-school communications app

At St Gabriel's we use Teachers2Parents. This is used to enable parents to purchase various items and to pay for school trips if needed, or after school care. This is also a method to communicate with parents regarding monies owed.

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. The office email address is monitored periodically throughout the day. Therefore, if it is an emergency, parents should call. Parents are also welcome to call school for non-emergencies (see below).

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 5 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 15 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Teachers, including the headteacher, do not share their work emails with parents or carers. Any email communication will go through the office email address.

The SENCO does share their SENCo email address with parents.

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 3 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
- Changes in family circumstances
- If a child is upset and it would help to share this with school
- If a child has a medical need that should be shared urgently

We also welcome non urgent phone calls. 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 office@stgabrielsprimary.co.uk or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 3 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

Teachers are not able to have confidential extended meetings at the beginning of the day as they have a responsibility to collect their class.

Sometimes, parents and carers may want another person to accompany them to the meeting. We welcome this, however we ask that school is made aware in advance. Similarly, it can help if an additional member of the staff team is present, if they have worked with a child, or may hold other information that can help with a meeting. If a staff member intends to invite a colleague to a meeting, parents will also be notified in advance.

Team Around the Family (TAF) or Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings are sometimes held. This can involve parents/carers meeting with a staff member and outside agencies (e.g. NHS professionals, SEN advisory, occupational therapists, Educational Psychologists), to enable the support fro the best outcomes for individual children.

4.4 Home-school communications app

See above.

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
- › 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
- › If written communication is requested due to a disability, in place of face to face meetings, school can facilitate this as a reasonable adjustment. However, if written communication becomes excessive and disruptive to activities, the adjustment would be deemed to be unreasonable if a disproportionate burden is placed on the school, is impractical, or severely disrupts business activities and so parents would be encouraged where ever possible to communicate in person or on the phone.

Please contact the school office should you need 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) in 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 2 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

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

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

- Email or call the school office on office@stgabrielsprimary.co.uk or 02071860080
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

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

We try to respond to all emails within 3 days

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's Class Teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's Class Teacher or SENCo
Payments	School Office
School trips	School Office
Uniform/lost and found	School Office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 02071860080 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office and complete an absence request form. You can also request a meeting with the headteacher to discuss this.
Bullying and behaviour	Mr Nunn (Assistant Head in Charge of Behaviour) – via the school office or in person in the playground at the end of the day.
School events/the school calendar	School Office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Miss Bell (Assistant Head and SENDCo)
Before and after-school clubs	School Office
Hiring the school premises	School Office
Governing board	Fr Owen Higgs (Chair of Governors c/o the School Office)

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Catering/meals	School Office

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy available on the school website.