

The Little Way Catholic Education Trust

“Kindness is my only guiding star. In its light, I sail a straight route, I have my motto written on my sail: ‘To live in love’.” St Therese of Lisieux

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School

Inspiring everyone to **REACH** through Faith, Hope, Love

At St Joseph’s, we strive for academic excellence through encouraging resilience, empathy, aspiration and challenge. We have high expectations for ALL so that we can be ‘The best we can be.’ With Faith, Hope and Love at the heart of our school family, our children feel safe, secure and supported.



Policy for Home-School Communication

Approved by:	Governing Board	Date: September 2024
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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 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
- ✓ Responding to communication from parents in line with 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 - 5pm and within 48 hours of receiving any communication. 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.

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 Monday-Friday 8.30am - 5pm or during school holidays.

You will also find a copy of the parent code of contact on our school website, under statutory policies [here](#).

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 via eschools 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
- ✓ Payments
- ✓ Short notice to the school day
- ✓ Emergency school closures

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar that is set in September. This is also added to the first school newsletter of the year. This is regularly added to and additional dates are on the school newsletter which is produced fortnightly.

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.

3.4 Phone calls

We will contact you via telephone if;

- ✓ Your child is ill and needs to be collected
- ✓ If we have information that we need to share with you
- ✓ If your child is absent from school and you have not informed us why
- ✓ If your child has arrived at school without what they need for the school day
- ✓ If your child has not been collected on time from school or a club

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- ✓ Letters about trips and visits
- ✓ Consent forms
- ✓ Our fortnightly newsletter
- ✓ Termly letters and topic webs from the class teachers

3.6 Homework books/school planners

All children from Years 1-6 are given a pink homework book at the start of the academic year. Homework is set on TEAMS. Work completed in the pink homework book is uploaded on TEAMS.

EYFS children are given a homework booklet that follows their phonics learning.

Please see homework guidance for further information.

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 the results of 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 2 parents' evenings per 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 attendance, achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, will also be asked to attend 4 further meetings (structured conversations) 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
- ✓ Class pages with general class information
- ✓ Class blogs, a weekly update of the children's learning

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 (email the office with the header FAO followed by the staff members name), about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 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 office.

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 2 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 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 5 working days of the request.

Teachers are available at the end of the school day on the playground until 3.30pm where parents are able to speak to them. However, 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 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. For example, we have used a white font on a navy blue background. We also include photos of our school, including of children to provide context to the text provided.
- ✓ 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

Please contact the school office to further discuss reasonable adjustments, should these be needed when meeting with school.

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

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

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:

- ✓ Catch class teachers on the playground at the end of the school day - teachers are there until 3.30pm (unless on PPA or running a club)
- ✓ Email or call the school office on 01453 860311 admin@st-josephs.gloucs.sch.uk
- ✓ 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 2 working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Class teacher
Payments	School office
School trips	The person who sent out the trip letter
Uniform/lost and found	School office/Class teacher
Attendance and absence requests, including appointments (please note – appointment letters/texts will be requested)	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01453 860311 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact admin@st-josephs.gloucs.sch.uk
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher
School events/the school calendar	School Office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Class teacher/SENDCO
Before and after-school clubs	School office
Safeguarding/sensitive nature	School office - header CONFIDENTIAL FAO followed by who the email is intended for. The Admin Team will forward the email without opening it.
PTA	A member of the committee

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Governing board	Headteacher / chair of governors
Catering/meals	School office / Caterlink

Complaints

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

Our complaints policy can be found on the school website under statutory policies.