

St Nicholas CE Primary School

Belonging, Believing, Becoming

Policy for Communication Between School and Parents

Communication is key to having a good, positive relationships. It is essential that teachers, parents, staff, and pupils have a clearly understood line of communication.

This policy will assist in keeping clear communication lines with the entire school community. By working together with mutual respect, we shall be best placed to support our children to fulfill their potential.

We aim to foster high quality communication by:

- Being respectful, honest and courteous and expecting similar behaviours in return.
- Being clear about the balance of rights and responsibilities between the school and parents in our communications.
- Promoting a culture of openness and honesty
- Seeking parents' views and taking them into consideration when making decisions
- Valuing parents' expertise and knowledge
- Providing timely, appropriate, and accessible information
- Avoiding information overload
- Seeking to overcome any barriers to communications

What Can Parents Expect From Us?

- Parents can communicate with us by letter, telephone call or e-mail as convenient.
- We have a formal Parent Consultation once a year.
- Each child receives a written report annually
- We also operate a text and email alert system.

We expect our staff to behave in a respectful and polite manner towards members of the public.

There is a complaints procedure, and through this procedure, parents may make complaints, have them investigated and any learning points for the school taken on board as part of efforts to improve.

What Do We Expect of Parents?

All staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. They should not have to endure abusive, disrespectful or threatening behaviour whilst at work.

Parents are generally courteous and respectful. In a minority of cases, where this is not the case and a member of staff considers that a parent is being abusive, disrespectful or threatening, the parent will be asked to stop. If the behaviour does not stop, the discussion will be terminated. The school may continue to communicate with the parent but will use another form, such as a letter.

Similarly, staff will not respond to correspondence that is abusive or threatening. In this case we will write to the parent explaining that it is not our policy to reply to such communications. We shall suggest that they communicate in an acceptable manner so that we are able to respond to concerns. St Nicholas CE Primary School has a specific policy for addressing persistent complaints, which will be applied where appropriate.

Social Media

As a school, we recognise that when used positively, social media can be a huge force for good. We always welcome positive comments regarding the activities children are involved in and it is also lovely for the staff to know how much their hard work is appreciated.

Within our Home School Agreement, that all parents sign when their child starts school, it states that parents will, "Ensure that the school is only mentioned in a positive light on social media." This has been recommended by Sefton's legal department. We recognise that it is impossible to please all of the people all of the time and sometimes, a concern to one family may be regarded as a strength by another. As a school, we have to take a very broad view of what we feel is in the best interest of all children. If parents are not happy with decisions taken by staff, there are procedures for raising concerns. The problem with raising concerns or posting negative comments on social media in a school context, is that there may be information involved that parents are not party to. Postings may not contain a full picture or have all the facts.

Our stance on social media is there to protect all members of our school family and this includes parents, who may be accused of slander or bullying, even if comments are made on 'private' accounts or groups, especially as others involved may not have a public right to reply.

As we explain to the children, nothing written on social media is ever private. We encourage them to think of these three aspects before posting:

- Is it true
- Is it kind
- Is it necessary

We ask parents to model this behaviour for children so that they learn how to navigate the complex online world and use it kindly and effectively.

Review:

Member of staff responsible: R. Woods

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