

Home School Communications Policy

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School



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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

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's 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).
- Ensuring that all communications are treated as confidential within the school context.
- Ensuring that all communications are dealt with respectfully and with courtesy.

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication within 48 hours of receiving communications 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 do so.

See Acceptable Use Policy

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Refer to the communication flowchart included in this policy to ensure communications are sent to the right person/people.
- Read the key communication issued by the school through Arbor ParentApp, the weekly newsletter, messages sent and letters via email. This is managed by the school admin team.
- Reading the messages sent on Class Dojo by the classteacher.
- 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 in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should allow up to 48 hours for staff members to respond. They should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours, or their working hours if they are part time, 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 Arbor ParentApp

We use Arbor ParentApp 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
- Consent forms/permissions
- Book wrap around care – breakfast club and after school club
- Book on and pay for trips/visits
- Book on extra-curricular activities

If parents are unable to connect to Arbor parent app, emails are also used.

3.2 Email

We use email which is linked to Arbor 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
- Consent forms/permissions

We use phone calls to inform parents of any accidents or incidents that results in first aid treatment. Children will also come home with a handwritten medical slip.

3.3 Social Media

Arbor ParentApp is the main form of communication, however if this system is not working or we need to share an urgent message, will also use our school Facebook/Instagram page.

e.g

- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.4 School calendar

Our weekly newsletter includes a full school calendar for the half-term/term.

Our calendar is on our school website and updates on social media channels.

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.

3.5 Phone calls

Telephone calls are one appropriate way to notify us that your child will be absent from school. This can also be done through the reporting absence tile on Arbor ParentApp or email.

Please telephone us to communicate brief information about your child that the school needs to know in an emergency, e.g. to let us know that you will be late collecting your child. The school office is open between 8:00am and 4.00pm, Monday - Friday during term-time. At all other times there is an answering service available to take your message. If the call requires a response, we aim to do this within 3 working days during term-time.

3.6 Letters

We send the following letters via Arbor ParentApp and email regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Our weekly newsletter

If a parent requires a letter to be printed this can be done by request through the main office.

3.7 Reports

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

- A termly and end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- A report on EYFS, Phonics, Multiplication Table Check and 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) and receive a termly brief report.

3.8 Meetings

We hold three parents' evening(s) 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.

Alongside Autumn term parents' evening, our SENDCO runs meetings for all families of SEND children or any families who have concerns.

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, are asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs in their individual plan and / or one page profile.

All children of EHCPs have at least annual reviews.

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.

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/Class Dojo

Parents should always email the school/message on class dojo, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. Please see communication flowchart (appendix 1) included in this policy to know which email address to use.

Staff will respond to messages between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm. We acknowledge all emails and aim to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within two 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 4.1 is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time.

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 also call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email or call the school to book an appointment. They can also message on Class Dojo.

We try to schedule all meetings within five 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

4.4 Home-school communications Arbor app

We encourage all parents to engage with the use of Arbor ParentApp, as this is the main form of communication provided by the school.

Arbor ParentApp is used to send out a variety of information, either to a targeted class or group, e.g. specific communications regarding class trips and special events, or to all parents, e.g. urgent messages such as an unplanned school closure.

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English. Class Dojo/Social Media has a translate facility.

Parents who need help accessing / communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls
- Provide additional staff to support with any additional learning needs, mental health or well-being pastoral support
- Online, face to face or phone calls to suit preference
- Option of rooms within school or times around the school working hours
- Car parking support
- Home visits

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 three 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
- 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:

- Consult the communication flow chart
- Email the most appropriate address from the list below
- Include your child's full name in the subject line

We try to respond to all emails within 24 working hours.

Parent Communication Flow Chart

- We know that when parents have a concern that relates to their child at school, whether it's pastoral, curriculum or staffing in nature, they often feel the best way forward is to ask to see the Headteacher or Deputy Head. In our experience many of these concerns can often be most quickly resolved by talking first to the most appropriate person. The flow chart below outlines who this will be.
- Any immediate Safeguarding Concerns should be shared with our DSL (Headteacher) or DDSLs (Deputy Headteacher or SENDCO). Other contact numbers are 999, Childline 0800 1111 or Children's First Partnership Hub: Monday to Sunday (24 hours): 01942 828300.

Learning Concerns	Pastoral Concerns	Concern relating to particular learning or physical needs	Issues relating to staff	Concerns & Queries relating to school administration
Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher in the first instance.	(Pastoral care covers our support of your child's individual needs, their emotional wellbeing and helping them with any personal problems they may be experiencing at school.)	Where a concern is related to a special need and you feel an adjustment may be required to support successful learning e.g. issues related to ASD (autistic spectrum disorders), dyslexia or dyspraxia or physical disabilities	Please contact the office who will forward your concern to the most appropriate person.	Please speak to our office.

	Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher.	Please raise your concern with your child's class teacher in the first instance.		
If you feel that the class teacher is unable to help for pastoral concerns please contact the SENDCO or Deputy Headteacher	If you feel that the class teacher is unable to help for pastoral concerns please contact the SENDCO or Deputy Headteacher	Please arrange an appointment with our SENDCO or Deputy Headteacher		
Please make an appointment to see our Headteacher if you remain concerned after following the steps above.				
Teachers are available after school for informal conversations and appointments can be made with all of the above by contacting the school office or emailing the school.				
If you are writing to the school it is really helpful if you give us as much information about the background of your concern or complaint as possible, including who it involves, and what you would like the outcome to be.				

- Our Chair of Governors, is also here to support when a parent has a concern or complaint. They can be contacted through the school office.
- Our full school complaints policy can be found on our website or a hard copy can be obtained from the school office.

Useful email addresses

Parents should consult this list to use the correct email address for staff members. If this email address is not listed please use main school office email and include staff members name in the email subject. This will then be forwarded to the right person.

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
School Office	enquiries@admin.saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk
Headteacher	enquiries@admin.saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk
Deputy Headteacher	enquiries@admin.saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
SENDCO	SENDCO@saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk
FOSB	FOSB2022@gmail.com
Governors – Chair of Governors or Safeguarding Governor	enquiries@admin.saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk

Complaints

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

ST. BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



<https://saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk> ~ 01257 401125

PARENT COMMUNICATION



Facebook

Facebook is used to share and promote activities within the school with parents /carers and the wider local community.



Instagram

Instagram is used to share and promote activities within the school with parents /carers and the wider local community.



Arbor

Nursery—Year 6: Use to book and pay for Breakfast and After School Club wrap around care.

Use to book and pay for Extra Curricular activities, Music Tuition and School Trips.

Our office communication app. We use Arbor to share messages, newsletters and year group information from the school office, manage consent and report absences.



Class Dojo

Our class teacher communication APP. Dojo 'house' point system. Stories about your child's learning with photos, messages directly from the class teacher and direct message service to your child's class teacher.



A fortnightly newsletter is emailed to families to share school updates, celebrate children's achievements and highlight upcoming events and key dates.



My Evolve Hub

Reception—Year 6: Use to order and pay for school lunches. All lunch orders are made from home. All children in Reception and KS1 are entitled to Universal Free School Meals.

enquiries@admin.saintbernadettes.wigan.sch.uk

Please email school with any enquiries. Letters from school will be emailed directly to your email address.