

**St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Chiswick**

*"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"*

## **COMMUNICATION POLICY**



**September 2020**

*DHR Sanku*

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**Chair of Governors**

**Review Date: September 2021**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted; understanding is developed and shared; trust is built; confidentiality respected, and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message but also how that message is communicated. Good communication promotes partnership.
- 1.2 The aim of this School/Home Communications Policy is to ensure that communications between St Mary's and Parents/Carers are clear, professional, and appropriate.
- 1.3 All our communications should:
  - be open, honest, ethical and professional;
  - be jargon free and easily understood by all;
  - be actioned within a clear timeframe;
  - use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience;
  - take account of relevant school policies; and
  - be compatible with our core values.

## **2. Communicating with parents/Carers**

- 2.1 St Mary's wants to have clear and effective communications with all Parents/Carers. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping Parents/Carers well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that Parents/Carers play in supporting school.
- 2.2 Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with Parents/Carers, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. To this end Parents/Carers and staff members should always be addressed in an appropriate manner, and the school will ensure that the right of its staff to be protected from inappropriate language and behaviour is enforced.
- 2.3 We will try to make written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias.

## **3. How St Mary's communicates with parents/carers**

- 3.1. Communication can take on a variety of formats, including for example, information shared on the school website, notices or the weekly newsletter circulated via Parentmail, or through more informal / non-essential content shared via twitter.
- 3.2. Written letters or telephone calls may also be used by parents and the school as outlined below.
- 3.3. It is important that information is communicated via the most appropriate method and in a consistent manner, so that the intended recipient can always be aware of where to find what they are looking for, when they need to do so.

#### **4. School Website**

- 4.1. The website address is: [www.stmaryschiswick.org.uk](http://www.stmaryschiswick.org.uk)
- 4.2. The school website provides an opportunity for staff to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.
- 4.3. It is a fantastic resource that contains most of the relevant information about the school itself, the curriculum, calendar and key events for the year, information about the teachers and policies, and sections for children and Parents/Carers.

#### **5. Home / School Communications via Parentmail**

- 5.1. The school has an e-mail/text system (Parentmail) which it uses to communicate with Parents/Carers. Any communication that needs to be sent to Parents/Carers using this system must be approved by the Headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team if the Headteacher is not available.
- 5.2. Weekly newsletters are sent via Parentmail on Friday afternoons and added to the website later. The weekly newsletters are used to highlight key dates in the coming two weeks, key achievements by pupils and staff, as well as general updates and school news.

#### **6. E-mail**

- 6.1. Any e-mails addressed to the school or a member of staff should be sent to [office@stmarys.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:office@stmarys.hounslow.sch.uk).
- 6.2. St Mary's will acknowledge e-mails from Parents/Carers within one school day. When the school needs to gather information to provide a proper response, the response will be issued as soon as possible after any information has been received and reviewed.
- 6.3. The office staff will log the email and forward it to the relevant member of staff.
- 6.4. All e-mails requiring a written answer should be responded to within 5 school days. St Mary's will not respond to anonymous emails.
- 6.5. Any e-mail sent to the office that is or could be a complaint will be forwarded promptly to the Headteacher.
- 6.6. St. Mary's cannot enter into communication via text message or any other social messaging platform (e.g. WhatsApp).

#### **7. Written Letters**

- 7.1. Written letters should be addressed to The School Office, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Duke Road, London, W4 2DF, or to the relevant member of staff at the above address.
- 7.2. Note that all letters from Parents/Carers, including those addressed to members of staff, will be photocopied and logged by the office staff.

- 7.3. The letter will then be forwarded to the relevant member of staff.
- 7.4. The response to all letters requiring a written answer should be sent within 5 school days of receipt of the letter. The response may be sent by letter or e-mail. St. Mary's will not respond to anonymous letters.
- 7.5. Any letter that is sent to the office and could be a complaint will be forwarded promptly to the Headteacher.

## **8. Telephone Calls**

- 8.1. Parents/Carers may phone the school on the following number: 020 8994 5606.
- 8.2. Classes will not be interrupted except in the case of emergency.
- 8.3. The office staff will take a message and pass it on to the relevant member of staff at the end of the school day. Staff will return calls to Parents/Carers within 3 school days and during school hours.

## **9. Social Media Sites / Blogs**

- 9.1. The school maintains a twitter feed for each year group, to relay informal, non-essential day to day information. See also the Social Media Code of Conduct for Parents

## **10. Complaints**

- 10.1. For communications relating to complaints, please refer to the St. Mary's Complaints Procedure, which can be found on the school website.
- 10.2. Any correspondence email or letter that contains a complaint should be addressed to the Headteacher.

## **11. Communications about School Trips, Visits and Activities Closure**

- 11.1. Parents/Carers are notified about school trips, visits and activities by Parentmail and payment can be made via ParentPay

## **12. Communications about Severe Weather and Emergency Closure**

- 12.1. Parents/Carers are notified if the school is closed due to severe weather or other emergency via Parentmail (e-mail or text)

## **13. Parent Forums**

- 13.1. Parent Forums are held once in each half-term at the beginning or end of school day to accommodate as many parents/carers as possible. A governor will also be in attendance. Specific topics are discussed, giving Parents and Carers a chance to hear from the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team on a range of topics pertaining to the curriculum, school facilities, amongst others, and to discuss general questions.

#### **14. Homework Diaries**

- 14.1. Parents/Carers may use the comments section of their child's homework diaries to communicate. However, this is not to be used when making formal communication.

#### **15. Written Reports and Consultations**

- 15.1. Once a year, we provide a written report to each child's Parents/Carers on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. Parents/Carers are also given an opportunity to comment on their progress.
- 15.2. In addition, Parents/Carers meet their child's teacher/s twice during the year for a private parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring term.
- 15.3. Parents are also offered the opportunity to meet their child's teacher/s at the end of the Summer term, following the End of Year Report.
- 15.4. We encourage Parents/Carers to contact the school directly in order to talk to the class teacher, if they have any questions, issues or queries regarding their child's progress or well-being. The office team will be able to make an appointment for the Parents/Carers with the teacher or alternatively the class teachers are available after school each day on the school playground.
- 15.5. When children have particular education needs, Parents/Carers will be invited to meet with their child's teacher more regularly. We will also make reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a Parents/Carers with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand communication.
- 15.6. Where relevant, the SENCO can be reached via the following e-mail:  
senco@stmarys.hounslow.sch.uk

#### **16. Communications with School Governors**

- 16.1. Parents/Carers may on occasions wish to communicate with the Governors, and this can be done using email or a letter.
- 16.2. Emails should be sent to [governors@stmarys.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:governors@stmarys.hounslow.sch.uk) and letters sent to the school office, marked for the attention of the Governors. Please include your email address in any such letters.
- 16.3. The Governing Body will acknowledge your communication within 24 hours of receiving it. Note that this may not be 24 hours from the date sent/delivered as the Governing Body is not on hand 24/7.
- 16.4. A formal response will depend on the nature of the communication, as the process may need to be followed.