

# THE STOKE POGES SCHOOL

## Communication Policy

Date Approved	September 2024
Recommended Review Period	Biennial
Date for Review	September 2026
Person Responsible for the Policy	Headteacher

### 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

### 2. Roles and responsibilities

#### 2.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with parents is 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 communicate during core school hours (8.30am to 4pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff achieve 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, or during school holidays.

Our parents code of conduct can be found on our website under Key Information, School Policies.

### **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 as our primary method of communication and in particular to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Weekly information and reminders sent each Friday
- Scheduled school closures (for example staff training days)
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Year group educational visits and residentials
- PTA events and activities
- School Bulletin – our half-termly newsletters full of information and pictures of all the exciting learning activities that have taken place in each year group. This is also uploaded to the website

#### **3.2 School calendar**

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term and each term our diary dates are circulated to parents. Parents are regularly reminded of upcoming events by emails and our Weekly Information and reminders sent each Friday.

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).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

#### **3.3 Phone calls/Teams**

- Your child's teacher may phone you to discuss your child's progress?
- We will phone you if your child becomes unwell, or if they need medical treatment.
- Our primary method of contact will be by phone, but we will also conduct meetings via Teams if appropriate.

#### **3.4 Letters**

- We send the following letters home regularly:
- Our weekly information and reminders. Details of school activities, including sports, music and parent events.

#### **3.5 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 about their achievement and progress.

### **3.6 Meetings**

We hold two parents' evenings per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum, 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 achievement, progress 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.

### **3.7 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 extra-curricular provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

### **3.8 School Gateway App**

We request that at least one parent/carer downloads the School Gateway App. This is used to:

- Report pupil absence by 9am each day of illness (alternatively a message can be left on the absence phone line or an email sent to [office@stokepoges.school](mailto:office@stokepoges.school))
- Book pupils onto school clubs
- Update parent contact details

We ask that parents do not send us messages via the App, please contact School by email or phone.

### **3.9 WhatsApp**

Parents are invited to join a class WhatsApp group which is managed by the class parent representative. The WhatsApp groups are a quick way for Teachers and Office Staff to remind parents of upcoming activities that have been communicated by email and for parents to ask any class related queries.

- The WhatsApp group is not a place to air concerns – parents will be reminded by the class rep to follow school procedures.
- As much as possible, messages should only be sent between **8am and 8pm**.
- The class rep will communicate with the class teacher so that any questions can be quickly answered and any problems solved. The teacher may also use the WhatsApp group to remind parents about mufti days, trips etc.
- In order to maintain a healthy work/life balance, our staff will not respond to queries after 6pm or during the weekend.

## **4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school**

### **4.1 Email**

Parents should always email the school office 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.

### **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 of staff within 2 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 school office to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings with 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning and 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

## **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 communication 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

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

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## 5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

- 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 every two 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
- Parents code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing
- Social media policy

## 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@stokepoges.school](mailto:office@stokepoges.school) or **01753 643 319**.
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line (for emails)
- Please include your child's full name and class in the email
- 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 here. We try to respond to all emails within two days.

I have a question about...	Who you need to talk to
Safeguarding	Ms Astley and Mrs Benians <a href="mailto:head@stokepoges.school">head@stokepoges.school</a> or <a href="mailto:safeguarding@stokepoges.school">safeguarding@stokepoges.school</a>
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing / pastoral support	In the first instance, this should be the class teacher.
Payments	Mrs Cook in the School Office
Lunches	Mrs Palmer in the School Office
School trips	Mrs Cook in the School Office
Uniform / lost and found	The Reception Team

Attendance and absence requests	Mrs Palmer in the School Office
Behaviour	In the first instance, this should be the class teacher.
School events / the school calendar	The Reception Team
Special Education Needs	Class Teacher and SENDCo
PTA	Email <a href="mailto:pta@stokepoges.school">pta@stokepoges.school</a> or call the School Office
Hiring the school premises	The Business Manager – Mrs Sheehan

### **Complaints**

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