



# Communication with Parents and Carers: Policy and Guidance

Date Procedure Adopted by Governing Body	Autumn 2019 12.12.19
Procedure Review Period	Biennial
Procedure Review Date	Autumn 2021

At the heart of our school lies an ethos built on love, unity, support and collaboration where all stakeholders work together to ensure that each child can reach their full potential in the presence of God's love.

At St. Bede's RC Primary School we believe that it is important to work in partnership with parents and carers and that clear communication between school and home is important to help children benefit as much as possible from their time in school. We are committed to improving parents/carers' understanding of our school and in encouraging them to play an active part in their child's education. We welcome discussion with parents and carers on all aspects of their child's education, their personal and social development and care and welfare. This policy describes how staff will communicate with parents and carers about these issues and how we would like parents and carers to communicate with us. *We will communicate with parents and carers in a variety of ways - these are described below (not sure if we need this sentence).*

### **Visiting School**

We have an 'Open Door' Policy here at St Bede's and parents and carers are always welcome at school. If you are visiting school to attend a scheduled meeting, one of our school admin staff members will ask you to sign into the school visitor book and will then provide you with a badge which we kindly ask you to wear at all times while you are on the school premises.

We do ask parents and carers to be understanding of the fact that staff are not always available to meet with you without notice, and we encourage all parents and carers to make appointments with staff to discuss any concerns that you may have regarding your child.

Parents and carers are always welcome to join us for Masses, collective worships, assemblies and other special events that are held throughout the year – you will be invited to these events through the school newsletter, fortnightly dates' letter or a letter of invitation.

### **Contacting School by Telephone**

The school office is open from 8.30am – 4.30pm, Monday – Friday. The telephone number is **0191 3710272**. Please contact a member of the admin staff if you would like a message to be passed to your child's teacher. Please be aware that the phone is unlikely to be answered at hours outside of these times but you are welcome to leave an answer phone message.

If you have an urgent enquiry that can't be discussed with your child's teacher or you have a safeguarding concern, please contact a member of the admin staff and ask to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The members of the Senior Leadership Team are:

- Mrs E Alderson, Head teacher
- Mrs A Holtham, Deputy Head teacher

### **Email**

We are aware that some parents and carers may prefer to be contacted by email or would rather email the school to contact a member of staff, rather than via the telephone. Emails can be used for general communication instead of using the telephone, however, emails must only be communicated to the school email address [st.bedes.rc.sacriston@durhamlearning.net](mailto:st.bedes.rc.sacriston@durhamlearning.net) and not to staff's email addresses. Please note that if your email requires a response, a member of staff will ensure that your email will be replied to within a period of **3-5 working days**.

### **Text Messages**

We use a text messaging service to contact parents and carers with reminders about school events, details of class trips as well as any urgent information – for example; if it is necessary to close the school in an emergency. Please help us by making sure that we always have your correct mobile telephone number. If your details change at any time, please notify us of such change in details as soon as possible.

### **Newsletters**

The Head teacher will write a newsletter each term which will be sent home with children. This will provide general information for parents and carers in addition to items of news and event dates for the term. The school office also writes a fortnightly newsletter. Newsletters will be e-mailed or sent as a paper copy, depending on what you have specified as your preferred method of receiving these.

### **School Letters**

During the year we may write to you with information about activities that will involve your child – these could be educational visits, sporting activities or special events in school. At times this will be emailed, however if it requires a response it will be distributed to the children to take home.

### **Website**    [\*\*www.stbedessacriston.co.uk\*\*](http://www.stbedessacriston.co.uk)

The school website is a useful tool in finding out information about our school. Information such as newsletters, school policies, information on admissions, holiday dates and termly events, SEND information reports and other useful information can be found on the school website.

### **Twitter**

We have a school twitter page @StBedeSacriston which we use to publicise information about events in school including photographs of children's activities and details of events. It is a positive way of promoting events in school, although it is not intended to be used as a two-way method of communication.

### **Autumn Term Welcome Evening**

At the beginning of each school year we will hold a Welcome Evening for each class. This will provide an opportunity to meet your child's new class teacher early in the school year as well as provide you with some information and routines for the year ahead.

## **For Parents/Carers of Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

### **Children with Identified SEND Needs**

For parents or carers of children who are listed on our SEND register, these parents/carers will be asked to review their child's SEND support plan at our parents' consultation afternoons and discuss possible new targets, which will then be written into a new plan by teachers and shared with parents.

### **Children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)**

For children who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), we will arrange an annual review meeting in the Summer term to discuss your child's progress, health and wellbeing and agree targets for their educational, social and emotional development.

We will inform you of the arrangements for this meeting as soon as possible. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact the school office as soon as possible and we will arrange an alternative date and time. When we inform you of the date of your child's review we will also ask you if there is anyone in particular that you would like to be invited to your child's review meeting – please let us know as soon as possible. We will invite the other professionals who work with you and your child to attend.

### **Transition Meetings/ Days**

During the Summer term, in addition to the 'Changeover Day' where all children move into the new class for the day, there will be opportunities for extra transition time for those children who may benefit from some extra support transitioning into the next year group. Year 6 pupils also have transition days at the secondary school they are attending.

### **Communication With Staff**

#### **Contacting Staff Outside of School**

We welcome discussion with parents and carers on all aspects of their child's education, and personal and social development. It is the school's policy that these discussions must take place on the school premises or in other professional settings. This enables us to have the right information available to discuss your child's needs.

Please note that discussions or contact with staff must not take place via any unofficial channels. Staff should not be contacted outside of working hours. Please do not contact staff outside of their professional role or by personal communication such as their private email addresses, personal telephone numbers or via social media such as Facebook or Twitter.

### **Respectful Communication**

We strive to communicate respectfully with parents at all times and politely request that parents are respectful to staff in all forms of communication: in person, by telephone or email. Please be aware that abusive or threatening behaviour or language towards any staff member will not be tolerated.

Policy agreed by the Governing Body of St Bede's.