

Home-school communication policy

Bishop Ellis Catholic Voluntary Academy



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Signed: 	
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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 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)
- › Manage access to Class Dojo
- › Manage access to Arbor (School Management System)

Urgent communication must always go through the school office. Staff will **aim** to respond to other communication between the hours of 8:30am and 4pm Monday to Friday or their working hours (if they work part-time), and within 48 hours. 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.

A copy of our internet acceptable use policy can be found on the school website

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
- › 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 **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside the hours of 8:30am and 4pm Monday to Friday or their working hours (if they work 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 Email via Arbor

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- › School newsletters
- › Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- › School surveys or consultations
- › Educational visits
- › Payments
- › Events in school.
- › SEND passports
- › Individual letters relating to their child/ren
- › Individual letters relating to their conduct on school grounds.

3.2 Class Dojo

We will message parents about:

- › Upcoming school events
- › Class activities or teacher requests

- › Short-notice changes to the school day
- › Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- › Reminders about events in school
- › School Uniform reminders
- › Health and Safety reminders.
- › Curriculum Information
- › Positive behaviour

3.3 School calendar

Our school website and newsletters includes a full school calendar for the year.

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).

Please note that some sporting events may be arranged at shorter notice.

3.4 Phone calls

You will receive a phone call for any absences from school that are not reported.

You may receive a phone call from school for admin related queries.

When a teacher needs to speak to a parent, we would always endeavour to do this face to face unless there is an emergency. If this is not possible then teachers will ring parents to arrange a meeting or discuss anything- both positive and negative.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly: (this is almost always done via Arbor.)

- › Letters about trips and visits
- › Consent forms
- › Our school newsletter

3.6 Homework books/reading diaries

We encourage parents to engage with their child's learning outside of school. Parents are expected to sign their children's reading diaries.

3.7 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 Phonics Screening Check and KS2 SATs tests.

3.8 Meetings

We hold 1 parents' meeting per term. 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.

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 (SEND), or who have other additional needs, will also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

3.9 School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- › School times and term dates
- › School Meals
- › 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.

3.10 Social Media

The school uses Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to celebrate successes of children in school. The school does not respond to comments on social media.

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

Parents should always email the school office about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.2 Class Dojo

Parents can communicate with their child/ren's teacher via private messaging. If parents have any concerns regarding learning, behaviour or pastoral, they should contact the school office to arrange a conversation with the teacher.

Work can be uploaded to a child's portfolio as required.

4.3 Phone calls

Parents should always report a child's absence by phone.

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 two 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 member of staff within five 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
- › Same day changes to collection of children.

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 call or email the school office to book an appointment.

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 or behaviour.
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

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 via Class Dojo in many languages via the translate function.

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 the policy every two years.

The policy will be approved by the local governing body.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- CMAT behaviour expectations.
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Staff wellbeing

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

We believe in working in partnership with our parent community.

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 admin@bishopellis@leics.sch.uk. 0116 2695510
- › Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- › 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 there.

We try to respond to all emails within five days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher
Payments	School office/
School trips	School office or class teacher
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's class teacher
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: the school office If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office and complete the request form.
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher initially.
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	Class teacher initially. SENDCo
Before and after-school clubs	School office
PTA	FOBE representatives
Governing body	School office
Catering/meals	School office

Complaints

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

A copy of this can be found on the school website.