



# Communications Policy

*Our motto is: 'Let your light shine... as you grow', (inspired by Matthew 5: 15-16)*

*Our vision is: 'We nurture our pupils to be the best they can be in every way - in an inclusive and supportive environment, rooted in Christian teachings.'*

<b>This policy is in force until further notice from:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025
<b>This policy must be reviewed by:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2026
<b>Policy Author(s):</b>	Headteacher and SLT
<b>Location of publication of policy:</b>	Website
<b>Approved by:</b>	Headteacher & SLT

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Contacting the School .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Communication Between Home and School .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Social Media .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. In the event you do not receive a response .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## 1. Introduction

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives. Modern communication methods can mean more efficient sharing of information, though this needs to be structured to ensure that it is manageable for staff whose primary responsibility is to teach young people.

Effective communication between parents and carers and schools is critical for creating a positive learning environment. We expect all parents and carers to communicate in a respectful manner with staff. Disrespectful, abusive, or threatening communications will not be tolerated. In such instances, we will take appropriate action, which may include restricting communication or involvement with the school and involving law enforcement authorities if necessary. Our school community is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all students, staff, and families, and we appreciate your support in helping us achieve this goal through constructive and respectful communication.

## 2. Contacting the School

### 2.1 Email

Please use the general office email address: [info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk](mailto:info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk) if you need to contact staff. Our admin team will be able to direct your query to the correct member of staff.

- Teachers are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day and the school does not expect work email accounts to be checked during a teacher's personal time.
- We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and within three working days. Part-time staff may take longer to reply. Those sent at weekends may not be dealt with until the following working week, and emails sent in holidays will probably elicit no reply until term time.
- Teachers on occasion may find it easier to email you regarding your child using the contact details we have on our system. It is acceptable to continue these conversations directly with the member of staff once they have contacted you, but any subsequent new question or issue should be raised through the [info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk](mailto:info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk) email address so that it can be tracked and routed accordingly. Please note that we do not give out staff email addresses to parents and carers and that all communication with staff should be via the school office.
- For notification of medical appointments or requests for leave of absence please email at [info@st-marycofe.essex.sch.uk](mailto:info@st-marycofe.essex.sch.uk) in the first instance.

### 2.2 Telephone

- For pupil absences please call the office number on 01799 523384, option 1 following the Attendance Policy <https://www.stmaryssw.org.uk/policies/> regarding reporting absences.
- If you need to call after 3.00pm for a change of pick up please call the school office on 01799 523384.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the school office who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will aim to respond to you within three working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

### 3. Communication Between Home and School

Our commitment to effectively and efficiently communicate with all parents and carers is paramount so that we can collaborate to educate young people in the best way possible.

#### 3.1 Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

- Classroom Teacher
- Head of Key Stage (Mr Brown for Key Stage 1, Mr Clarke for Key Stage 2) or Inclusion Leader (Mrs Robinson) if SEND matter
- Curriculum Leader (Mr Pike)
- Headteacher (Mr Jarman)

Please note that meetings **should always be pre-arranged** with members of staff.

- We recognise that sometimes you receive news that may cause upset. It is not appropriate to come to school expecting to speak to a particular member of staff immediately, including a member of the Senior Leadership Team, without an appointment. Appointments can be made via the school office team, and a pre-arranged meeting will allow us to have the right information to hand and to meet with you at a time that both suits you and fits with that teacher's timetable and other fixed commitments. When arranging a meeting please outline in your original communications with the school office or member of staff what the meeting is regarding.
- If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a member of the Senior Leadership Team) to see you.
- For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

#### 3.2 Contacting You

Our preferred method of contacting you is via email.

Parent Teacher Consultation (PTC) evening and One Plan/SEND appointments are booked via the School Cloud online booking system via the school website.

Details surrounding co-curricular activities are shared with both parents/carers and via the school website and the newsletters.

Sports teams and fixtures are all managed through Miss Driscoll (Sports Coach) and the school office team.

If you need support with accessing these systems, please contact [info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk](mailto:info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk)

### 4. School Website, Newsletters, Class Updates and Social Media

#### 4.1 School website and Newsletters

We use our Newsletters and School Website to promote student achievements, subject information and key events at the school. This is for the benefit of parents and students. We also occasionally post important

information which we feel would benefit pupils and their families on the Facebook page -Facebook @ St Mary's C of E (VA) Primary School, Saffron Walden

We understand that parents and carers particularly enjoy updates and photographs from school trips. The primary concern of staff needs to be the safety and learning of students on the trip and there may not be time to post about trips in detail. Parents and carers should also be aware that we are often in parts of the country where there is limited signal, so it may only be possible to update at the end of the day although we will endeavour to update parents/carers on the return time for trips, when we can.

#### **4.2 Appropriate Use of Social Media**

We are aware that some parents/carers have set up group chats for classes or year groups on WhatsApp, Facebook and other platforms. Whilst we recognise that these can be useful for some parents/carers, these are not endorsed by the school, and we will never post official messages on these forums. On occasion, information provided by parents on these forums can be inaccurate or not representative of the school's view. Please rely on official school emails, the school website or articles/information in the school newsletter or Facebook page. Furthermore, in line with our school values of compassion, friendship and respect please also refrain from derogatory comments about pupils or staff members in these social media groups. Please bring any issues directly to the school so that we can work with you to solve these problems in partnership.

#### **5. In the Event you do not receive a response**

If you have not received a response from the school within three working days, please contact the school by emailing [info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk](mailto:info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk) or telephone the school and we will follow up your enquiry.

Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.