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**St. Matthew’s Primary School Communication Policy and Procedures**

**Introduction**

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.

**Aim**

To ensure that St. Matthew’s Primary School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our pupils, with their parents and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Objectives

All communications at St. Matthew’s Primary School should:

• Keep staff, pupils, parents, and stakeholders well informed.

• Be open, honest, ethical and professional.

• Be jargon free and easily understood by all.

• Be actioned within a reasonable time.

• Use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience.

• Take account of relevant school policies.

• Be compatible with our core values and School Improvement Plan.

**Responsibilities**

This section details the responsibilities of the different groups within the school.

**Senior leadership team (SLT)**

• To ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner and via appropriate channels, where practicable face to face.

• To ensure that staff have the relevant information available to communicate with colleagues effectively.

• To maintain open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comment from all staff.

• To keep parents informed of developments and concerns.

**All staff**

• To communicate regularly with each other, preferably face to face, to ensure information is available and understood within the context of the classroom and working environment.

• To ensure they are informed and have access to information in order to be as effective as possible in their role and to support their work within the school.

• To use open channels of two-way communication to keep the leadership team and colleagues informed.

**Internal Methods of Communication**

• All staff receive an information folder providing them with important information about organisation and procedures within the school

• An integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff both formal and informal: e.g. teachers’ meetings, teaching assistant meetings, Office meetings, Key Stage meetings, whole staff meetings

• All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda

• E-mail is a quick, effective way of communicating information however it should not replace face to face meetings where discussion is required

• Written communications should be placed in pigeon holes, in the staffroom, which staff must check daily and clear regularly and where possible e-mailed to staff

• Staff meetings & SLT meetings take place every week. Events are discussed in advance at meetings but staff also have the responsibility to check future actions

• Support Staff meeting and Office meetings take place once a term.

• Weekly Overviews are placed in the pigeon holes in the staffroom on a Friday and e-mailed to staff

• The annual overview whiteboard in the staffroom is to be used by all staff to add information and the small white board is used for day to day notices

• Reminders or letters to individual parents are sent to classes to be given out by the class teachers and must be given to children the same day. Every class must have a system for distributing letters and other materials to go home with the children.

• The schools uses Groupcall to communicate with parents by text or e-mail

• A list of all those not subscribing to Groupcall will be kept by the office & hard copies sent to all those on the list

• Telephone contacts to the office from parents will be recorded on Parental Communication Sheet by office and given to appropriate member of staff. Parental Communication Procedure should be followed.

**External methods of communication**

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Our aim is to have clear and effective communications with all parents and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting school.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional.

To this end parents should always be addressed in an appropriate manner.

All staff should not accept friendship requests from parents on social media. All staff should follow EDC Policy and Procedures.

We will try to make written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias.

**Communications with Parents/Carers**

**E-mail/Text:** The school has an e-mail/text system (Groupcall) which it uses to communicate with parents. Any communication that needs to be sent to parents using this system must be approved by the Head Teacher. If a parent communicates with the school using email with a complaint or a matter that requires an action, a copy should be printed & filed. Staff should forward relevant emails from parents to the Head Teacher and should always do so if the content is a complaint. All e-mails requiring an answer should be responded to within 5 school days. E-mail communications concerning a child are kept for in PPRs.

**Telephone calls:** Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency.

**Social Media Sites/Blogs:** Staff are advised not to communicate with parents via social networking sites or accept them as “friends”. Staff will not accept pupils or ex-pupils as “friends” and follow EDC Policy and Procedures.

**Written Reports**: Once a year, we provide a written report to each child’s parents on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. Pupils are also given an opportunity to comment on their progress.

In addition, parents meet their child’s teacher/s twice during the year for a private consultation at a Parents’ Evening. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child’s progress or well-being. When children have particular education needs parents 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 parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at our school, or to receive and understand communication. Parents of children with a GIRF Me will have the opportunity to review the Plan twice in a year.

**School Website:** The school website provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

We recognise that children’s protection is a shared responsibility, and that St. Matthew’s Primary School should provide a safe and secure environment. If any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed to the Children Protection Co-ordinator who may share this information with Social Services.

**How will this policy be monitored and evaluated?**

This policy will be monitored through on-going school self-evaluation. The Head Teacher will use a variety of methods to evaluate this policy with staff, parents.