

**St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Isleworth
Communication Guidelines for Staff and Parents**



School Mission Statement

*Our school family at St Mary's wants this to be
a safe, caring, creative and happy place,
where we all have a fair chance to learn
and grow together and to do the best we can.
We do this by knowing and loving Jesus more every day
and by following his teaching in a joyful way.*

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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 guidance is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards 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
- Regularly (biennially) reviewing this guidance

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this guidance and the school's staff handbook
- 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 not** respond to communications outside of school hours, or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

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 on the school website or in their child/ren's bag

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 Weekly Newsletter

We use the newsletter (longer newspaper in the final week of half term and terms) to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Health and Safety updates such as parking, building work and infections
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days or a change in Bank Holidays)
- School surveys or consultations

3.2 Text messages sent via the Parent Hub App

To receive these messages you must download and register on the app using the instructions here: www.bit.ly/SMIAPP. We will text parents about:

- Regarding payments including lunch bookings
- To inform you about short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- School Updates and news
- To inform you that a letter has been uploaded for the whole school, year group or your child's class.

3.3 School calendar

Our school website www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk includes a full school calendar and term dates are uploaded here: www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/term-dates.html.

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).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar and a letter uploaded to the year group letters page or whole school letters page.

3.4 Phone calls

Teachers are available to speak to you (outside of teaching time) during the school day.

3.5 Letters – all letters (apart from those requesting a meeting) are uploaded onto the letters page of our website: www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/letters-and-updates.html. From here letters can be translated with an online translator.

When we upload a letter we will send you a text to alert you. Hard copies are available on request from the school office. Letters cover these areas:

- Letters about trips and visits. Please reply to reply@smi.hounslow.sch.uk if you are available to help.
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Consent forms (signed once when your child starts the school)
- Our termly year group newsletter

3.6 Homework books/school planners/reading records

If you wish your child to use a homework diary please supply them with one. Most year groups set homework 4 times a week. You can see our homework policy here: www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/helping-at-home/home-policy-2019.html. Class homework timetables are on the class pages of the website.

Children up to Y3 have a reading record which you will find in their book bag. Please complete it weekly.

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 KS1 and KS2 SATs tests
- A report on the results of public examinations – uploaded onto the website here: www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/about-us--dates.html.
- Information about vocational qualifications gained (or credits gained towards these)

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.8 Meetings

We hold 3 parents' evening(s) per year these are booked using links published in the school newsletters in the weeks potentially the parents' evening. In the summer term no appointment is needed as we operate a drop-in afternoon. 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 (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may 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
- Important events and announcements
- Letters and Newsletters
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Please 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 1 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 you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 2 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- To notify us that another adult is picking your child up

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

If you are not regularly in school parents can telephone to ask questions or raise concerns as appropriate.

4.3 Meetings/In person

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the school office, or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 3 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your child's home environment, or their wellbeing

Teachers are available to meet you without an appointment from 8:45-8:55 and from 3:20-3:30 most days.

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 (such as email alerts and newsletters) in English and we hope parents will use online translators such as translate.google.com to translate letters and texts.

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 guidance and will review the guidance every 2 years.

7. Links with other policies

The guidance should be read alongside our policies on:

- Staff handbook
- Complaints policy which is the Diocesan policy and is updated when a newer version is released.

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
- 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 (including the FAQs page www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/faqs.html), much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within 5 days. Office hours are 8:30am to 4pm.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher in person or via the school office
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher in person or via the school office
Payments including booking school lunches	Mrs Whyms in the school office
School trips	Mrs Gardner or Mrs Whyms in the school office. Please use: reply@smi.hounslow.sch.uk
Uniform/lost and found	Mrs Gardner or Mrs Whyms in the school office. Please use: reply@smi.hounslow.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, use the form on our homepage or call 020 85601766 and use the option. If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact Mrs Whyms in the school office
Bullying and behavior	Your child's class teacher in the first instance and then Mrs Formby (Assistant Head) or Mr Cobbold.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
School events/the school calendar	Mrs Gardner in the school office please use office@smi.hounslow.sch.uk
Special educational needs	Our SENCO Mrs Winchester via the school office
Before and after-school clubs	Mrs Whyms in the school office
Hiring the school premises	Mr Marsh via the school office
The PTA	The PTA chairs via their facebook page https://www.facebook.com/StMarysSleworthPTA/
The governing board	The Chair of Governors (Dr Jim Park) via the school office
Catering/meals	Mrs Sarah Inwood – catering manager via the school office

Complaints

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

http://www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/_Media/school-complaints-procedure-2.pdf