

St Oswald's C of E Primary School

Home School Communication Policy



Policy Approved: May 2026

Next reviewed: May 2027

1. Introduction and aims

At St Oswald's we are 'one body, many parts' which reflects our commitment to all our stakeholders and the role each plays in our school community. We want to strike a healthy balance in our communication which is not overwhelming or intrusive for any party. We want parents to feel that they are informed and are clear on the part they play in our school family, and we want our staff to feel that communication to parents is meaningful, achievable and not burdensome.

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 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).

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30am to 3.20pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time). Where staff cannot correspond with parents in a way which

is mutually agreeable, senior leaders may lead the communication in their place. 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.

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.
- Responding 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 not be tolerated and any incidents of such behaviours will be directed to the senior leadership team. School will always try to mediate with parents to find a method of communication which is constructive but appropriate measures will be taken by the school if disrespect, abuse or threats continue.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30am – 3.20pm) or during school holidays, though staff may choose to do so.

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

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

- Upcoming school events.
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days).
- School surveys or consultations.
- Class activities or teacher requests.
- Letters about trips and visits.
- Consent forms.

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Accidents involving a headbump.
- Short-notice changes to the school day.

- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather).

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the year and is regularly updated.

3.4 Phone calls

We will call parents for the following reasons:

- To communicate first aid concerns which need to be shared immediately.
- To communicate that a child is unwell and may need to go home.
- To seek permission for something unexpected in school e.g. photo permission for an unexpected newspaper article.
- To establish consent where e-mails have not been responded to.
- To discuss behaviour incidents in school which staff were not able to communicate at the end of the day, or which put a parent in a difficult position. This may include to suspend a child.
- To discuss academic or SEND plan progress with a parent who has arranged to do so in place or a face to face appointment.

3.5 Homework books/school planners

- Reading records are provided for children to record their home reading. Comments may also be added by staff and reading volunteers.
- Parents are expected to make entries in this every week up to the end of Year 4 or when their child is reading confidently in their own head, whichever comes last. Children are then expected to complete their reading record themselves.
- In Year 6, children receive a homework planner which parents are expected to sign as recognition that they are aware of homework for the week.

3.6 Reports

Parents will 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 record of their official Year 1 phonics screening score (and again in Year 2 if necessary), their Year 4 Multiplication Check score and their Year 6 End of KS2 SATs test results. Phonics and multiplication results will be part of their end of year report. KS2 SATs results will come separately.

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

3.7 Meetings

We hold 2 parents' evening(s) per year. 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.

3.8 School website

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

- School times and term dates.
- 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.

4. How parents can communicate with the school

4.1 Email

Parents should e-mail school as the first point of contact in non-emergencies.

All emails relating to absences should be sent to the Office email address – office@stoswaldsleeds.org.

Year group queries

E-mails can go directly to the year group e-mail address. These are:

- Reception@stoswaldsleeds.org
- Y1@stoswaldsleeds.org
- Y2@stoswaldsleeds.org
- Y3@stoswaldsleeds.org
- Y4@stoswaldsleeds.org
- Y5@stoswaldsleeds.org
- Y@stoswaldsleeds.org

For general queries, and for queries which parents wish to be directed to the headteacher, these should be sent to office@stoswaldsleeds.org

We aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days. Where a meeting is requested, we aim to provide an opportunity for this within five working days, as per the availability of the parent.

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

4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff other than the class teacher 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 (for example, that person is absent or this occurs during their non-working days) 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 and share their concern with the office team. Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies.
- Safeguarding or welfare issues.
- A change in pick up arrangements for the same day.

For more general enquiries, please e-mail and a return call will be made if requested.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address, or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request. SEND review meetings may have a longer time frame in line with the review process.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day, we recommend that parents e-mail to request a meeting then about the following in more detail:

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

4.4 Recording Meeting

Meetings with school may not be recorded without the full permission of all those in the meeting, and with 48 hours notice of an intent to record the meeting. We reserve the right to disallow the recording of meetings.

School, and other agencies working with school, may use AI to record the minutes of meetings. These will be checked, carried out in line with GDPR, and only visible to parties within the meeting.

5. Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

5.1 Parents with additional communication needs

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

- All whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats upon request.
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible.

- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the school website.
- Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavor to provide information in an accessible format.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats.
- Sign language interpreters for meetings.

Please contact the school office to discuss these.

5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)

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 year.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.