

Communication Policy

**St. Lawrence CE (VA) Primary
School**

**With
Little Lawrences**

Napton

Agreed by Full Governing Body: November 2024

To be reviewed: November 2026

Aim

At St Lawrence C of E Primary School, we endeavour to ensure that communication among all members of the school community (staff, parents, helpers and the wider community) is both effective and efficient at all times. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated.

Definition of communication

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It involves:

- Respectful listening
- The management of relationships and appropriate involvement of people
- An awareness of attitude and behaviour as well as the clarity of the message
- Timely, effective action if required

Objectives:

All communications at St Lawrence C of E Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon-free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- Be actioned within a reasonable time
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience
- Take account of relevant school policies
- Be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Vision and School Development Plan.
- Be shared in a way that is GDPR Compliant.

External methods of communication

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Good communication between the school and the home is essential and is a two-way process. In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with 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 the school.

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

We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our school.

Communications with parents/carers

Website

The school website provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. The curriculum page will include termly overviews for each year group and update parents on what their children have been learning. The website also has the school prospectus, all the latest dates and events related to the school and holds copies of recent newsletters.

Email

All journals are emailed to parents on a weekly basis.

The school promotes the use of the email system in ensuring general messages and information are communicated to parents. Any communication that needs to be sent to parents using this system is approved by the headteacher. Parents are encouraged to respond to general requests using email where possible. However, it is acknowledged that electronic communication will not take the place of face-to-face conversation.

All email communications should be sent to the school office in the first instance: office@stlawrenceprimaryschool.co.uk , unless there is an alternative arrangement with the class teacher for specific circumstances.

Whilst most communication will be sent electronically; on occasion the school will send a letter to parents via their child. It is also acknowledged that there are some families who do not have electronic means of communication and arrangements are made accordingly.

Telephone

Parents are encouraged to phone the school if there is any immediate information the school needs to know e.g. pupil sickness or to make an appointment with a staff member. The school will endeavour to respond quickly and appropriately. The school will also phone the parents if there is an urgent issue concerning a pupil or specific issue.

Google Classroom

Children will be given a Google Classroom account from Year 1 upwards and parents/carers will be invited by school administrators to join as Guardians once their child has logged into their Google classroom account for the first time. Parents/carers can opt in to receive an email summary of their child's classwork, homework, class activities, notifications. There is NOT the facility for parents to contact teachers directly via google classroom but children can submit homework, chat with classmates and message their teacher. Whole class communications are sent using Google Classrooms to inform children and parents about reading books, PE kits and additional equipment they may need in school. Homework is set using Google Classroom, which is the marked and commented on by the class teacher.

Tapestry

Tapestry is used by Little Lawrences and Reception class to communicate special events, information about funding for pre-school children, weekly update and photographs of children's learning and development.

School Money

School Money will send an email and text message to parents when invoices or payments are added to the cashless system. Periodically, overdue payments will trigger reminder emails and text messages.

School prospectus

The school prospectus contains a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school. This is updated every year.

Raising concerns

The school aims to resolve all issues as speedily and informally as possible. However, where it has not been possible to come to a satisfactory conclusion the Complaints Policy be used and parents will be communicated with in accordance with that policy.

Social networking sites/blogs, etc

Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as their 'friends'. The exception to this rule would be where parents are also members of staff, or there are pre-existing relationships due to the nature of a close-knit community of a village school.

Written reports

Once a year, in July, we provide a full written report to each child's parents on their progress in each subject. This report gives a summary of the pupil's academic development; parents are encouraged to take up any queries directly with the teacher through the drop-in sessions provided. In the Spring Term we also provide an interim report, before the Spring Term parent's evening, which details current attainment level and forecasted attainment level for the end of the academic year.

In Little Lawrence there are three reports annually as per EYFS requirements: report on entry, a report in January and an end of year report in July.

Parent/Teacher meetings

In addition, parents meet their child's teacher twice a year for a consultation at parents' evening (in the autumn and spring terms). This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement.

Teachers welcome the opportunity to talk to parents as and when issues arise, either at the end of the school day for brief communication of relevant information or by arranging an appointment if there is the requirement for a more private or detailed conversation.

Following end of year reports in July, there is an open afternoon drop-in session for parents/carers to view books and have a brief informal discussion with teachers.

When children have special educational needs, or if they are making less than the expected progress, we find it helpful to meet with parents more regularly. We will also make any 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 a communication.

Communication with the community

Members of the local community are invited to school functions such as assemblies, Harvest Festival, Christmas carol services and school productions. The children visit the church for Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and Leavers as well as visit local community at Christmas to sing carols and take part in community events.

All staff are encouraged to maintain an appropriate work-life balance, therefore if staff receive communication outside of normal working hours (8am – 4pm) there is no expectation to respond. In the case of emergency information being passed to a member of staff this should be immediately forwarded to the headteacher who will take appropriate action.

Parents Communication with the School

Parents are expected to communicate with the school in a respectful way – inappropriate, rude or discriminatory language is not acceptable. Communication made with the school is recorded and can be accessed by DSL and leadership.

Parents are responsible for keeping the school informed of absences, keeping contact information up to date and informing the school of any change in circumstance and any other relevant information regarding their child.

Communication from Parents	Suggested response time
Phone calls	Returned within 24hrs of parents call or 1 working day
Email	Where possible an initial response same day. Full email or phone call reply within 72rs of receipt or 3 working days Emails sent at after 4.00pm, on weekends or in holidays may not be dealt with until the following working day or until term time. Some teachers work part-time, therefore if you have only email one class teacher you will have to wait till their contracted working days to receive a response. It would be beneficial to ensure emails are sent to both job-share teachers.
Written letter	Acknowledge receipt of letter within 72 hours or 3 working days Full response within 5 working days

Information required	Appropriate contact
Questions or concerns regarding a child's progress/attainment	Class teacher
Questions or concerns related to friendships or behaviour	Class teacher
Safeguarding	Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Hanna Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Miss Shepherd, Miss Moss, Mrs White, Mrs O'Shaughnessy, Mrs Evans
Parents of children with SEND	SENCO – Miss Shepherd SENCO3589@we-learn.com
Complaint and School related items	Headteacher – Mrs Hanna head@stlawrenceprimaryschool.co.uk

Internal methods of communication

Meetings

There is an integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff, both formal and informal and this includes a weekly staff meeting. All formal meetings should be structured, minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. It is important that time is put aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to subject leader's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans. For all other meetings notes should be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff.

The approved minutes of staff meetings are available to all staff via email or the staff meeting record book (located in headteacher's office) and can always be requested from the meeting Chair.

Email

Information and notification of initiatives are communicated through the use of email where appropriate. Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information; however, it does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required.

Staff will endeavour to not send emails outside of working hours, or if the staff member chooses to do this then recipients will not be expected to respond.

Mobile phones

EYFS – Under no circumstances is mobile phone use permitted in the Early Years Unit which includes Little Lawrences and Reception.

Staff - Mobile phones should not be used during lessons or when in contact with the children. In exceptional cases, such as family illness, the circumstances should be discussed with the headteacher. Non-intrusive work-related mobile phone use is acceptable during PPA or management time. Mobile phone use is only permitted in adult only areas which include main school office, headteacher's office and the staff room. During trips and off-site provision, staff should ensure they can be contacted by mobile phone at all times – this will be provided by the school. Personal mobile devices should only be used in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be made aware of this post use.

Pupils – Pupils should not bring mobile phones to school. Any exceptions must be discussed with and approved by the headteacher.

Parents/carers/visitors– Use of mobile phones whilst on the school site should be *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment. Parents are not permitted to photograph or film school events such as shows or sports day without first being invited to do so by the headteacher. When photograph and film is permitted images that include any children other than their own should not be published (e.g. on social networking sites) without the permission of the parents/carers of those other children. Parents and visitors are required to turn phones off when volunteering in classrooms and at Forest School, these should be left with administration staff where they will be secured in lockers. If parent/carers need to use their phone this is only permitted in adult only areas which include the main school office and the headteacher's office. Parents and carers should not be accessing the staff room. ***Under no circumstances*** is mobile phone use permitted when helping with swimming changing. Making voice recordings on a mobile phone or other device during meetings or discussions with staff or governors is not permitted.

Smart watches

Staff – Staff may wear smart watches however it is not appropriate for staff to be communicating through smart watches during lessons or when in contact with children. Smart watch use for communicating is only permitted in adult only areas which include main school office, headteacher's office and the staff room.

Under no circumstances are smart watches with photographic function permitted in any are of the school or Little Lawrences.

Pupils – Pupils are permitted to wear smart watches but all messaging capability must be turned off.

Smart watches with photographic function are not permitted for pupils to wear or have in the school building.

Parents/Carers/Visitors – All visitors to our school should not be using smart watches to communicate and those with photographic function should be left in the school office. ***Under no circumstances are smart watches with photographic function permitted in any are of the school or Little Lawrences.***

Staff notice boards

The staff notice board is located in the staffroom.