Christ Church and Holy Trinity Primary Schools
Communications Policy
June 2024

Our Christian Vision

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus Christ tells us that God is like a generous farmer and we are like the soil in which he plants his seeds. At Christ Church and Holy Trinity Schools, we are learning how to be good soil, so that we grow to love God, our neighbour and ourselves and thereby enable every member of our community to flourish. Each day, we endeavour to face up to all that challenges our growth, in order to see with our eyes, hear with our ears and understand with our hearts God's Good News for the world and to cultivate the virtues with which to produce an abundant harvest.

Our Mission

Christ Church & Holy Trinity Schools are dedicated to providing a nurturing environment in which all children have the opportunity to reach their maximum academic and social potential. Excellent teaching, learning and relationships are at the heart of our schools.

Aims:

We have two very happy schools, and the objectives outlined in this policy are key to ensuring our communications are effective and support our positive ethos.

At Christ Church and Holy Trinity Primary Schools we strive to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

We believe that high quality communication amongst staff and with students, parents, governors and members of the wider school community is of the utmost importance.

Objectives:

All communications at our schools should:

• Keep staff, students, parents and other stakeholders well informed

• Be open, honest, ethical and professional

• Use jargon free English and be easily understood by all

• Be imparted in a timely manner

• Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, method and participants.

• Take account of relevant school policies e.g., Confidentiality, Safeguarding, Equalities

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Positive Communication Principles

Communicating effectively and positively with each other and all stakeholders is of the utmost importance, as is made clear in our mission statement.

Respectful and empathetic communications between staff and all members of the wider community is paramount and one of the key ingredients that makes our schools happy and successful. Damage caused by thoughtless words and criticism is very hard to repair. All staff share the responsibility for upholding professionalism and best practice in communications, when dealing with one another and the wider community of stakeholders.

Please do:

- Think before you speak negatively about anyone else, be it a member of staff, parent, child or other member of the school community. These words will also say something about you.
- If you have an issue and are not sure how to deal with it, always seek out a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the matter or ask for advice about how to deal with it.
- When dealing with something contentious, always pause to reflect thoroughly and calmly on the issue.
- Be quick to apologise if you think you may have offended someone.

Letters

The Senior Leadership Team will endeavour to reply to parents' letters as quickly as possible. Letters will be acknowledged in three working days and a reply sent within ten working days when necessary. Copies of correspondence with parents will be placed on student files.

E-mail

Email is a quick fast and effective way of communicating information however it should not replace face to face meetings where some discussion is required. All written communications can easily be misinterpreted, and offence can easily be caused. If the schools receive a detailed e mail that may have contentious content, staff will not always reply by e mail but instead elect to call a meeting to discuss the matter.

We ask that parents do not use e mail to correspond with teachers as additional correspondence is time consuming and the preparation for the children's lessons is of the highest priority. Parents of children with complex needs can e mail the SENCO and where appropriate this will BE shared with class teachers.

All e-mail sent from school should be treated as letters and should be checked carefully.

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Please be aware that Emails 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.

Telephone Calls

Staff will contact a parent by telephone when it is appropriate. A record of this call will be made if it is important, and actions need to be taken as a result of the conversation.

Meetings with Parents

Any parent wishing to meet with a member of staff should contact the school in advance and request a meeting with the member of staff. This request should be responded to within the usual communications protocols and in a timely manner. Parents should not come to the school to talk to a member of staff without an appointment. If a parent comes to the school without a prior appointment, the member of staff may still choose to meet with them, but there should be no expectation to do so. Parents (like all visitors) should report to the office prior to meeting with a member of staff.

If a meeting with a parent is taking place outside normal school hours, the member of staff should ensure that another colleague is in the same building.

It is perfectly acceptable to call a meeting to a close in order to allow time for further investigation. In the event of a parent or parents becoming angry or abusive, Staff should call the meeting to a close.

The member of staff involved should report any such an incident to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and seek further advice. The Senior Leader should either accompany the member of staff to any further meeting with the parent or hold it without the original member of staff present.

Newsletter

This is sent out weekly to share information with parents and children and the wider community and to celebrate all that is happening in our schools. It is e mailed to governors and friends of the school and any parents that request it.

One paper copy per family is sent out to Holy Trinity families in school bags on a Friday and additional copies are in the office for visitors and parents.

Christ Church families are emailed a copy every Friday. Paper copies are available on request. Additional copies are available in the office for visitors and parents.

Pictures will be posted of children whose families have given us their permission for us to do so. No children's names will appear with pictures.

Instagram

We have a Federation Instagram which is used to share events, news and learning. This complements the Federation Website and individual schools' weekly newsletters. The audience for the Instagram is parents and friends of the school. We are happy for

children to look at posts with their families, but we ask that children under the age of 13 do not follow the account themselves.

Pictures will be posted of children whose families have given us their permission for us to do so. No children's names will appear with pictures.

Ways that we communicate with Parents.

- Staff will not communicate with parents or children via social networking sites or accept them as their "friends". The exception is networks or blogs set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning.
- The schools send e mails with information to parent groups whenever it is felt to be helpful.
- Parents are asked to not communicate with class teachers by e mail but can e mail SENCOs, the Assistant Heads and Deputy and Head Teacher as well as the School Info address and any of the admin team listed as contacts on the website.
- There will be three 1:1 meeting with parents and teachers a year (one per term) and teachers will make a meeting with parents if they are ever concerned about a child's learning or wellbeing. We encourage parents to do the same.
- Parents can always ask the teacher if they can have a quick word after school at pick up time, but we encourage parents to make appointments for anything that will take longer than 5 minutes. We ask parents not to detain teachers for any conversation at morning drop off as this can hold up the smooth start to the beginning of the day. Parents are welcome to drop notes off with their child's teacher at this time, if there is news to convey.

Other ways to find out about how your child is getting on.

Class meeting at the start of term

Reports twice a year (Spring and Summer)

Open Afternoons

Copies of Curriculum Plans

A wide variety of informal events throughout the year

Parental involvement in events

Teacher's letter to the child at the end of the Summer Term

Graduation Ceremony

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Parent Coordinators

Parent Coordinators communicate with the whole class of parents by an e mail group. They will collect questions and queries from parents for meetings (6 times a year) and will circulate minutes of meetings. They will not use Whats App for messaging about Parent Coordinator related information.

Parent Whats App

While Whats App can be a useful way of communicating with a large group of people, our experience has shown that this can also be used by parents in inappropriate ways and can make other members feel uncomfortable. We ask that parents think carefully about what they post on class Whats App groups. The schools will not engage in issues involving whats app group messages and related issues.

Children's Communications

All communication with children when the schools are open will be face to face. Children will not be encouraged to communicate using e mail and any social media with any member of the school community unless as part of a specific communication lesson.

We do not condone children using any social media before the recommended age.

We believe there is no imperative or need for children in primary school to use social media as a practise for secondary school. We strongly urge parents to ensure that their children wait until they are older and able to cope with all the challenges this will present them with.

The school will not engage in issues that relate to children using social media at home. We will not allow social media or phones to be used in school.

Name of School	CCHT Primary Schools
Policy review Date	June 2024
Date of next Review	June 2025
Who reviewed this policy?	Avis Hawkins, Partnership Committee
Ratified by Governors.	June 2024