



**St Edward's**  
RC/CE VA School

# Home/School Communication Policy

**Reviewed and Ratified at the St Edward's FGB**

**On: 14 December 2017**

**Next review date: December 2020**

**Member of SLT responsible: Mr M Antram**

It is very important to St Edward's School that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives.

### **Contacting Us**

Communication by email or student planner is our preferred method.

- Notes in student planners are by far the best way to get a message to a teacher promptly and should be used for the majority of everyday communication;
- the student is responsible for showing the note to the correct teacher. If you need to discuss something in more detail with a teacher, this is the best way to ask them to contact you when they are able. If needs be, please write a separate note for the student to give to the relevant teacher.

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so, however, most of a teacher's time is taken up with lessons, meetings, planning and preparation, or covering a lesson for an absent colleague. For clarification:

- Teachers are usually in meetings, on duty, or preparing for tutor time and lessons from 8.15am.
- Once a week they give their 20 minute morning break to be on duty and a 30 minute lunchtime, if not spent on duty or running activities, will be used for planning etc.
- After school, teachers will generally be on duty, in meetings or running after-school clubs. Therefore they may not be able to respond on the day that the query is made.
- The school, in caring for its staff, has advised teachers that there is no expectation to respond to queries in their personal/family time, such as at weekends.
- Year leaders and subject leaders generally have their 'non contact' time booked for meetings with students, parents, carers or colleagues.

### **Telephone**

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you;

- Reception staff will relay this to the teacher as soon as they can, usually by email.
- Please note that there are no phones in classrooms and lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.
- All calls to and from the school are recorded for security and training purposes. Year leaders and subject leaders generally have their 'non-contact' time booked for meetings with students, parents, carers and colleagues.
- If the nature of the call is extremely urgent, please tell the receptionist and they will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will endeavour to respond to you on the same day, but within three working days where this is not possible.

## E-mail

Please use staff email addresses to contact them directly.

- Please note though, that teachers are not always in a position to check emails during the day and the school does not expect work emails to be checked during a teacher's personal/family time from home; we therefore aim to reply as soon as possible, and within three working days.
- Part-time staff may take longer, so email should only be used for non-urgent communication that cannot be done via the student's diary.
- The majority of staff email addresses follow the following format: [initialsurname@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk](mailto:initialsurname@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk).
- Occasionally emails go astray, so if you do not get a reply within three days, please contact reception, who will pursue your enquiry for you.

## Meetings

With over 1000 students in the school, the day to day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them.

- In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:
  - 1/ Form tutor or classroom teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
  - 2/ Year leader or subject leader (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
  - 3/ Assistant headteacher
  - 4/ Deputy headteacher
  - 5/ Headteacher
- Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff so that they can adjust their schedules as needed.
- If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.
- For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within 5 working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

## Contacting You

### Wisepay

Our preferred means of contacting you is via Wisepay.

- Parents and carers who are signed up are benefitting by receiving letters and notifications via email and text.

- We also use this system to text you if we have to close the school in an emergency. Our main communication day for emails is on a Thursday, however occasionally the weekly mailing may be delayed until the Friday.
- Parents and carers can also pay for trips and resources online via the Wisepay system instead of sending in cheques and cash. To sign up, please contact our Administrator via [enquiries@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk)

### **Social Media**

We use Facebook and Twitter to promote student achievements, subject information and generic educational information that used to be put in the fortnightly newsletter.

This information can also be found on the news page of the school website for those parents and carers that do not use Facebook and Twitter.

### **No Response**

In the event that you have contacted the school and not had a response within 3 working days, we ask for parents and carers to contact the school either by email [enquiries@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk) or alternatively speaking to the Enquiries Co-ordination Team on the main school number who will chase up your enquiry.

Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor practice under this policy, in seeking ways to improve our communication processes further.