



# Communications Policy

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 Committee: Personnel and Pastoral

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Smith", is positioned above the text "(Headteacher)".

Signed:  
 (Headteacher)

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## 1. Purpose and scope

At St Mary's Hampton, we believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents
- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times

To this end, our aspirations for the behaviour and culture we want to encourage for all parties can be summed up in the three words on which our behaviour policy is founded:

### **Ready, respectful, responsible**

Our aim is for school and parents to be ready at all times to engage in a respectful and responsible way in order to ensure the very best outcomes for the children

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct), pupils (through our behaviour policy) and parents (through the communications and conduct policy)

This code of conduct aims to help the school work together with parents by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

## 2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern, as per the communications and conduct policy
- Respect the decisions and outcomes made by the school

## 3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Swearing, or using offensive language
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Threatening another member of the school community

- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Malicious complaints
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Smoking or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event)
- Arriving at the school in a state of intoxication
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than guide dogs)

#### **4. Breaching the code of conduct**

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may take any of the following actions:

- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Invite the parent in to school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the LDBS regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site
- Limit the means of communicating with the school (eg. in writing only, to a designated person)

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the headteacher.

The headteacher will consult the chair of governors before banning a parent from the school site.

#### **5. School communications**

##### **Rationale**

The staff and governors of St Mary's understand the need to establish and foster clear lines of communication with the school community. There is a need to ensure that all stakeholders, including parents and carers, staff and governors and the wider community all work together to ensure the very best for every child that attends the school.

We aim to have as many relevant lines of communication as possible between all stakeholders to reinforce the importance that everyone has in supporting the school, as well as ensuring there are clear and well-established ways to feed back and be informed on all elements of school life.

This policy establishes those aims and explains the school's commitment to communicating with all stakeholders in the community, the responsibilities of parents, carers & guardians and the expectations of all involved.

### **Aims**

At St Mary's, our aim whole school community feel part of one team that is partnering together to achieve the best outcomes for the children. The aim is to ensure all communications are:

- Clear
- Timely
- Accurate
- Complete

### **School Responsibilities**

The school will undertake to ensure that:

- Parents and children have clear lines of communication with staff and governors
- The curriculum is clearly communicated to parents
- Parents are informed of forthcoming events within appropriate timelines.

### **Parents/Guardians/Carers**

Parent/Guardians/Carers should commit to:

- Read all communications issued by the school. \*
- Act on the communication (for example, attending special meetings) when required.
- Raise issues, concerns or feedback at the earliest opportunity with the school in the appropriate manner. \*
- Abide by the Home School expectations (see point 5, below) in terms of discussion of school on social media/public forums and the expectations set out in the parent code of conduct (above)

\* According to the 'methods of communication' section

### **Governing Board**

The governing board commit to:

- The publishing of full board meeting minutes on the School Website once the minutes have been signed off by the board.
- Be available at regular and pre-advertised activities during the school year.
- Contribute at least on a termly basis to the School newsletter with updates on the work of the governing board.

### **Methods of School Communication**

- **The Message Board**  
*Daily messages for parents will be displayed on the outdoor message board each day. The noticeboard will be updated with various notices from the school as well as the PTFA.*
- **Weekly Newsletter**  
*This will be the main established way of communicating the latest news to the school community with notices and timely reminders of upcoming events plus occasional updates from individual class teachers, governors and the PTFA.*
- **E-mail**  
*Where required the school will use e-mail to send out notifications and more urgent updates from the school.*

- **Website**

*As the school continues to improve the website we aim to make this the destination to catch up on all key communications. All of our policies and full governing board minutes will be available here, as well as all key general information about the school, its staff and its philosophies.*

- **School Twitter Page**

*This is for retrospective messages, photos from events or catching up on what the children have been up to.*

- **Letters**

*Occasionally letters have to be sent to parents and carers to ensure they are delivered to you rather than being reliant on technology. This will either be by post or placed in the children's book bags as appropriate.*

- **Telephone**

*Contact via telephone is for urgent issues where the school need a response quickly or need to inform a parent or carer personally.*

- **Reading Diaries/Spelling Books**

*This is a log of your child's reading, and provides the school and the parent body the means to monitor the progress of a child. These should only be used for this purpose only.*

- **Parent Meetings**

*These are held termly on dates decided at the start of each school year. They are appointment based and offer a chance for parents/carers and teachers to discuss and ask questions around the progress of their own child. Ad-hoc meetings can be arranged with the class teacher at any point in the school year, should you have concerns*

- **Annual Teacher Report**

*This is a written report on a child's progress completed by the teacher, but with contributions from the child and headteacher summarising the child's learning journey.*

- **Governor Drop Ins/Forums**

*On a regular basis, a selection from the board of governors will be available to speak with parents to answer any governance questions on the school's progress. The format and date will be pre-advertised to make sure parents have the opportunity to attend.*

## **Contacting the school**

### **Who to contact**

- **School Office** – For any questions or issues not specific to your child's education or progress. This could be around uniform, ParentPay, information on trips or classes and school events.
- **Teaching Staff** – In the first instance, please raise any issues in person with your class teacher. It may then be escalated to a member of the SLT if necessary. You should speak to teachers with any specific questions around teaching and learning. For simple questions there may be an informal chance after school once the children have been dismissed, but in most cases please request an appointment via [staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk](mailto:staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk) giving a brief description of the reason for the meeting along with your availability.

*There is not enough time for the teachers or TAs to engage with parents regarding any issues before school. Therefore to ensure that staff are able to fully engage with the children from 8.45am and maximise teaching time, if you need to speak to a teacher, please pass a handwritten message to the class teacher or your child to give to the class teacher first thing which will be read once the register has been taken.*

- **Senior Leadership Team** - *If you feel there has not been a satisfactory outcome to your enquiry this can be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team via [staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk](mailto:staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk)*
- **Headteacher** – *In the vast majority of cases enquiries should go through the Senior Leadership Team and teachers. Unless it is a safeguarding concern please share your concern or request an appointment via [staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk](mailto:staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk)*
- **The Governing Board** – *Governors are there to steer the strategic direction and vision of the school, oversee the management of the school's finances and hold the headteacher to account. Governors do not get involved in the day-to-day running and decision making at the school. However if a parent feels they have the need to raise an issue with the governors, please inform the Clerk to the Governors via the email address on the Governors Page of the school website.*

### **Ways of contacting**

- **The School Office**

*The school office is open between 8.45am and 3.30pm each school day for parents where required.*

- **E-mail**

*We do not wish to receive lengthy emails from parents regarding any issues or concerns around children. We are very happy to meet in person or arrange a call to discuss these concerns. Emails should be brief and used to request a meeting with the relevant staff member, allowing staff to focus fully on teaching and learning during the school day.*

[admin@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk)

- *For the school office team, this e-mail is monitored throughout the school week only.*

[staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk](mailto:staff@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk)

- *This is the e-mail to contact teaching staff and senior leaders, including the headteacher. It is the intention that you should get a response to any e-mail by the end of the next working day.*

- **Letters**

*The school is happy to receive handwritten letters as an alternative to email. Responses will be made by phone, email or in writing, as appropriate.*

- **Telephone**

*Parents and carers are required to inform the school office ([admin@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmaryshampton.school.org.uk)) to flag any urgent situations around sick leave and absence.*

- **Appointments**

*You can make an appointment via any of the methods above with the relevant member of staff who will be able to deal with your request directly.*

## **Social Media**

As well as the official school social media presence, St Mary's welcome the many ways that parents build their own communities around the school using social media. These are useful ways of keeping in touch around school updates, arranging the PTFA and other events, and sharing information and notices with each other. This is an important part of our school community. But the school reminds you of the home school agreement and the parent code of conduct, around discussing school business on public forums, which could be to the detriment of the school's purpose, values and wider community. Please note that anything posted on social media, even in a private forum or private messenger group, could end up in the public domain.

## ***Communication with the Community***

The school continues to work closely with its local community. Obviously as a church school it holds very close links with St Mary's Church. The school also has close links with its close neighbour Hampton Care with children making regular visits.

Guest speakers from local churches and businesses, community organisations and charities visit the school to speak to the children. We encourage parents and governors to get involved as much as possible.

Parents, carers and relatives are invited to special events and assemblies. We may host class lunches where parents can join their children once a term to enjoy lunch at school and get an experience of school life at St Mary's first hand. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in class should they wish to.

## ***Communication with Other Schools***

Regular communication with staff and children of other schools takes place. Such communication may be by means of personal contact with specific staff or through more formal contact such as governor, teacher and headteacher cluster groups and by means of sports fixtures and other inter-school events.

St Mary's is a member of the London Diocese Board for Schools and links with seven schools in the area and the Hampton Hill Schools. The school also has strong links with other local schools, such as Twickenham Prep, Bishop Wand, and Hampton High.

## ***Confidentiality***

The school complies with GDPR and does hold information on pupils in our school. From time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others to support a child's education and for safeguarding. Details have been sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. The school is compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and KCSIE 2018. Parents can view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. Governors oversee processes around confidentiality.

## ***Safeguarding***

To report a safeguarding concern, please telephone the school or come in person in the first instance and ask to speak urgently with one of our safeguarding team. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Matt White, the headteacher. There are two Deputy DSLs – the SENDCo (Sarah Creegan) and the Assistant Head (Amy Nesbit).

## **6. Home-school expectations**

The document below provides a summary outline of the expectations for each of the members of our school community. At St Mary's, we expect all the members of our community to read, understand and uphold the expectations and demonstrate our shared commitment towards building a positive and productive school community.



## St Mary's Home-School Expectations

### School

At St Mary's school, we will...

- Provide a Christian ethos on which the values of the school are founded
- Encourage all children to treat one another with respect and kindness, as they would wish to be treated
- Create a happy, secure and caring environment
- Deliver an exciting curriculum which meets the needs of every child
- Inspire children to achieve their very best
- Listen to children and parents
- Communicate clearly and regularly with parents through letters, messages, newsletters and emails
- Welcome and invite parents to share in the life of the school
- Celebrate children's achievements
- Keep parents updated about the attainment and progress of children
- Provide homework
- Celebrate difference, respecting other cultures and beliefs
- Have the highest expectations for behaviour and will contact parents should any concerns arise
- Abide by our school policies and the terms of the Communications and Conduct Policy

### Parent

As part of the school community, I will...

- Ensure my child comes to school with the correct uniform, which is all named
- See that my child attends school regularly, is punctual, properly equipped and ready to learn
- Inform the school office on the first day of absence, by 9.15am
- Raise concerns or problems that might affect my child's learning and support the school in helping my child to behave appropriately
- Read, understand and respect school policies and the terms of the Communications and Conduct Policy
- Support my child with homework and listen to my child read daily
- Attend parent meetings with the teacher to discuss my child's attainment and progress
- Support the school's efforts to create a caring, inclusive, Christian ethos where all beliefs and cultures are valued
- Read all letters, messages, newsletters and emails that are sent home
- Inform the school immediately of any changes to parents/carers and emergency contacts details
- Follow the correct lines of communication according to our Communications and Conduct Policy and refrain from airing grievances about school on any social media platform

### Child

At St Mary's school, I will do my best to...

- Learn all I can by doing my best at all times
- Work hard and listen carefully to instructions
- Come to school every day, on time
- Follow the school and class rules
- Behave sensibly at all times, so that we can learn and everyone is safe
- Be polite, friendly and helpful to other children and all adults
- Tell somebody if there is something I am not happy about
- Do my homework regularly and return it to school on time
- Bring all the equipment I need every day including my PE kit, book bag and reading books
- Take good care of the school environment and equipment
- Address the staff with respect and by their professional name
- Take pride in my appearance and ensure I don't lose my uniform

## Contacting The School & Who To Contact

Who	When & How	Why
School Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8.45am – 3.30pm in person</li><li>• <a href="mailto:admin@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk">admin@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk</a></li></ul>	Absence, ParentPay, trips, clubs, events, medicines or uniform
Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request an appointment via <a href="mailto:staff@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk">staff@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk</a></li><li>• Brief note to the teacher before school</li><li>• Informal chat after school</li></ul>	Questions around teaching and learning or pastoral concerns
Senior Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="mailto:staff@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk">staff@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk</a></li></ul>	If there has been an unsatisfactory outcome to your enquiry.
Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="mailto:staff@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk">staff@stmaryshamptonsschool.org.uk</a></li><li>• In person at the school (safeguarding)</li></ul>	Safeguarding concern