

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL



Communications Policy

Objectives:

All communications at Our Lady Queen of Peace RCVA Primary School should keep staff, students, parents, governors and other stakeholders well informed. Communication should be honest, ethical and professional and use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to context, message and audience, in good time.

Internal Methods of Communication:

Meetings: There is an integrated programme of both formal and informal meetings to facilitate involvement of staff. All formal meetings are structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. We expect staff to attend on time.

Internet and Email: The school has a separate policy for dealing with Internet usage. All staff and governors are contacted via email and therefore it is important that inboxes are checked daily.

Written Communications: Telephone messages taken by office staff will be passed to staff directly.

Staff Briefings: Take place on a daily basis (8.45am). The diary for the day is discussed and information shared.

Staff Handbook: A copy of the Staff Handbook is saved electronically on Staff Shared Areas.

Newsletter: Is usually published on a monthly basis. The newsletter promotes school successes and incorporates news relevant to the school. Members of staff are encouraged to contribute appropriate items, which should be emailed to the Head Teacher. We also have a school blog which outlines news and events, (<http://olqop.blogspot.co.uk>)

External Methods of Communication:

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, the diocese, the parish, the LA, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Clear professional communication in an informed manner between the school and the home is essential.

Communications with Parents/Carers:

Text Messaging: Information will be provided to parents where possible via Text Message.

Letters: Staff will endeavour to respond to parents' letters as quickly as possible within 48 hours. Copies of all correspondence with parents will be placed in the students file.

E mail: Should be treated as formal communication. We will retain hard copies of important emails. Staff will endeavour to reply to email within 24 hours.

Social Media: There is a staff protocol for using social networking sites, (please see staff handbook.) Parents are respectfully reminded that inappropriate use of social media to comment on the school, a member of staff or pupils and their families may result in legal procedures.

Telephone calls: Staff will be notified of telephone messages each day and endeavour to respond to parents' telephone messages within 48 hours of receiving the message.

Written Reports: Once a year we provide a report to each child's parents on their progress in each subject. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. Pupils are also given the opportunity to comment on their own progress and parents are invited to make a similar comment. Interim reports are also provided twice per year.

School Website: The school website provides information about the school calendar and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. It also has areas for information for current parents and details of school activities. (<http://www.olqopreprimary.org.uk>)

Home-school meetings: We arrange various meetings for parents throughout the year. Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents of planning, content and arrangements. If a child is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, the school attendance officer will contact the parent.

Communication with other schools and outside agencies: We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and partner professionals. We hold information on pupils in our school, and from

time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. We adhere to the Data Protection Act and local LA protocols regarding the transfer of information.

In the Case of an Emergency:

If a child has an injury, illness or other emergency in school we will contact carers as indicated on the parent information sheets. It is a carer's responsibility to notify the school of any changes of contact details.

When there is a significant emergency in school or whilst the children are off-site, we will follow our Business Continuity Plan. Parents of children involved directly in the incident will usually be telephoned to inform them. Parents of other children will usually be informed by a text message. The school landline telephone number will be used for incoming calls and the school mobile telephone will be used for outgoing calls. If necessary, the Diocesan and/or LA communications officer will be contacted to support the school and to advise on media communications. If the school landline is rendered unusable the church telephone will be used.

In extreme circumstances it may be necessary to vacate the school premises and parents will be informed of suitable "pick up" points via text messaging. Designated staff will make information available to parents and the wider community; other staff must refrain from passing information on without authorisation from a member of the senior leadership team. Carers and the wider community are respectfully asked not to share information without due care or attention so that the information in the public domain is accurate and does not lead to undue anxiety.

Equality statement

- The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.
- This policy has been impact assessed by governors in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.