

COMMUNICATION POLICY FOR ST. MARGARET'S CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL



At St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School we seek to develop wisdom, encourage aspiration and promote dignity and acceptance enabling our respectful children to live a life giving back to the community.

John 10:10: 'Live life in all its fullness.'

Aspiration

Wisdom

Endurance

Approved by the governing body on:	Autumn 2026
Shared with stakeholders on:	Autumn 2026
Next review:	Autumn 2028

1. Introduction

At St Margaret's CofE Primary School, we value strong relationships with our families and are committed to open, respectful, and effective communication. This policy sets out our expectations and approaches to communication between school and home.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To promote mutual respect and understanding between school and families.
- To provide clear expectations for how and when communication takes place.
- To ensure timely and appropriate responses to enquiries and concerns.

3. General Principles

- Communication should always be respectful and measured.
- Staff and parents/carers are expected to communicate in a way that models the values of our school.
- Staff are not expected to monitor or respond to messages outside of their working hours.
- Our aim is to respond to all communication within 2 working days, though this may vary depending on staff working patterns and availability.

4. Key communication guidance

Effective communications enable us to share our school aims and values as well as keeping parents and carers well informed about school life. This reinforces the vital role that parents and carers play in supporting the school and their child/ren.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, it is essential that relationships are professional and parents are addressed in a formal manner in all written communication, whatever the form.

St Margaret's CofE Primary School aims to make written communication as accessible and inclusive as possible, we will ensure that all of our parents can access a form of communication, making alternative arrangements where necessary (e.g. EAL, SEN, IT access or literacy issues). We will seek parental feedback on the school communication via parental surveys.

4.1 Key communication procedures

The school office can be contacted between 8.30am and 3.15pm on school weekdays.

Postal Address	Telephone	Email
St Margaret's CofE Primary School, Church Lane Toppesfield Halstead Essex CO9 4DS	01787 237354	admin@st-margaretscofe.essex.sch.uk

Message, Queries, Concerns	Person to Contact
If your child is absent from school...	Please notify the school office each day of absence by 9:00 am either by telephone on 01732 882596 (where you can leave a message) or in person. Please note that this notification does not guarantee that absences will be authorised.
If you have a quick message for your child's teacher about collection, concerns, home learning...	Talk to your child's teacher on the playground after the class has been dismissed; teachers are outside every afternoon. Urgent messages may be left at the school office if you do not get a chance to speak to the teacher.
If you would like to talk about your child's learning progress...	Make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher via the school office. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with a relevant School Leader.
If you are concerned about social behaviours or bullying...	Make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher via the school office. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant School Leader.
If you would like to discuss something related to your child's teacher...	Make an appointment to meet with the Headteacher via the school office.
If you would like to discuss your child's special educational needs...	Make an appointment to meet with the SENCO via the school office.
If you would like to find out about after school clubs or have a query...	Check the school website, email the office on admin@st-margaretscofe.essex.sch.uk or ask at the school office.
If you have a pay query ...	Enquiries can be made to the school's office staff.
If you have a school dinner enquiry...	Please contact the school office directly.
If you wanted to check if the school is open...	Please check the school website or Dojo.

If having followed the above the steps above, your question or concern is not resolved, please make an appointment with the school office to meet with the Headteacher.

If you would like to contact the Governing Body, they may be contacted directly, in writing, via the school office. All correspondence must be sealed and addressed to the Chair of the Governing Body.

5. Contacting the School

Before contacting school staff, we ask parents and carers to consider the appropriateness, necessity, and timing of their communication. Ask:

- Is this something this person needs to know?
- Is this the right time to send this message?
- Am I over-communicating about this issue?

Messages sent late at night, outside working hours, or in high volume can have a negative impact on staff wellbeing and workload. While staff are not expected to respond outside their working hours, the notification of out-of-hours or excessive messages can be intrusive and stressful. Please think carefully before you press send.

We also ask that families limit the number of messages sent about the same concern. Staff may not be able to respond promptly if they are receiving frequent or repeated messages. In cases of excessive or inappropriate use of communication channels, the school reserves the right to restrict or remove access to certain communication methods.

5.1 Email – admin@st-margaretscofe.essex.sch.uk

- Parents and carers should email the school for all non-urgent matters in the first instance.
- Emails will be acknowledged within 2 working days and responded to in full (or a meeting/phone call arranged, if appropriate) within 3 working days, depending on the staff member's working pattern.
- For urgent concerns requiring a quicker response, please telephone the school office directly.

5.2 Phone Calls – 01787 237354

- If you need to speak with a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, please email the school office. The relevant staff member will aim to return your call within 2 working days, depending on their availability.
- If the member of staff is unavailable due to teaching or other commitments, we will arrange a convenient time for a phone call. We aim for all requested meetings/conversations to take place within 3 working days.
- Please call the school office for any urgent issues, such as:
 - Family emergencies
 - Safeguarding or welfare concerns
 - Attendance matters
- For general enquiries, please contact the school office.

5.3 Meetings

- To schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email or call the school office to request an appointment. The subject of the meeting should be shared in advance to help staff to be fully prepared to ensure the meeting is productive.
- We aim to schedule meetings within 3 working days, depending on staff availability and working patterns.

- Parents and visitors should report to reception prior to meeting with a member of staff.
- If a meeting is taking place outside of normal school hours, the member of staff should try, where possible, to ensure that a colleague is nearby.
- A meeting may be called to a close in order to allow time for further investigation.
- When a pupil is accompanying a parent for a meeting, the pupil may be asked to remain outside of the meeting for part of it if it is deemed to be appropriate to do so.
- In cases where a meeting may be contentious, any member of staff may ask for another staff member to be present at the meeting.
- Additional staff may be invited to a meeting if their input would add value to the meeting.
- Staff will stop any meeting where attendees become angry or abusive or if they feel threatened. This will be reported to a Senior Leader for further advice to be sought.
- While teachers may be available briefly at the start or end of the school day, we recommend that parents book an appointment to discuss:
 - Concerns about their child's learning
 - Updates regarding pastoral support, home situations, or wellbeing.

5.4 Home–School Communication App (ClassDojo)

In school we use ClassDojo as a way of promoting our values in school through the use of dojo points which will link to houses. We also use it as a means of communicating more effectively. ClassDojo is secure and only parents invited by the school will be able to access the ClassDojo site.

Staff are advised that they are not expected to use ClassDojo between the hours of 5 pm and 8 am and will only look at messages when they are able to and it does not impact upon teaching and learning. If you need to communicate absence or need to speak to someone as a matter of urgency we ask that you still contact the school via the school office.

6. Staff Responsibilities

- Staff will respond within the timeframes outlined, depending on their working pattern.
- They will remain professional, calm, and courteous at all times.
- Staff are not expected to engage in communication outside working hours or via personal accounts.
- Staff will not communicate via social media platforms
- Staff will not engage in private/personal correspondence with a pupil.
- Staff will not communicate with anyone regarding school business using a personal email account or telephone.

6. Parent/Carer Responsibilities

- Communicate respectfully with staff, using appropriate language and tone.
- Use the appropriate channels for communication, as outlined above.
- Avoid contacting staff via personal or social media platforms.
- Consider whether your message is necessary and appropriate for the recipient, and avoid sending messages outside of school hours unless essential. The timing and nature of communications can impact staff wellbeing—please think before you press send.

- Refrain from sending repeated or excessive messages about the same issue. Staff require time to investigate and respond appropriately.
- In cases where communication is persistent, excessive, or inappropriate, the school may limit or remove access to certain communication platforms.

7. Managing Difficult Communication

The school follows a structured process for managing challenging or inappropriate communication.

In cases where communication becomes aggressive, threatening, inappropriate or excessive we may restrict or limit future contact.

8. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changing needs. Feedback from parents/carers and staff will be considered as part of the review process.