



**The Castle School**  
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## **Communications Policy**

**Date: June 2022**

CEO: Sarah Watson

Headteacher: James Lamb

Due for Review: Summer Term 2025

## **1. Definition of communication**

Effective communication enables information to be shared, understanding to be developed, trust to be built, confidentiality to be respected and activities to be co-ordinated. Good communication includes both informing and listening and is the responsibility of both staff and stakeholders.

## **2. Principles and objectives**

- A variety of methods will be used to maintain effective communication with parents, carers, and other stakeholders which include governors, other schools, outside agencies and the wider community.
- This policy takes account of other relevant policies including the Equalities Scheme, Online Safety Policy, Information Security, Freedom of Information and Data Protection Policies.
- Communication will be regularly monitored and evaluated.
- Improvements will be sought through relevant opportunities for consultation and feedback.
- Communication should be inclusive and easily comprehended.

## **3. Aims of the policy**

We aim to provide effective communication, essential to ensure that stakeholders are informed and are able to respond to information relating to the school. We seek to ensure communications are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

### **3.1 Strategic Leadership will:**

- Ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner, via appropriate means and face to face where practical.
- Maintain open channels of two-way communication with staff, parents and other stakeholders.
- Keep governors informed of challenges and developments.

### **3.2 Staff will:**

- Communicate effectively with each other and the Strategic Leadership Team to ensure information is available and understood in the context of their departments and working responsibilities.
- Provide information to parents, primarily via letter or email as appropriate, and respond to matters raised by parents in a professional and timely manner.
- Provide regular and relevant information about students' progress to students and parents.
- Follow relevant procedures for communicating with parents, students and other stakeholders, e.g. using the school email system and other apps such as class charts and SIMs.

### **3.3 Parents are expected to:**

- Provide accurate and up to date contact information.
- Inform the school of relevant matters relating to their child, including absences and medical matters.
- Ensure communication via their child has reached appropriate staff members.
- Read communications from the school and respond as necessary.

## **4. Methods of communication**

Communication with students, parents and other stakeholders takes place using a variety of methods.

### **4.1 Written**

Written communication is important, but should not preplace face to face communication where this is more appropriate.

#### **Letters and emails:**

- These are the preferred methods of communication for information relating to school trips, visits, and activities.
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- All emails will be sent from official school email addresses.
- Staff will endeavour to respond to parents' correspondence as quickly as possible, referring them to the Senior Leadership Team if appropriate.

#### **Reports:**

- Information about students' progress is provided regularly to parents, and at least twice a year.

#### **Prospectus:**

- This provides an overview of the school including ethos, curriculum and a range of practical information.

#### **Surveys:**

- These are used to gain feedback from stakeholders as part of the school's self-evaluation process and will inform the School Improvement Plan.

#### **Guides and handbooks:**

- These include the Parent/Student Handbook and Curriculum Guide and provide information about the curriculum and school procedures.

#### **Postcards:**

- Cards may be sent to parents to highlight a child's particular activity or achievement.

## **4.2 Verbal**

### **Telephone:**

- The telephone switchboard is open from 8.30 am – 4.15 pm Monday-Thursday and 8.30 am – 4.00 pm on Friday. Outside of these times and during school holidays, an answerphone system is in place.
- Mobile phones may be brought into school by students, but may only be used in designated areas at permitted times.

### **Parents' evenings:**

- These are held at least annually for each year group, providing an opportunity for parents and students to discuss progress face to face with staff.
- Parents are also encouraged to contact the school at any time if they wish to discuss matters relating to their child.

### **Focus groups:**

- These are held by the leadership team to consult over significant changes or as directed by governors/directors. Feedback from these will be communicated to governors and used to inform policy and decisions.

### **Meetings:**

- A wide variety of meetings are held to assist with the smooth running of the school and the progress and well-being of students. These may be internal or involve parents or other stakeholders.
- Individual parents and students may be invited to meet with staff to discuss specific matters relating to their progress or well-being.
- Meetings may be called to discuss other matters including curriculum changes, subject options or arrangements for residential trips.
- All formal meetings will be minuted and circulated as appropriate.

## **4.3 Online**

### **Website:**

- This is a central means of communication with parents and other stakeholders, and includes general information about the school, copies of all letters, information for parents and students, school documents, a calendar, vacancies and contact information.
- It is regularly updated and is also an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

- The website content will complement the work of the school and contain information about the most recent activities, successes, progress, priorities and performance.

#### **Social media:**

- Official school social media channels are used for to provide information and to promote the school through good news stories, such as sports results and extra curricula activities.
- Staff will not communicate with individual parents or students via social media, or accept them as 'friends'.

#### **Online applications:**

- The school uses a variety of online applications in order to communicate with students and parents, e.g Class Charts

#### **4.4 Emergency / Adverse Weather**

- If a student is seriously ill or injured the school will contact the parents via telephone.
- Where an incident affects the whole school, e.g. power failure, a message will be posted on the school website and texted out to parents/carers.
- If the school is closed due to adverse weather information will be provided on the website and in line with the Adverse Weather Policy

#### **4.5 Media and community relations**

- The school will do all it can to ensure positive publicity and to seek recognition for students who have achieved outstanding success, for example in sports or the arts.
- The Headteacher will be manage communications in times of adverse publicity as part of the Critical Incident Policy
- The Headteacher will manage communications with the community and delegate as appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the governing body.