

Sullivan Upper Preparatory Department

Communication policy 2021-22



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Board of governors

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Introduction:

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message, but also how the message is communicated. Good communication promotes partnership.

AIM:

At Sullivan Prep, we aim to have clear, effective, high quality communication among staff and with students, parents, governors and members of the wider school community. We want to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

OBJECTIVES:

- Keep staff, parents and other stakeholders well informed
- Be honest, ethical and professional
- Be easily understood by all
- Be actioned within a reasonable time
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context and audience
- Take account of relevant school policies

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Senior Leadership Team

- Provide clear weekly, termly and annual overviews of dates for all staff
- Use Teams channel to update risk assessments, government guidance and policies so that all staff have access to these
- Provide a detailed staff handbook that all staff have electronic access to, so they can check information at any time
- Head of Prep to provide mobile phone number so that staff can contact in the event of illness or other event. Senior teacher to take on this role in the event of Head being unavailable.
- Communicate with staff through professional channels such as outlook email and Teams channel. Only using personal mobiles in the event of a school closure , positive contact or illness.

THE OFFICE

- The office will contact teachers regarding pupil appointments or early/late collections
- The office will sign pupils in and out for appointments or illness
- Send out absence form for parents to complete
- Contact parents in the event of illness
- Send out any information/ newsletters etc via Parentmail
- Send out, check and update any contact details or permissions such as internet, photos, intimate care etc

STAFF

- No staff member is expected to read email or Teams messaging during their own time. If there is any serious incident such as an unplanned school closure due to weather, a text message will be sent to all staff on their mobile phone.
- However, as part of the role of a teacher and Learning Support Assistant, it is each individual's professional responsibility to keep up to date with any information being shared regarding the school via email and the Teams channel
- Staff will endeavour to contact a parent within 48 hours of any correspondence. (acknowledge receipt) However, in the case of a more serious matter, this contact may be to arrange a meeting with the parent

at a later stage. However, staff should always try to meet with the parent within 5 working days of the date being set, unless this is around holiday time, end of term or staff closures.

- Staff do not have to reply to emails or messages outside of working hours. (9am - 3pm) However, some staff find that due to their lifestyle, later at night may suit them to reply to correspondence and this is acceptable.
- Learning Support Assistant's should not be asked to meet with parents or discuss pupil progress without the attendance of the class teacher.
- Each class to provide the Head of Prep with 1 photo and short explanation of the activity or learning to be uploaded to Facebook across each week

GOVERNORS

- Minutes of meetings will be available to all staff and any clarity needed will be provided by the Head
- Update staff regularly about any aspects of pay, change of service etc

PARENTS

- Avoid asking about pupil progress at collection and drop off times to ensure the dignity of their child
- Contact staff in advance to arrange a meeting, stating what the meeting is pertaining to
- Contact the office regarding children being collected early or released for an appointment. Firstly, the office has to sign a pupil in and out due to Child Protection and safety but secondly, as teachers are teaching during the day, they often do not get a chance to read their emails.
- Sign their child in or out regarding appointments, early collections or illness, at the office
- Please be patient as staff have many responsibilities in school and may not reply straight away (48 hours to reply is an acceptable amount of time to plan to arrange a further meeting- which should take place within 5 working days -excluding holidays)
- Have access to the Parentmail app to keep updated about important information. Optional access to the school website, facebook and instagram for additional information regarding the daily life of the school
- Contact the class teacher for an absence when their child is off or complete a request to take their child out of school during term time via messaging on the Seesaw app.

Internal communication between staff:

- An annual strategic overview is available for all staff in Teams and Weekly overviews will be provided for all staff- taking into account school trips, specialist teaching, meetings etc
- Emails will be used to send information to staff such as policies updates, information regarding changes to department guidance, updated information on the Teams channel and any other important housekeeping information
- Monthly face to face teaching staff meetings will take place on Monday after school. Other Monday sessions will be available for subject leaders or Senior Leadership meetings
- Learning Support Assistants face to face meetings will take place on a monthly basis with the Head of dept. These dates will be flexible.
- In the event of school closures or remote/blended learning, staff will meet with the Head Via Teams on a weekly basis
- Teams channel will be used for teachers and Learning Support Assistants to include more extensive detail such as policies, guidance, School Development Plans, Action plans, staff handbook, SEN advice and training, notes to parents etc
- Chat function on Teams to check something quickly.
- A quick phone call can be made internally to check eg. Medical information, wet break, behaviour incident, contact a parent regarding pupil illness etc
- Staff are urged not to communicate with parents or students via social networking sites or accept them as their 'friends'. The exception is on school apps such as Seesaw where a class blog can be used (Prep1 and Prep 2), or google classroom for Prep 3- Prep 6.

Communications with parents

- All detailed information such as weekly newsletter, policies etc will be sent via the parent mail app.
- A newsletter will be provided for parents regarding specific events and activities such as class trips, parental questionnaires, dinner bookings, updates regarding collections etc

- Conversations at collection – will be positive and focus on ensuring the dignity of both the pupil and their parent
- Phone call – will be made in the event of repeated behaviour incidents or a one off serious incident. May also be made in the event of illness or housekeeping such as needing a piece of sports clothing or musical instrument
- Any parent wishing to meet with any member of the teaching staff or the Head must contact the school in advance and request a meeting suitable to both parties. On contacting the member of staff or office, the parent will be expected to give a brief overview as to what the meeting is about.
- If a parent comes into school without a prior appointment, the member of staff is not expected to meet with the parent but can choose to do so, if it is suitable for them. As a professional body, it is essential, that staff are afforded the professional courtesy of being able to prepare information for the meeting such as evidence of work, test scores, playground observation etc.
- Annual curriculum meetings will be held by every class in September to introduce parents to the new class routines and ask any general questions regarding that specific class. These can be provided virtually in the case of a pandemic. Presentations will be added to Seesaw for parents.
- Individual Meetings with parents – will take place twice a year. Usually around November and April. Based on parental feedback, these will take a blended approach, with a mixture of face to face and virtual means. Meetings outside these whole -school parent meetings can be arranged by prior appointment with the teacher but we do urge you to be cognisant of the fact that teachers do have meetings, training and other work after school and often a phone call can resolve any concerns more quickly. Parents can avail of their parent teacher meetings via virtual meetings. Parents can contact staff using the Seesaw app
- Parents and students are urged not to communicate with staff via social networking sites or invite them as their 'friends'.
- Social media –
Facebook and Instagram will be updated on a weekly basis with photos and information regarding the daily life of the school

In the event of a school closure:

- Staff will meet with the Head via the Teams app on a weekly basis
- Staff will follow the teaching plan and feedback set out in the remote learning policy

- Staff will only reply to emails during working hours (unless they choose to message at another time more suitable to their own lifestyle)
- Parents can contact the school via the school office or class teachers through seesaw
- The focus will be on the teaching and learning of, and feedback for, the children as this takes priority over everything
- Pupils will receive weekly learning intentions for Literacy and Numeracy.
- Pupils will receive a Literacy/Numeracy piece of work on a daily basis which has detailed feedback either verbal or written.
- Weekly spellings and mental maths will be uploaded to Seesaw as well.

Other connected policies:

Child protection & safeguarding

Complaints procedure

Staff code of conduct

Data protection

Remote/blended learning