



Communications Policy

Policy owner	Headteacher	October 2022
Formally endorsed by	Trustees	October 2022
Review date		October 2024

Communications Policy

We want to hear from you

At St Paul's Steiner School, we believe that effective communication between the school, the home and the wider community is essential for the well-being and development of each pupil and for the harmonious life and development of the school.

We encourage parents to engage in the journey of their child/ren through the School and we provide regular opportunities for sharing the cognitive, emotional and behavioural development of both of the individual child and the class community.

Effective communication enables us to share our aims, ethos and values, and keeping parents well informed about school life. This supports healthy engagement and an understanding of the Steiner-Waldorf education, the opportunities we provide, and the important role parents play in supporting their child's education.

The school welcomes suggestions and are constantly aiming to improve. We endeavour to create a positive working environment for our staff, pupils, parents, and visitors. The communications policy build on the culture of mutual respect established at St Paul's Steiner School. As such we are always expecting staff to be treated with dignity and respect.

At times we are bound by confidentiality, and we ask that this is respected by parents in their communication as well. We would ask for your patience and understanding that it is not always possible or appropriate to give an instant response, especially when further consultation may be needed.

We communicate with the whole parent body in a range of different ways; at school meetings; coffee mornings; parents' evenings; by class or all school text or email; via website; newsletter; through St Paul's Community Group (SPCG) meetings; and through the class representatives (class reps) and the Diversity and Equality forum. Some of our communications are the result of a statutory requirement; others reflect what we believe to be important to our school community.

Parents are encouraged to direct any feedback, suggestions or questions to the appropriate person as soon as they arise, to be dealt with quickly and openly. Some parental queries and concerns can be dealt with by the reception and office staff. They will be able to direct parents to the appropriate source of information or person to talk to.

Who to talk to regarding your child

Good communication between parents and the School's teachers and staff is important to us and an essential part of Steiner education. The School relies upon you to inform about any requirements for physical or medication attention your child might need during the day. Sometimes changes at home can affect your child's behaviour, such as a parent's absence or a serious illness in the family. It is important that you let the teacher know about such changes so that your child's emotional needs and wellbeing can be supported at School.

If you wish to talk to your child's class/kindergarten teacher, please make an appointment for a telephone conversation or a meeting in person. Talking before, during or directly after school is difficult for the teacher and the children. The teacher will call or arrange a meeting as soon as convenient. Wherever possible we encourage direct communication either in person or by arranging to speak on the telephone.

If your message is urgent and requires an immediate response, please speak to the School office who will ensure the message gets to the teacher. The School office telephone number is 0207 226 4454. The email address: schooloffice@stpaulssteinerschool.org

If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's experience at school, the curriculum, discipline, homework etc. please follow these steps:

- If the child is in the Kindergarten, email the Kindergarten teacher.
- For questions about Lunch Club or Kindergarten gardening lessons, in the first instance please contact your child's keyworker, their Kindergarten teacher.
- If the child is in the Lower or Middle School contact your child's class teacher.
- If it is about a subject, contact the relevant teacher (Subject Lead) via the school office.
- If it is a general question about the educational provision, please contact the Head teacher
- If the concern remains, please follow the concerns and complaints procedure

Absence

When notifying an absence, change in pick-up arrangements or asking for authorization of term-time absence please email absence@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Safeguarding concerns

If, at any time, you have a concern relating to any child's wellbeing or safety, please report this immediately to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Tamara Allen or Simone Freeman (DDSL) and Elena Oliver Andres (DDSL) on safeguarding@stpaulssteinerschool.org or call 020 7226 4454.

Any serious allegation against a member of staff is handled by the Head teacher Anna Retsler. Please see Safeguarding policy.

Concerns and Complaints: see separate policy

Social media: see separate policy

Regular meetings

A number of meetings are held throughout the School year that provide opportunities to discuss your child's progress and well-being and current developments within the school.

a) Your child's development and education overview

- **Home Visits.** The Kindergarten Teachers make home visits usually before and during the start of the Autumn Term. The Class I Teacher makes home visits during the school year. The aim is to see the child in the home environment for a fuller picture of the child.
- **Parents' evenings** are usually scheduled once each term. A broad sketch of the whole class' learning at their stage of development will be given and a picture of the class dynamics. Parents' insights are welcomed, and they are encouraged to attend as this also is a chance to get to know parents of the other children in the class. Parents' evenings may be organised when a residential trip or visit is taking place to provide parents with detailed information.

- School usually organises a **subject teacher evening** in the older classes which provides the opportunity to meet with each subject teacher for 5 minutes each to discuss your child's progress in the second part of the autumn term.
- **Parent surgeries.** Parents are encouraged to meet their child's Class or KG teacher individually to discuss their own child by booking a termly 'surgery' time. Topics discussed typically include areas of strength, targets, and strategies for future development, reviews of progress etc. Parents can look at their child's work during these meetings.
- **Play plan or Individual Educational Plan meetings** are held when SEN interventions are planned. See SEN Policy.

b) School development and ways to get involved

- **All School Meeting (ASM).** This is held at least once a year and focuses on dialogue and engagement with the whole school community. This forum is where vision and development work are discussed, and parents are encouraged to participate.
- **Class representatives (class reps).** Every year, in every KG and Class, one or two parents volunteer to act as class reps. The class reps form an important social link between the teacher, the School and all the families in the Class. They play an active role in welcoming and helping new parents and assisting the teacher with the organisation of class activities such as trips. Class reps take minutes at parents' evenings and distribute them once they have been checked by the teacher. They also help to coordinate volunteer support for major fundraising events such as the Advent and Pea Fair and for workdays. Class reps are asked to become familiar with the Communications policy and website so that they can help to channel communication within the school.
- **SPCG – St Paul's Community Group.** The class reps are the core group of the SPCG but everyone is welcome to attend. Guidelines for WhatsApp groups agreed and adhered to reflect the safeguarding and wellbeing of all members of the community.

Written communication via the School website, Newsletter, email and text.

- **Website.** The school website is regularly updated with information about the school, including policies and staff lists. The school calendar can also be found on the website and should be consulted for dates of parents' evenings, festivals, events and workshops as well as the term dates.
<http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/>
- **The Newsletter** is published on the School website where archived copies can be read. It is emailed to all parents, staff and members of the wider School community and contains reminders and reports of meetings, lectures, and events; requests for help such as contributing to a workday or fundraising activity, articles and work by staff and students and community notices.
- **School reports.** Parents are sent a written narrative report at the end of each Kindergarten and School year from age 5. The report seeks to give you a picture of your child's development, achievements and next steps. Pupil's progress is assessed through a consideration of his or her whole development, which includes social and artistic capacities alongside academic performance. The written reports aim to be

comprehensive, but they cannot take the place of ongoing communication between teachers and parents. Parents are urged to take up the opportunities for meeting the teachers and keeping in touch with their child's work and development as outlined above.

- **Public access documents.** The school makes available a range of documentation for parents. We keep a master set in the school office, and we make this available on request. It contains copies of all school curriculum policies and copies of policies that the school is required to have in relation to Child Protection, health and safety, behaviour, concerns etc.
- **Access of information** The School office will make available the information in different formats.

Staff communication with parents and carers

Details for the Staff protocol for communicating with parents and carers via text and email are provided in the Code of conduct.

Email addresses for the School:

The school office.

This mailbox is accessed only by the school Administration Manager who will pass all communications to the relevant parties, schooloffice@stpaulssteinerschool.org

If your communication is only regarding an absence, drop-off or collection please email absence@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Kindergarten and Class teachers.

These mailboxes are accessed only by the class teacher and the school administration manager (in case of absence). We will aim to acknowledge emails within two working days, but a full reply may take longer. We request that parents do not include information relating to pupils or other individuals within texts or emails.

Classone@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classtwo@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classthree@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classfour@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classfive@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classsix@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classeven@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Classeight@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Appletree@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Chestnut@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Rosebush@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Mulberrybush@stpaulssteinerschool.org

SENCo

senco@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Finance

This mailbox is accessed by the School Business Manager.

finance@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Admissions

Admissions@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Premises

Premises@stpaulssteinerschool.org

College of Teachers Chair

college@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Head teacher

are@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Trustees

Belle Benson – Chair of Trustees, Trustee for Community

trustees5@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Matt Rene

trustees4@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Benjamin Parratt – HR

trustees10@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Jayne Thomas – Quality of Education for Early Years (including SEND)

trustee11@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Daniel Zylbersztajn-Lewandowski – Diversity

trustees13@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Roberta Renton – Finance

trustees14@stpaulssteineschool.org

Neil Kahawatte – Premises

trustees15@stpaulssteineschool.org

Massimiliano Spensley – Association & Alumni

trustees16@stpaulssteineschool.org