

Communications Policy



Policy owner	Head Teacher	September 2019
Agreed by	College	
Formally approved by	Trustees	
Review date		October 2020

St Paul's Steiner School Communications Policy

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 the pupils and for the harmonious life and development of the School.

Effective communication enables us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This supports healthy engagement and fosters an understanding of the education and opportunities we provide plus of the important role that parents play in supporting the school.

Strategies

We communicate with parents in a range of different ways for example through school meetings, St Paul's Community Group meetings, parents' evenings, by class or all school text or email, via the fortnightly newsletter and via the class representatives (class reps). Some of our communications are the result of a statutory requirement; others reflect what we believe is important to our school.

Talking with staff

Parents are encouraged to direct any questions and concerns to the appropriate person as soon as they arise, as they can then be dealt with quickly and openly. Some parental queries and concerns can be dealt with by the reception and office staff.

If you wish to talk with the class/kindergarten teacher please make an appointment for a telephone conversation or a meeting in person, as talking before, during or directly after school is difficult for the teacher and the children. Messages will be taken by the School office, can be sent in with your child or emailed to your teacher (see p5). Teachers 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 and request that parents do not include information relating to pupils or other individuals within texts or emails.

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 will aim to acknowledge emails within two working days, but a full reply may take longer. If your question is urgent and requires an immediate response, please speak to the School office direct who will ensure the message gets to the teacher.

Any message about your child which urgently needs to get to the teacher before lessons begin must be left with reception staff, who will ensure it gets to the teacher.

The School office telephone number is 0207 226 4454

The email address: schooloffice@stpaulssteinerschool.org

When notifying an absence or when sending an absence note once your child returns to school please email absence@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 Parent/child Group or Kindergarten, contact the Parent and Child group leader or 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 the concern remains unresolved, please follow the concerns procedure and contact Tamara Allen on schooloffice@stpaulssteinerschool.org email
- If the concern still remains unresolved, please follow the Complaints procedure.

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.

Simone Freeman is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Tamara Allen and Elena Oliver Andres are the Deputy Safeguarding Leads. You can contact them on safeguarding@stpaulssteinerschool.org or call 020 7226 4454.

Meetings concerning your child's education

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

a) Your child 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.
- ***Parents' evenings.*** Parents' evenings are usually scheduled once each term. They are for the whole Class, often take place within the classroom and offer an opportunity for the teacher to share insights into the curriculum being covered and the teaching methods. A broad sketch of the children's learning process at their current 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.

Additional parents' evenings may be organised where a residential trip or visit is taking place in order to provide parents with detailed information.

- ***Parent surgeries.*** Parents are also invited to meet their child's Class or KG teacher individually to discuss their child by booking a 'surgery' time. Topics discussed typically include areas of strength, targets for future development, reviews of progress etc. Parents are able to look at their child's work during these meetings.

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 tell them about any requirements for physical attention or medication that 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 also be acknowledged and supported at School.

Teachers, staff and any other persons involved in the provision of education or other services for students of the school who are undertaking courses, subjects, tutoring or other education either on or off-site which have been arranged by the School, are subject to the requirements of relevant child protection legislation. The *Child Protection Policy and Procedures* is specific in addressing complaints of child abuse and reportable conduct. Nothing in this document replaces the processes in that policy.

If you have a safeguarding concern please report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding lead, Simone Freeman, on safeguarding@stpaulssteinerschool.org.

b) School governance, management, development and ways to get involved

- ***AGM (Annual General Meeting)***. The School encourages parents and staff to join the Associations governing the two Charities. At the Annual General Meeting of these Charities, Association members are given information about the School's financial accounts and activities. The Association members elect Trustees and hold the Trustees to account. Issues relating to governance, development and other School matters are discussed and actions taken forward and reported on.
- ***ASM (All School Meeting)***. 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 is 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 outings. 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 Fairs 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.

Written communication via the School website, Flier, 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/>
- ***E-Mail Communication***. You can send emails to your class and kindergarten teacher or to the relevant member of the School staff via the website here. http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/?page_id=269 or via the individual class email address (see pg 5.)
- ***The Friday Flier***. The Friday Flier is a major point of communication between the school and parents. It is published fortnightly 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. You can subscribe to the flier here http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/?page_id=708

- **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, his or her strengths and weaknesses and potential for the future. Pupil's progress is assessed through a consideration of his or her whole development, which includes social and artistic capacities alongside academic performance.

Additional Maths and English screenings take place in Classes II - VIII to help ensure the teachers have the information they need to support each pupil to progress to the best of their abilities.

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 (p2).

- **Noticeboards.** There is a large wooden noticeboard opposite the Marquess Road entrance to the School. This is for communication about School events and notices.
- **Home School Agreement and Code of Conduct.** Currently in development.
- **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.

Staff communication with parents and carers

Details for the Staff protocol for communicating with parents and carers via text and email are provided in appendix 1.

Appendix 1

Email addresses for the School:

The Head Teacher – Anna Retsler – are@stpaulssteinerschool.org

The school office - schooloffice@stpaulssteinerschool.org

This mailbox is accessed only by the school Administration Manager who will pass all communications to the relevant parties. If your communication is only regarding an absence, drop-off or collection please email/ copy 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).

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 only by the school finance team.

finance@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Admissions

Admissions@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Premises Group

Premises@stpaulssteinerschool.org

College of Teachers Chair

college@stpaulssteinerschool.org

Trustees

Isabelle Benson	Trustees5@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Louise Newton	Trustees6@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Grazia Gatti	Trustees7@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Matt Rene	Trustees4@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Kate Jeffery	Trustees9@stpaulssteinerschool.org
Benjamin Parratt	Trustees10@stpaulssteinerschool.org