



St Monica's Catholic Primary School
...a small school where big things happen...



Home - School Communication Policy

Policy Reviewed:	November 2025
Review Cycle:	2 years
Date of Next Review:	September 2027

1. Policy Statement

St Monica's Primary School recognises that effective communication between home and school is essential to pupils' wellbeing, learning, and success.

All communication must respect the dignity of the recipient. We are committed to maintaining open, courteous, and professional dialogue between staff and parents/carers, built on mutual trust and shared responsibility for children's education.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote clear, respectful, and efficient communication between home and school.
- Establish reasonable expectations for response times and methods.
- Protect staff wellbeing and ensure that workload remains sustainable.
- Safeguard all members of the school community from inappropriate or excessive communication.

3. Guiding Principles

- All communication must be respectful, professional, and considerate in tone and content.
- The school values and encourages parental engagement, recognising that partnership leads to improved outcomes for pupils.
- Staff have the right to work without unreasonable intrusion into their personal time or workload.
- Both staff and parents share responsibility for maintaining positive, constructive communication.

4. Communication by Email

Email is now the predominant means of communication between home and school. While it offers convenience, it can also lead to unrealistic expectations for rapid response. The following standards apply:

1. **Acknowledgement:**
 - Staff will acknowledge receipt of an email **within five working days** (term time only, excluding weekends and school holidays).
2. **Response:**

- A full response will normally be provided **within five working days** of acknowledgement.
 - If additional time is needed to investigate or consult, staff will advise the sender and provide an indicative timeframe for reply.
3. **Referral:**
- If an email is sent to the wrong staff member, it will be redirected to the appropriate colleague, and the sender will be informed.
4. **Working Hours:**
- Staff are **not expected** to read or respond to emails outside their normal working hours, during weekends, or school holidays.
 - Parents/carers are requested to avoid sending emails outside school hours where possible, recognising the impact of notifications on staff wellbeing.
5. **Inappropriate or Aggressive Communication:**
- Emails that are hostile, aggressive, or harassing in tone will be referred to a senior leader.
 - The school may manage further contact under the *Persistent Complaints and Harassment Policy*.

5. Use of Email and Workload Considerations

Teachers' primary duty is to deliver high-quality teaching and learning. Frequent or informal requests for updates can divert time away from lesson planning, marking, and direct work with pupils.

Teachers are not expected to:

- Check or respond to emails during lessons or teaching hours.
- Provide ongoing updates on progress or behaviour outside of formal reporting structures, unless part of an agreed *Pupil Support Plan*.

The school views email communication with individual teachers as a privilege rather than an entitlement. Staff will respond in a professional and timely manner, but within reasonable boundaries.

6. Reporting and Progress Updates

Parents/carers receive regular, structured communication about their child's learning through:

- Termly progress and effort reports
- One full annual report
- Scheduled parent-teacher meetings

In addition, staff may contact parents by phone, letter, or email for serious concerns or significant updates. Continuous dialogue by email is not expected or sustainable.

7. Respectful Communication and Conduct

The school community is built on mutual respect. All correspondence should be polite, constructive, and focused on resolving issues collaboratively.

While we understand that concerns can be emotional, communications that are disrespectful, accusatory, or inflammatory damage relationships and undermine the shared goal of supporting children.

Parents are encouraged to request a meeting or phone conversation for complex matters rather than continuing extended email exchanges.

8. Staff Wellbeing and Workload

St Monica's has a duty of care to protect staff from unreasonable workload and stress. Managing expectations around communication is a key part of this.

Staff should not feel pressured to respond instantly or outside contracted hours. Likewise, parents have a right to expect courteous, timely, and informative responses within the agreed timeframe.

9. Compliments and Feedback

The school deeply appreciates messages of thanks and constructive feedback from parents/carers. Such communication reinforces positive relationships and staff morale.

When issues arise, the school welcomes feedback delivered in a way that supports resolution and partnership.

10. Summary of Expectations

Area	Expectation
Acknowledgement of email	Within 5 working days (term time only)
Full response	Within 5 working days of acknowledgement, or timeframe indicated (term time only)

Area	Expectation
Staff availability	During working hours only
Inappropriate communication	Referred to senior leader; may be managed under the Persistent Complaints and Harassment Policy
Parental tone and conduct	Respectful, constructive, and professional
Staff duty	Prioritise teaching, learning, and pupil welfare