



St Bernadette's Home – School Communications Policy

Rationale & Aims

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School our Mission is:

'...to ensure a loving and faithful learning community in which our children can become the person God created them to be. A community where we celebrate the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual. Where we grow and learn together with joy, in the love of Jesus. In this love, we strive to be courageous stewards of creation.'

Therefore, the full implementation of this Communications Policy plays an integral role in enabling us to work in partnership with parents and carers as together we strive towards achieving this mission for all the children in our care.

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning and wellbeing because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education.
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers.

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers.
- Setting clear standards, expectations and timescales for responding to communication from parents/carers.
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.

Roles & Responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Regularly reviewing this policy.

Staff

Teaching and office staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy.
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves.

Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful and courteous at all times.
- Being proportionate with levels of contact and realistic with timelines for responses.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.
- Responding to communications from the school, such as requests for meetings or information, in a timely manner.
- Checking all communications from the school – in particular newsletters and Emails & In-APP messages.
- Keep their contact information up to date on Arbor.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8:30am – 4:30pm Mon to Fri) or during school holidays. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our **Parent Code of Conduct (Appendix 2)**.

Communication from school to Parents & Carers

Arbor App

Our main channel of communication to families is through the school Arbor App. Please ensure that you have downloaded the Arbor App click [here](#) for access to the school website home page. Select the parent tab and the link to the App download for iPhone and Android is there for you. The App messages do not automatically generate an email to your email accounts but, we will send an app message to tell you to check your emails if a message has been sent via Arbor email. Please check your spam and trash folders as these emails can often find their way into these rather than your inbox. We use the app and email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Bumped heads – minor injuries that happen in school.
- Educational visits and payments (Payments and consent are made through ParentPay)
- Upcoming school events

- School surveys or consultations – these messages will contain a link to a Google Form.
- Newsletters
- Booking systems for parents' evening and extra-curricular clubs
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Meeting reminders
- Updates regarding SEND matters where appropriate (for example receipt of reports, meetings)
- Unexpected events (cancelled clubs, changes to normal routines etc)
- Emergency or scheduled school closures (for example, due to bad weather, for staff training days)

If you have any difficulties accessing your account, please contact the school office.

Meetings & Reports

We provide parents with the opportunity to meet their class teacher termly. The meetings are times to focus on your child's learning in class and are not the appropriate time to discuss other difficulties. If you have any concerns, it is best to discuss these early so they can be addressed and do not escalate.

Autumn term – There are two opportunities to meet your child's class teacher. The first is the Welcome Meeting. At this meeting you will meet your child's class teacher and find out about what they will be learning, find out about homework and trips etc. At this meeting you will be able to ask general questions. This meeting does not facilitate one-one consultations. In the second half of the autumn term, there is the opportunity to book parent consultations. At this meeting the focus is on how your child has settled into their new class, friendships, behaviour, effort and home/school partnership e.g. reading and homework.

Spring term – we focus on how your child's achievement and progress with the opportunity to review their learning by looking at a sample of their books.

Summer term – We offer an optional meeting which you will need to arrange individually with the class teacher if required, to discuss any concerns following their end of year report going home. The end of year report will cover their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and grades for effort, behaviour and share their attendance percentage.

We also provide end of term reports at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms which focus on the core learning of Religious Education, Reading, Writing and Maths and will contain an attendance report.

We may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

If either the class teacher or parents/carers feel that a longer appointment is required for pupils with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs. These can be arranged separately.

Parents may also be asked to attend further meetings where staff feel that there is a need.

Phone calls

Staff may call parents for a variety of reasons; to discuss concerns, to let you know about an injury or illness or to celebrate something your child has done. We recognise that you may not be able to speak at the time of the call. Staff will leave a voice message providing brief details and a request to call back at a suitable time. If staff are unable to leave a message, they may ask the office to send a message and will try and call again.

School Website

Our school website has a plethora of information on it to support you and your child.

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Curriculum information
- Newsletters
- Information and contacts for early help and SEND
- Important policies and procedures
- Uniform Policy
- Important contact information
- Information about wraparound provision (before and after-school club)

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

Newsletters & Letters

Monthly newsletters are sent via the App and email and are also uploaded to our website. They include curriculum information, reminders, key dates, and general news

How parents & carers can communicate with school

We recognise that families have busy lives and many parents work, which is why we ask parents to contact the school, either by phone or email, so that their query or concern can be logged and passed to the appropriate member of staff – see list in the appendix.

Before and after school, teachers may be unable to offer you the time to address queries and concerns on the spot due to teaching or other commitments, which is why we ask parents and carers to email the class emails or phone/email the school office so the relevant information can be shared with the relevant member of staff. Communications at drop off and collection times should be limited.

In App Messages

Parents can use the Arbor App to message with general queries, especially regarding bookings for wraparound care, illness, medical appointments etc. These messages go to Mrs Maudsley and Mrs Shoulder in the office. They will aim to respond to these as soon as we can and within 2 working days. If your matter is urgent or you need a space for wraparound care on the same day you should telephone the office.

Phone Calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should contact the school office who will summarise the conversation and email the relevant member of staff so that there is a record. The staff member will aim to contact you as soon as possible but this may take up to three working days due to teaching or other commitments. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within five working days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office in order to ensure the message gets through to the correct person quickly. Urgent issues might include things like:

- Safeguarding or welfare issues – please ask to speak to the DSL. Emails are not appropriate for this type of communication.
- Family emergencies

Emails

Emails are a convenient way for parents to contact the school about non-urgent matters, but please ensure that these are brief and include the key points. Class email addresses are shared with parents and carers. If you have a specific query regarding your child or their class you should use these in the first instance.

apple@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk
oak@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk
elm@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk
beech@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk
eucalyptus@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk
willow@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk
sycamore@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk

We do not share widely the emails of individual staff to prevent them from being overwhelmed with emails which takes them away from focusing on teaching and learning. General queries can be sent to the school office at bursar@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk and SEND related emails to our SENDCo Mrs Clare Round sendco@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk

We aim to acknowledge all emails within three working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days. If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school office.

Meetings

We recommend parents book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address or call the school to request an appointment. This request will be passed on to the appropriate member of staff. We try to schedule all meetings within three working days of the request, but this is not always possible due to teaching or other commitments.

Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Adaptations can be made when the school is aware of any additional needs. Please speak to a member of the office team if you require additional support to access communications.

Parents/Carers with additional communication needs, including English as an additional language

We aim to make communications accessible to all. We have taken the following steps to achieve this:

All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request reasonable adjustments, such as:

- School announcements and communications in accessible formats or translated into additional languages.
- Interpreters or sign language interpreters for meetings.

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every two years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

Policy created by Headteacher: Autumn 2025

Approved by Governors: November 2025

Next review date: Autumn 2027

Appendix 1



For general or initial queries please contact Mrs Maudsley via email bursar@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk

If the communication refers to your child, please put your child's name, class and the subject (from the list below).

For example, 'Such Abody Y5 Behaviour Incident' or 'Such Abody Y5 Medical Update'

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I have a question about...	Who you need to talk to
My child's learning	Class teacher
Behaviour incident / concerns involving my child	Class teacher initially
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)	Class teacher initially and then Mrs Round who is our SENDCo.
My child's wellbeing / pastoral support	Class teacher initially and then Mrs Shoulder who is our pastoral lead.
My child's health needs	Class teacher initially and then Mrs Round who is our SENDCo and deals with Early Help and Health Needs.
Unresolved behaviour or bullying incidents	Mrs Bramhall , who is responsible for the Apple, Oak & Elm classes and can be reached using the Apple class email above (EYFS and KS1). Mrs Round who is responsible for the Beech, Eucalyptus, Willow and Sycamore Classes (KS2). She can be contacted using the Sycamore email detailed above.
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call (01524) 63934 or send a message via the Arbor App If you wish to request a term-time absence, please collect the form from the office.
Uniform / lost property / school dinners/wraparound care/Arbor/Payments	Mrs Maudsley (01524) 63934 or bursar@st-bernardettes.lancs.sch.uk

Appendix 2

Parent Code of Conduct



At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, we believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support their child's learning and wellbeing.
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for our pupils, staff and families.
- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times.
- Address concerns early and work together to improve.

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the Staff Code of Conduct and related policies) and pupils (through our Behaviour Policy).

This code of conduct aims to help school, work together with parents, by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour both in person and online. We use the term 'parents' to refer to anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil or anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders).

Our expectations of parents and carers

- We expect parents and other visitors to:
- Respect the mission, vision and Gospel Values of our school.
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect and kindness setting a good example with speech and behaviour – both in person and online.
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues.
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated

- The following is not an exhaustive list but provides examples of unacceptable behaviours that will not be tolerated, either in person or online, towards school, its staff, pupils or any member of its community.
- Behaviour which makes others feel uncomfortable or takes up a disproportionate amount of staff time.
- Excessive emails or phone calls about the same issue will be redirected to a meeting or a phone call. If the emails or phone calls continue after the issue has been dealt with the parent will be directed to the [complaints policy](#) and the where the rule on persistent correspondence will be used.
- Sharing concerns in the community which have not been raised properly with school either in person or online.

- Using social media or messaging Apps/groups to publicly criticise or intimidate staff rather than raising a complaint through the proper channels.
- Displaying a temper or aggressive behaviour which includes swearing or offensive language.
- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including school events and local competitions).
- Threatening or abusive behaviour in-person, via email or on the telephone.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments in-person, via email or on the telephone
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises.
- Disciplining another person's child or challenging another parent about a school incident – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention.
- Smoking (including vaping) or drinking alcohol (including being intoxicated) on the school premises.
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs).
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than guide dogs).

Breaching the code of conduct

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident(s). Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

- Invite the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.
- Send a warning letter to the parent.
- Ban parent from the school or restrict their level of contact for example removing permission to attend school events and assemblies.
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour).
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous).

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the headteacher. The headteacher will consult the chair of governors before banning a parent from the school site.