

# St Bede's Catholic College



## Home-college communication policy

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### 1. Introduction and aims

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and college is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives.

We believe that clear, open communication between the college and families has a positive impact on students' learning because it:

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

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

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

### 2. Roles and responsibilities

#### 2.1 Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

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

#### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- › Responding to communication from families in line with this policy and the college's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- › Working with other members of staff to make sure families get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core college hours, 08.00 – 17.00, or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

The IT Acceptable Use Policy can be found on our website:  
<https://www.stbedescc.org/page/?title=Policies+and+Procedures&pid=20>

### **2.3 Families**

Families are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the college is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Responding to communications from the college (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the college

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our Home College Agreement. This can be found on our website:  
<https://www.stbedescc.org/page/?title=Policies+and+Procedures&pid=20>

Families should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core college hours, 08.00-17.00, or during college holidays.

### **3. How we communicate with families**

The sections below explain how we keep families up to date with their child's education and what is happening in college.

Families should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

#### **3.1 Email**

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming college events
- Scheduled college closures (for example, for staff training days)
- College surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

#### **3.2 Text messages**

We will text parents about:

- Student attendance
- Short-notice changes to the college day
- Emergency college closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

#### **3.3 College calendar**

Our website includes a full college calendar for the year. Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including flexible uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for students to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the college calendar.

#### **3.4 Phone calls**

Our preferred method of contacting you is via email, text or for more general information, the fortnightly newsletter. More student specific issues may be communicated via a phone call.

### 3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms

### 3.6 Class Charts

Information regarding home learning, house points and behaviour incidents is available on Class Charts

### 3.7 Reports

Families receive reports from the college via the isams parent portal about their child's learning, including three termly progress reports covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold one progress evening per year group for families each year. During these meetings, families can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

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

Families of students with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

### 3.9 College website

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

- College times and term dates
- College Mission
- Important events and announcements
- Uniform
- Curriculum information
- Home Learning Timetables
- Important policies and procedures
- Scopay
- Important contact information

Families should check the website before contacting the college.

## 4. How families can communicate with the college

### 4.1 Email

Families should always email the college, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

If you have not received a response from the school within two working days, please contact the school by emailing [contact@stbcc.org](mailto:contact@stbcc.org) and we will chase up your enquiry.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the college.

## 4.2 Phone calls

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Reception staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.
- If a call is an emergency, please inform the receptionist who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will try to respond to you within one working day.
- Please **note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.**

## 4.3 Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them.

In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

- Form Tutor (for general wellbeing queries) or Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Head of Year/House (for general wellbeing queries) or Subject Leader (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Assistant Principal
- Vice Principal
- Principal

Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff.

If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will find a senior member of staff to meet with you at the earliest opportunity.

For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you normally within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

## 4.4 Home-College communications

Information regarding the college apps is available on the website:

<https://www.stbedesc.org/page/?title=Parent+Apps+and+Websites&pid=360>

## 5. Accessibility

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the college.

### 5.1 Parents with additional communication needs

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

- All whole-college announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) are made available in multiple formats
- All communications are written as clearly and concisely as possible
- Accessibility is considered when designing/updating the college
- Staff are trained on accessibility and will endeavour to provide information in an accessible format

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

- College announcements and communications in accessible formats
- Sign language interpreters for meetings

Please contact the college office to discuss these.

### **5.2 Parents with English as an additional language (EAL)**

We currently make whole-college announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in English

Parents who need help communicating with the college can request the following support:

- College announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the college office to discuss these.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

The Principal monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every two years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

## **7. Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- IT Acceptable Use
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-college agreement
- Staff wellbeing

## **Complaints**

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found on our website:

<https://www.stbedescc.org/page/?title=Policies+and+Procedures&pid=20>

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