



## Parent / School Communication Policy

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### 1. Introduction

St Oliver Plunkett National School recognises that clear, respectful and timely communication between home and school is essential to supporting pupils' academic, social and emotional development.

As a small specialist primary school, we value strong partnerships with parents and guardians and aim to ensure that communication is open, constructive and child-centred.

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### 2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive and respectful communication
- Ensure clarity around appropriate communication channels
- Support timely and effective responses
- Protect staff wellbeing and work-life balance
- Ensure communication complies with GDPR and child safeguarding requirements
- Provide clear procedures for raising concerns or queries

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### 3. Principles of Communication

All communication within the school community should:

- Be courteous, respectful and solution-focused
- Support the best interests and wellbeing of the child
- Recognise the professional role of school staff
- Take place through appropriate channels
- Respect confidentiality at all times

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### 4. Methods of Communication

#### 4.1 Aladdin (Official School Communication System)

Aladdin is the school's primary and official communication platform. It is used for:

- Attendance records
- School notices and circulars
- Permission forms
- Student Support Files
- Reports and meeting notifications
- Appointment scheduling

Parents are expected to check Aladdin regularly.

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#### 4.2 Email

Email may be used for:

- Individual communication with teachers
- Follow-up correspondence
- Sharing documents where appropriate

Emails should be respectful and concise. Teachers may not be in a position to respond immediately during teaching hours.

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#### 4.3 Phone Communication

Phone calls may be used for:

- Urgent matters
- Illness or collection issues
- Matters requiring timely clarification

Where a discussion is likely to require detailed conversation, a meeting will be arranged.

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#### 4.4 ClassDojo

ClassDojo is used to:

- Share photos of class activities and pupil work
- Celebrate achievements
- Provide positive updates from the classroom

ClassDojo is not used for:

- Formal complaints
- Confidential or sensitive matters

Consent is obtained from parents before photographs are shared in accordance with the school's Data Protection and Child Safeguarding policies.

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#### 5. Response Times

While we aim to respond promptly:

- Messages sent during the school day will not be answered until after class contact time
  - Staff will endeavour to respond within **two school days**
  - Communication sent outside school hours (including evenings and weekends) will be addressed during the next school working day
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#### 6. Communication During the School Day

In order to prioritise teaching and learning:

- Teachers are not available for unscheduled meetings during class time
  - Messages should be sent via Aladdin or email rather than through pupils
  - Urgent messages should be communicated through the school office
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#### 7. Arranging Meetings

Parents/guardians wishing to discuss a concern are encouraged to:

1. Contact the **class teacher in the first instance**
2. Arrange an appointment in advance
3. Provide a brief outline of the concern where possible

Unscheduled discussions at classroom doors are not appropriate for confidential or detailed matters.

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#### 8. Lines of Communication / Raising Concerns

The school operates a **step-by-step approach** to resolving concerns:

1. **Class Teacher** – first point of contact
2. **Deputy Principal / Principal** – if the issue is not resolved
3. **Board of Management** – in line with the school's Complaints Procedure

Parents are encouraged to follow this process to ensure concerns are addressed fairly and efficiently.

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#### 9. Respectful Communication

All communication between home and school should be:

- Respectful
- Professional
- Focused on the child's best interests

The school will not tolerate:

- Aggressive or threatening behaviour
- Abusive language (written or verbal)
- Inappropriate or defamatory communication

Where necessary, the school reserves the right to:

- Limit communication to written format
- Require meetings to take place in the presence of a third party

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#### 10. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All communication is managed in accordance with:

- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**
- The school's Data Protection Policy
- The Child Safeguarding Statement

Sensitive information will only be shared through secure and appropriate channels.

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#### 11. Social Media

The school does not conduct official communication through personal social media accounts.

Parents are reminded:

- Concerns should be raised directly with the school
- Posting about school-related matters on social media may impact the school community
- Confidential matters must not be discussed publicly

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#### 12. Record Keeping

The school may retain records of communication where appropriate, including:

- Emails
- Meeting notes
- Reports of phone conversations

This is to ensure clarity, continuity and appropriate follow-up.

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#### 13. Inclusivity and Accessibility

The school is committed to ensuring that communication is accessible to all parents/guardians.

Where possible, the school will:

- Support parents who may require additional assistance
- Provide clarification or alternative formats when needed

Parents are encouraged to inform the school of any specific communication needs.

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#### 14. Partnership Approach

At St Oliver Plunkett NS, we value our partnership with parents and guardians.

Through clear, respectful and open communication, we aim to work together to support every pupil during their two-year placement in our school.

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#### Ratification and Review

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_