

**CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office

In the City of Rochester School, the term 'staff' is inclusive of all staff and it also applies to students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, the Trustees and Board of Trustees.

Applies to:

- the whole school and extra-curricular activities inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school

Other relevant documents:

- Admissions Policy;
- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability legislation currently in force
- Inclusion Policy;
- E-Safety Policy and
- Home-School Contract.
- Remote Learning Policy

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher.
- The proprietor (who is also the Headteacher) will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than three years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require

Signed:

Date Reviewed: March 2022
Date of Next Review: March 2025
Version No. 3



Alicja Emmett
Headteacher

Introduction: Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents, with the community and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is aiming to achieve and how they can help.

Aims and Objectives

- In our school, we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community.
- Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values, through keeping parents well informed about school life.
- This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting the school in educating their child.
- We have various strategies for communicating with parents.

We:

- must make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible;
- must be as informative as possible, use easy to read font and add pictures wherever appropriate;
- wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our school.
- Parents can at any time request a meeting with school staff by email, in person, in writing a note in the child's home:school contact book or via the school office.
- Parents can request paper copies of any school policies or procedure via the school office

Home-School Agreement:

- The Home-School agreement explains the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities towards the children, the responsibilities of the parents, and what the school expects of the children. We expect parents to sign this agreement when their child starts in our school.
- The Agreement covers the standard of education in our school, the ethos of the school, our expectations on attendance and good behavior.
- The Headteacher reviews the Agreement annually.

Home-School Communication:

- Parents receive regular communications, such as school newsletters or letters informing them of events/initiatives etc. This is mainly done via letter (hardcopy) but is also sent out electronically.
- Some parents drop off and pick up their children each day allowing access to school staff, but this is by appointment only
- All parents are reminded never to hesitate to contact school if they have a concern. They are made aware that the Headteacher is available on a daily basis. The Headteacher agrees to meet with or at least telephone parents within 24 hours of an inquiry or, if the Headteacher is away from school, within 24 hours of her return.
- A newsletter is produced every term. These contain general details of school events, activities and information. Parents expect the newsletter and appreciate the regularity of the contact.
- Class Teachers often meet the parents of the children in their classes to impart arrangements and details of the work to be covered during the term.
- We invite parents to support their child's work through a range of suggested activities to be shared with the child at home.
- Children in all classes have a home-school reading initiative.
- Teachers record any homework assignments in the home:school communication book. It is to be signed by parents. The school encourages parents to share any issues about their child at the earliest opportunity using the communication book or by telephoning the main office in the morning before school starts so any relevant information can be shared with staff at the morning briefing
- If a child is absent from school and we have had no indication of the reason, we contact a parent (by telephone) to find out the reason for the absence.

Communication with other schools and outside agencies

- We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment.
- We are the people most in contact with our children and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help abused children. So when any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Headteacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- We hold information on pupils in our school and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for education purposes. This is a requirement under both the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.
- Parents have a right to view the information we hold and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed.

Electronic Communication

- We use the Internet; e-mail, a school website and a Facebook page which is owned and managed by school staff
- We recognised there are many benefits but also a number of possible dangers when using electronic communication. Safeguards in our school include constant adult supervision, filters, controlled links and the use of child-friendly search engines.
- The Internet may be used in lessons 'live' for lesson content and for interactive teaching programmes.
- Information on pupils is shared with our external partners – such as placement providers, and is held safely and securely
- Our school website provides phone and e-mail contact details of the school.
- All pupils hand in their mobile phones for safe keeping at the beginning of the day. Mobile phones are not permitted to be used during the school day

Use of Photographs and Names

- When pupils join City of Rochester School, parents sign to agree for them to have their photographs taken for use in school for, displays, records of practical work (e.g. art projects) and records of important school events but also for use in newspaper articles or publicity.
- Staff are made aware of any child who is not allowed to be photographed by the office.
- We may use photographs of children or their work when communicating with parents and the wider community, in newsletters and in the school prospectus.
- Photographs will be checked to ensure that they are suitable (photos of children in swimwear would be unsuitable, as would individual and close-up shots).
- Photographs used will not be captioned with children's surnames, unless additional permission has been granted for use in the local press for example.
- Photographs are never taken of any LAC children for use outside the school