



Communication Policy

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Our Mission Statement

At Holy Cross, we are very proud of our school motto and our Catholic ethos; **Loved, Valued, Challenged.**

Loved: We love one another as Jesus taught us – our friends, our families and those who we may never meet.

Valued: We value everyone – everyone is important; pupils, staff, parents, governors, and members of the community– no matter their race, religion ability or need. We try to live like Jesus taught us.

Challenged: We challenge each other – not only with our learning but challenge each other to be more merciful to others, have a little more understanding of others’ needs and challenge each other to be better people.

Our Vision

At Holy Cross, we aim to develop a caring Catholic community based upon the life and example of Jesus Christ, which envelopes the life and lives of everyone and everything in our school. It is through Christ’s message of love and forgiveness that the children, staff, both teachers and ancillary, parents and governors, preserve the essential Catholic ethos of the school.

The school aims to provide a challenging curriculum that reflects our philosophy, broadly balanced and relevant, and to support the development of the whole child to his/her full potential. At Holy Cross, everybody matters, therefore we encourage all to show respect to each other and the environment.

Aims

Communication is a fundamental aspect of school life, and we recognise the role it plays in creating a positive, purposeful environment. Holy Cross Catholic Primary and Nursery Voluntary Academy is a community of approximately 230 students and families, approximately 35 staff and 6 governors, and several external agencies. We all have a collective responsibility to communicate in a manner that is respectful, thoughtful, and kind as all stakeholders are Loved, Valued and Challenged.

This policy provides guidance to ensure we all communicate effectively with one another. In summary, the policy aims:

- To give families the information they need to support their child’s education.
- To maintain effective, proactive communication systems
- To develop positive working relationships across all stakeholders
- To help the school improve, through feedback and consultation with families.
- To help families reach the member of staff who is best placed to address their specific query so that they can get a response as quickly as possible.

The word ‘families’ refers to both parents, extended family members and carers.

Objectives

All communications with school should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, and other stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest, ethical, and professional.
- Use jargon-free English and be easily understood by all.
- Be conducted in a timely manner.
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, method, and audience.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with families are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Dealing with any issues of inappropriate communication.
- Regularly reviewing this policy.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from families in line with this policy and the school'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 not respond to communications outside of school hours (8.30am – 4.30pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays. It may, however, occasionally be necessary to send messages outside of these hours if messages to relate to the next day or any emergency messages.

Families

Families are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is always respectful.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner.
- Checking all communications from the school, including information in the weekly news. Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be treated in line with our Trust, School, Home Agreement, which can be seen on our website.

How families can communicate with school

Please use the list in the table below to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

Who should I contact?

I have a question about...	Who you need to contact
My child's learning / class activity / lesson / homework	Your child's class teacher via Class Dojo
My child's well-being/pastoral/mental health support	Mrs Rainbow – Senior Mental health Lead via Class Dojo or Mrs Tipton/Mrs McNamara via Class Dojo
A safeguarding concern	Mrs Tipton – Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs McNamara – Headteacher Mrs Sara Bruce – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead via Class Dojo Mrs Williams – Safeguarding Governor mwilliams@holycross.notts.sch.uk
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	SENDCo – Mrs Tipton senco@holycross.notts.sch.uk
Payments/School meals	Miss Teresa Horden Miss Paula Keightley office@holycross.notts.sch.uk
School trips	Miss Teresa Horden Miss Paula Keightley office@holycross.notts.sch.uk
Lost uniform	Miss Teresa Horden Miss Paula Keightley office@holycross.notts.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	Miss Teresa Horden Miss Paula Keightley office@holycross.notts.sch.uk Mrs McNamara – if you would like to discuss the absence of leave before completing a request form.
Bullying or behaviour incident	Initially your child's class teacher <i>More serious concerns:</i> Mrs McNamara or Mrs Tipton via Class Dojo
School events/diary dates/school calendar	Miss Teresa Horden Miss Paula Keightley office@holycross.notts.sch.uk
School website	Miss Teresa Horden office@holycross.notts.sch.uk
Breakfast and After School Club	Miss Christa Bales/Miss Teresa Horden wrapac@holycross.notts.sch.uk or office@holycross.notts.sch.uk

Class Dojo

All members of staff are available to contact via Class Dojo. If your question is about your child's learning, homework, or class related issue, please contact your child's class teacher.

Email

Families should always email the school office, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. The email address to use is office@holycross.notts.sch.uk. Emails sent to the office will then be forwarded to the relevant person. We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate). If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

Telephone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, please either contact the member of staff via Class Dojo or email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within 2 working days. If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time.

We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 days of your request. If your issue is urgent, please call the school office 0115 953 4577.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies.
- Safeguarding or welfare issues.
- For more general enquiries, please call the school office. The office staff will relay messages for teachers and other staff.

Meetings

If you would like to schedule a face-to-face meeting with a member of staff, please contact the member of staff via Class Dojo or email the school office address or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 2 working days of the request. While teachers are available at the end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, we recommend you book appointments to discuss:

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

How families can communicate with school

We recognise the importance of keeping you informed about your child's learning experience at Holy Cross Catholic Primary and Nursery Voluntary Academy and how they are progressing. We have timely information sent out to all parents on an annual, termly and half termly basis.

This includes:

- Meet the teacher.
- End of year written report.
- Termly Learning Meetings.
- Communication via Class Dojo.

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) in the English language.

Families who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls.
- Support for families with literacy difficulties or other additional needs.

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

School website

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

- School times and term dates.
- Important events and announcements.
- Curriculum and attainment information.
- Important policies and procedures.
- Important contact information.
- Information about wrap around care provision.
- Information about school uniform.
- Information about school admissions.
- Ofsted/Diocese reports.

Appropriate communication

We strive to be an open and approachable school that is committed to engaging with all stakeholders following our Catholic ethos. We would like to thank many visitors and parents who are consistently pleasant and polite in all their communications with the school. However, it is important to note that we have a duty of care to our staff, governors, and volunteers as well as to our pupils and we remain wholeheartedly committed to everyone.

All staff at the school are expected to show respect for everyone that they meet during their duties, by being always polite and courteous. They will endeavour to deal effectively with any reasonable request they receive from visitors and callers to the school. The school also expects all those who visit or contact our school to always treat our staff respectfully and courteously. The same level of courtesy is expected with email communication. We strongly encourage all those who may wish to communicate with our school to do so in a manner that does not discriminate against any member of our diverse community and consistently adheres to our Communications Policy.

We take any aggressive behaviour or threatening language towards any member of our staff, governors, and volunteers seriously, whether this is during a telephone conversation, email or during a visit to the school. If a caller or visitor's behaviour is deemed discriminatory, rude, abusive, or aggressive, they will be advised to stop their behaviour. If the behaviour persists, we will terminate the call or ask the visitor to leave the premises. If this behaviour should continue, the visitor will be asked not to come onto school property anymore and all communication would need to be sent through the school office so that these can be screened before sending on to the member of staff.

Parents and visitors should be aware that a request for an appointment must be made in advance if they wish to see a particular member of staff. We greatly value the support of parents and the wider school community and thank you for adhering to this notice.

Actions for inappropriate communication

- 1st instance – a verbal warning will be given.
- 2nd instance – a written warning will be given.
- 3rd instance – Parent/carer no longer allowed on school site, and all communications to go through the school office email office@holycross.notts.sch.uk

Any physically aggressive behaviour will ultimately result in a ban from site and the police will be contacted. This may also result in a referral to the MASH, where a social worker may need to be involved depending on the context of the physically aggressive behaviour.

Monitoring and evaluation

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years. The policy will be approved by the local governing board.