



Castle Park Primary School

Church Rd, Caldicot NP26 4HN

Communications Policy

Introduction

At Castle Park Primary School we value the strong relationship with parents and carers. Together, this helps us achieve the very best for the children in a mutually supportive partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. As a partnership, parents and carers understand the importance of a good working relationship with the school. We continually welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate in the life of the school. Parents and carers are always encouraged to contact the school with any concerns and/or issues. The school would appreciate the opportunity to resolve any matter with parents and carers.

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential. Children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Castle Park Primary School recognises the importance of clear and effective communication with all stakeholders and is committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school.

The key stakeholders for a school are parents, carers, pupils, staff and governors and this policy addresses the main ways in which the school ensures effective two-way communication between home and the school.

In this policy the term 'parents' refers to both parents and carers.

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.

Aims of the policy

To ensure that effective communication and consultation takes place between the school, parents, pupils and other stakeholders.

Castle Park Primary School recognises that engaging and working with parents is a vital component in providing their child with an excellent education. Throughout the year, the school will ask parents what they expect from and what their perceptions are of the school.

Our aims are listed below:

- To make the school as welcoming and inclusive as possible
- To respond and deal with problems or issues appropriately
- To use an appropriate range of communications to inform parents
- To give parents information on what their children are being taught and progress they are making
- To encourage parents to help or support their children's learning at school and at home with information on resources available
- To promote parental engagement through parent workshops and events
- To seek parents' views and consider feedback provided about the school

Parents as partners in their child's education

It is widely acknowledged in Government guidance, legislation and research that parents have a key role to play in their child's education.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age must make sure that they receive efficient full-time education suitable to -

- their age, ability and aptitude
- any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Communications

Communications can take a variety of forms: Schoop (app), verbal (through meetings or by telephone), written (through letters or email), through the School website or via social media. Our

aim is to utilise all means of communication effectively.

- Schoop was developed specifically to ease the burden for parents in managing the information coming from the school and to access up to date information for their child's class.
- The school prospectus contains a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school. We update this for each school year and it is available on the website.
- Reception parents are invited to a transition evening in the term prior to joining the school, where key information is shared. Parents can view the facilities, meet the Head Teacher and teaching staff and ask questions.
- The school recognises that some pupils with additional learning needs may need more information prior to moving up day in order to prepare them and reduce anxiety. Arrangements will be made with parents to inform them confidentially.
- Parents are invited to attend two full parent consultations each school year to review the academic, personal and social progress of their child. These take place in the Autumn and Summer terms.
- Parents will receive a written report of academic, personal and social progress at the end of the Spring Term.
- Parents are also encouraged to follow the school Facebook page which shares good news stories about the successes of the school and its pupils.
- The school will share a newsletter every half term – on Schoop, via the School website, which will include key dates, important information as well as photos and interesting stories about what the children have been doing.
- The Annual Governors Report to parents is shared via Schoop and is available on the website.

E-mail

The school e-mail address is CAS.Primary@monmouthshireschools.wales and this is the School's preferred method of communication. All emails must go through the office for tracking purposes.

1. Parents may wish to contact the school via email as an alternative to telephone or letter. Admin staff will forward any communication to the appropriate staff member for whom the message relates. All email communication will be treated in the same way as a letter.

2. The school is proactive in encouraging the use of email, with office email contacts being publicised regularly in newsletters and all parents being encouraged to give an email address for prompt and effective communication.

Telephone calls

All telephone enquiries will pass through the main school office, who will direct the call to the relevant member of staff. In the likely event that the member of staff is not available to answer the call a message should be left and a return call will be placed at the earliest appropriate time.

Meetings

1. At times, at the request of the school or parent, a meeting may take place if either party feels that this would be the most appropriate communication method. Meetings are conducted to discuss formal points or concerns to a student's welfare or well-being. All meetings must be agreed in advance.

2. Notes from telephone calls /meetings/ email content will be saved electronically.

3. All visitors to school must report to Reception, sign in and wait to be collected by the staff member they are seeing.

4. Communication from parents should be polite and civil at all times. Rudeness, inappropriate language, verbal abuse or threatening behaviour will result in the communication being ended immediately. Should the Headteacher deem it necessary for safeguarding and security reasons, action will be taken and restrictions may be put in place for future communication. In this instance, the school Policy for the Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers will be followed.

The School Website

The school website is the main source of general information and should be the first port of call for information like:

- The school prospectus
- Key information about the school
- Key dates
- Newsletters and updates
- Policies
- Other important content (e.g. School inspection reports)

Schoop

Schoop is a free, secure educational establishment-focused app that allows the School to quickly communicate with parents via their smartphones on subjects including:

- Key information about the school
- Key dates
- Newsletters and updates
- School clubs

Social Media within school

The school has an account for 'Facebook' which enables the school to communicate quickly and effectively with parents to share the day.

Inappropriate use of social media

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff and, in some cases, other parents/pupils. The Governors of Castle Park consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, so that they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all concerned. If any pupil or parent/carer of any child being educated in Castle Park Primary is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social media websites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site and to the Police.

All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site, and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately. In serious cases, the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other site including the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent/carer to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate online communication. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

Home-school communications

A calendar of Castle Park Primary School events is regularly updated and published on the school website as well as shared on Schoop.

The school encourages parents to share any issues about their child with their class teacher at the earliest opportunity. In the first instance parents should speak with the class teacher, before speaking to the Headteacher. A governor would only be involved if a formal complaint was made – as per the complaints policy which can be found on the school website.

The school will arrange parent consultations throughout the year and any additional meetings as necessary.

Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents of planning, content and arrangements.

If a student is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, administrative staff will telephone a parent to find out the reason for the absence (please see our Attendance Policy). This is in the interest of safeguarding.

PTA

The school has a thriving PTA – Friends of Castle Park. Its primary purpose is to organise social events and raise money for the school, but it is also a good way for parents to get involved in the life of the school and at times the school consults with this group of parents on ideas for the future.

Communication with separated parents

- Requests from split parents for separate communication are accommodated
- Newsletters and documents are downloadable from the school website with other necessary documentation Schooped out and available to all parents
- Separate appointments to see the class teachers at parents' evenings and school reports are accommodated if asked for in advance

Use of photographs and names

When a child starts at Castle Park Primary School, a parent is permitted to fill in a consent form which gives permission for photos to be published on different platforms, first names to be used in the newsletter and publication of work on the website.

Photographs are used in and around the school for many purposes including displays. We may use photographs of children or their work when communicating with parents and the wider community, in newsletters, on Schoop, on Facebook, in the school prospectus, on the school website, or in the Governors' Annual Report to parents.

The local or national press may on occasion publish photographs of children participating in events at school and permission would be requested from parents.

Lists of those children for whom permission has NOT been given will be held by each class teacher, and by the school office. Photographs will be checked to ensure that they are suitable (photos of children in swimwear would be unsuitable).

Confidentiality

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 educational purposes. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed (please see our Data Protection Policy).

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are a prominent feature of modern society; however, we know and have seen that there needs to be clear rules and expectations for children bringing phones to school. We fully understand and agree that, if children walk to or from school, parents may want them to possess a mobile phone for their safety and peace of mind. Only 5 and 6 pupils are permitted to bring mobile phones to school. Children may bring a mobile phone into school under the following conditions:

- The phone is switched off as the child enters the school site and is immediately handed into their class teacher on arrival into school.
- The phone must not be switched on until the child leaves the school site.
- The school accepts no liability for the loss/damage of the phone whilst on school premises.
- On the rare occasion that parents/carers need to contact pupils in an emergency, or vice versa, this should be done via the school office on 01291 420465.
- For more information, please see the School's dedicated policy on mobile phones. (See Appendix 1)

Managing Unreasonably Persistent and Unacceptable Behaviours

In the event of a parent, carer or stakeholder behaving in an inappropriate way, each situation will need to be considered individually by the headteacher or a designated member of school staff following the school Policy for the Conduct of Parents and Carers.

When a parent, carer or stakeholder begins to show signs of such unreasonably persistent behaviour Headteachers/Governing Bodies should inform the individual of the impact their behaviour is having at an early stage and that if the unreasonably persistent behaviour continues it may be necessary for restrictions to be imposed as to future communication and contact with the school and staff.

Communication Plan

When communication between parents and the school breaks down, a communication plan may be put in place to support the restoration of effective communication. The purpose of this plan is to establish clear expectations, agreed methods of contact, and appropriate timescales for responses, ensuring that information is shared respectfully and constructively. The plan may outline the agreed communication channels (for example email, telephone, or scheduled meetings), identify the key staff member responsible for communication, and set reasonable response times for both the school and parents. The aim is to rebuild positive working relationships in the best interests of the pupil.

This policy was April 2024 by Mrs C Orford. Amended March 2026 by Mrs H Quittelier

This policy was presented and accepted by the Governing Body March 2026

Signed(Chair person)