

St Wilfrid's Catholic Academy



“Love One Another As I Have Loved You”

Communication Policy

Policy Adopted	Next Review	Author
September 2025	September 2026	N Glover

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1. Introduction and aims

In The Newman Catholic Collegiate we believe we are here to place Christ at the Centre of our school communities allowing all to use their God given talents to succeed.

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school 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 school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Directors/Governors/Executive Leaders (CCEL/COO/CFO)

Directors, governors and executive leaders are responsible for:

- Effectively engaging with the views of pupils, parents and staff so that they have an accurate understanding of these stakeholders' concerns.
- Considering the views of individual schools and their stakeholders when taking decisions that have a significant and specific impact on them
- Adapting support for individual schools in line with feedback from the relevant school's stakeholders
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Developing a programme of strategies to collate pupil and parent voice and report findings to Directors/governors
- Responding effectively to any concerns raised and using findings to inform future strategic developments.

- Ensuring that our school communities feel valued and listened to.

2.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

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

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during the school hours of 8am – 5pm 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 normal method of communication will be a telephone call or email from the school office. Staff will never email parents from personal emails and will only email parents using a work email if they have gained the permission of the Principal.

2.4 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is always respectful
- Only using official communication channels, such as the school's phone line, school email addresses etc. Parents should not attempt to contact staff via personal emails, by text on their personal phones, on social media sites or at their home address
- 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
- Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our code of conduct
- Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours during school holidays
- Let us know if we are doing things well or could do things better
- When they remain dissatisfied, ensuring the school complaints procedure is followed. (Ofsted expects parents to follow the school complaints procedure before investigating issues)
- Our Parent Code of Conduct can be found here:
<https://www.stwilfridsnewman.co.uk/page/?title=Policies&pid=30>
- Our Complaints procedure can be found here:
<https://www.stwilfridsnewman.co.uk/page/?title=Policies&pid=30>

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

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

Parents should monitor 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:

School Letters without reply slips (as an attachment)

School Newsletters (half termly)

Third Party letters/leaflets e.g. Letters from Saint Margaret Ward

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

A pupil's absence where reasons are unknown

Rewards

Urgent reminders

Short notice changes to the school day

Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3 Arbor Parent Portal In-App Message

We will message parents about:

Non-urgent reminders

Informal responses to queries made initially on the App

Teacher requests for resources from parents

Upcoming school events

Completing school questionnaires

3.4 School calendar

Our school website <https://www.stwilfridsnewman.co.uk/> includes a school calendar with dates for the full year.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.5 Phone calls

Staff will call parents to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative).

Staff will call parents to discuss concerns about your child.

Staff will call to let you know that your child has fallen ill or become injured at school

3.6 Letters

We send letters home that require a consent form to be signed and returned by parents/carers.

3.6 Homework books/school planners

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children have a reading record diary which is sent home. Here reading in school and at home is recorded. We ask children to read at home 3 nights per week and for the diary to be signed by an adult.

In Year 3, 4,5 and 6 children have a school diary where they record their daily reading. Adults must sign each night to show that the child has read.

All Children also have a separate homework book which is used to record other homework which is sent home by the class teacher.

3.7 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance

- A report on Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 SATs tests

- A report on the results of public examinations

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

3.8 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening(s) per term. During these meetings, parents 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. We expect parents to attend all meetings. If you have not made an appointment we may contact you to try and arrange an appropriate time.

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

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

3.9 School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, <https://www.stwilfridsnewman.co.uk/>

including:

- School times and term dates

- Important events and announcements

- Curriculum information

- Important policies and procedures

- Important contact information

- Information about before and after-school provision

- Information about the collegiate and how to contact collegiate staff can be found at [The Newman Catholic Collegiate - Contact \(newmancc.co.uk\)](http://TheNewmanCatholicCollegiate-Contact(newmancc.co.uk))

Parents should check the school website before contacting the school.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a quick response, they should call the school office 01782 235676 where the issue will be picked up on the same day.

4.1 Email

Parents should email the school office office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk

If this is for a particular staff member, the office will forward the communication to them.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days.

4.2 Arbor Parent Portal in App Message

Parents can use the in-app messaging service to communicate with the school over non urgent matters.

Messages on the app will be read within 24 hours during the working week and a response given (if necessary) within 3 school days.

4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should telephone the school office, and the relevant member of staff will aim to return their call within 2 days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond by scheduling a phone call at a convenient time, this will be on the same day. We aim to ensure parents have spoken to the appropriate staff member as soon as possible.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

Family emergencies

Safeguarding or welfare issues

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the office email address or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request and usually within the same week.

Teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day. If parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments. Urgent appointments may used to discuss:

Any concerns they have about their child's learning

Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

4.4 Social Media

We have a Facebook page which celebrates the pupils' achievements in school and provides further information and messages about the school.

We advise parents to avoid posting negative comments on the Facebook page and instead bring their queries or concerns to the attention of the relevant member of staff by emailing the school office.

<https://www.facebook.com/St.WilfridsNewman/>

5. 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) available in the following languages:

- English

Our school website uses Google Translate and your home language can be selected from the dropdown list. There are 133 languages available.

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

School announcements and communications translated into additional languages

Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

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

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

ICT and internet acceptable use

School code of conduct

Complaints

Home-school agreement

Staff wellbeing

Collegiate wellbeing statement

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email the school office office@stwilfridsnewmanc.co.uk
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff
- Call the school office if you prefer not to use emails.

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework, wellbeing	Class teacher office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
Payments	Miss L Birkin office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
School trips	Class teacher office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
Uniform/lost and found	Miss L Birkin office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01782 235676 or email absence@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact Miss L Birkin 01782 235676 A form will need to be completed
Bullying and behaviour	Class teacher in the first instance If dissatisfied, Headteacher Mr N Glover
School events/the school calendar	Website https://www.stwilfridsnewman.co.uk/ Miss L Birkin office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
Special educational needs (SEN)	Mrs M Stonier office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Before and after-school clubs	Miss L Birkin office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
Governing board	Mis N Williams office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk
Board of Directors	Please fill in a contact form on the Collegiate website The Newman Catholic Collegiate - Contact (newmancc.co.uk)
Catering/meals	Miss L Birkin office@stwilfridsnewman.co.uk

Complaints

If you want to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure in our complaints policy.

https://www.stwilfridsnewman.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Collegiate-complaints_policy_2022.pdf

There are clear stages in the policy including the Principal/Local Governing Body. We will aim to listen to your comments and respond appropriately. We always want to resolve complaints. Please exhaust these avenues before turning to external agencies (unless a child is in danger). Remember, we cannot resolve problems if we do not know about them so please do not hesitate to contact us. Please also contact the CSEL (Mr I Beardmore [The Newman Catholic Collegiate - Contact \(newmancc.co.uk\)](http://TheNewmanCatholicCollegiate-Contact(newmancc.co.uk))) if you feel our school is not responding appropriately to your concern.

Social Media

Our staff are committed, dedicated professionals who deserve to be treated with respect. If you have a concern or complaint about a member of staff, you should raise it directly with the school, in line with our complaints procedure (see the above). In this modern age, social media may be used inappropriately and we ask that you refrain from commenting negatively about the school or any member of its community. Commenting negatively about our school on social media is a breach of our code of conduct. Similarly we may seek legal advice if slanderous comments are made.

A reminder of the following important information from the acceptable use of the internet - agreement for parents and carers:

I will not:

- use private groups, the school's Facebook page, or personal social media to complain about or criticise the school or members of staff. This is not constructive and the school can't improve or address issues if they aren't raised in an appropriate way
- use private groups, the school's Facebook page, or personal social media to complain about, or try to resolve, a behaviour issue involving other pupils. I will contact the school and speak to the appropriate member of staff if I'm aware of a specific behaviour issue or incident
- upload or share photos or videos on social media of any child other than my own, unless I have the permission of the other children's parents/carers

We will seek legal advice if we believe any comments about the school, or individual members of staff, to be defamatory, indecent or threatening.

We will involve the police if we believe comments or behaviour are threatening or discriminatory.
We may also consult with the governing board and Directors about banning you from the school site.