CHEPSTOW SCHOOL
INSPIRING LEARNING

CHEPSTOW SCHOOL

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Last Reviewed on: 19/10/2026

Next Review Date: October 2027

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Chepstow School recognises and values the importance of clear and effective communications with all stakeholders; pupils and parents/carers, governors, Local Authority, outside agencies, national bodies, etc.

We are committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school and we understand that the primary concern for parents / carers is the safety, wellbeing and achievement of their child.

The key stakeholders for a school are parents and pupils and this policy addresses the main ways in which the school aims to ensure effective two-way communication between home and school

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of effective communication with parents and carers is about much more than the simple exchange of information. It involves the management of relationships and the need to involve parents/carers as partners in the learning process. Communication is as much about expectations of attitudes and behaviour as it is about the message being conveyed. It is vitally important that all communications model the highest standards of articulacy and literacy and reflect the school's core aims and values.

Aims of Policy

- To make communication between home and school simple, efficient, informative and relevant; To ensure high quality support and guidance for students attending Chepstow School by ensuring that effective communication and consultation takes place between the school, parents, pupils and other stakeholders;
- To set out clearly the expectations and procedures that staff at all levels of the Organisation will follow in their communications with parents, whatever the context or media used;
- To ensure that staff and parents are able to communicate with mutual respect, courtesy and politeness.

Principles for Effective Communication

All communications from and within Chepstow School should adhere to the following principles:

- keep staff, pupils, parents, governors and the wider community well informed about the work of the school;

- be open, honest, ethical and professional at all times; use jargon free, plain English that is easily understood by all;
- be actioned within a reasonable time.
- use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience;
- be compatible with our core aims and values of Perseverance, Positivity, Curiosity, Ambition and Equity.
- follow the 'corporate' school style;
- characterised by a high standard of spelling, punctuation and grammar;

Details of Events and Other General News

Details about events, news, key messages at the school are published on the School's Social Media Channels, the Chepstow School App, the School's website and a termly newsletter to parents.

Our social media channels will be used to share achievements by the school and its pupils, or something similar. If these communications involve specific pupils and be in line with the school's use of photographs permissions which parents are asked to complete when children first start school.

Definition of communication

Communication is a two-way process, and every member of our Chepstow Community has a responsibility to support effective communications and needs to recognise that the quality of their communications reflects on the school's reputation.

Parents and carers, governors, PTA, and learners also have a part to play in reflecting the school's reputation. We strive to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and effective in their purpose.

Staff will always seek to establish friendly relationships with parents and carers, but they will ensure relationships are professional and parents will be addressed in a formal manner. Staff are to avoid developing close relationships with parents and carers, the use of a parent, carer, or staff member's first name is not appropriate; therefore, all communications will be to and from Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr etc.

Methods of General Communication

Communication between the school and parents operates in the following way:

Telephone

Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers may be teaching full-time and running clubs or working with pupils at lunchtime or after school. Parents and carers may be frustrated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been no available opportunity for the member of staff to reach a telephone to return a call.

The school telephone lines are open from 08:00 am to 16:00 pm. Staff should respond to telephone calls within two school days of receiving notification to ensure the fluidity of switchboard practices. Therefore, staff calling home should leave a message for the recipient if they are unavailable, so they know who is trying to contact them.

Weduc (Chepstow School App)

'Weduc' is a parental application that will be used by the school. It allows:

- Communication with parents
- Easy parents evening bookings
- Secure distribution of pupil progress reports
- Digital forms and consent management
- Efficient attendance monitoring
- Financial transactions (replaces ParentMail)
- Event bookings
- Targeted communications to specific groups
- Integration with social media and our website
- Direct messaging to parents
- SIMs updates by parents
- Pupil absence reporting
- Integration of third-party apps

ClassCharts

Class Charts is an online system that is used to track achievement, homework and behaviour of Chepstow School pupils throughout the school day. We believe in working closely with parents and one of the key benefits of using ClassCharts is that we are able to securely share your child's achievement, homework and behaviour report you; keeping you up to date with changes every day. You will be able to track homework more effectively and support your child with meeting deadlines, and be able to view your child's behaviour wheel of positive and negative behaviours.

Social Media

All social media accounts owned by Chepstow School are directly managed through the Operations Officer. These platforms of external communication are used to share relevant information with stakeholders. Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as their "friends".

Social Media groups

We work hard to respond appropriately and swiftly to any concerns. Given the multiple ways we offer to communicate with us – we kindly request that parents, families and others refrain from using social media to criticise the school. Social media should never be used to criticise individual members of staff. The school's ability to deal with complaints in a timely and effective manner are significantly undermined when they are brought into the public eye on social media. The school reserves the right to request that inappropriate comments are removed without delay. Please discuss with the school if there are any issues you wish to address. Sharing issues on social media is unhelpful, can exacerbate an already difficult situation and could be a breach of law. We ask parents and carers not to do this in any circumstance

Emails

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating necessary information and is the school's preferred method of communication. Holding emails will normally be sent within 24 hours. Emails received on weekends / out of school term time (i.e. holiday times) will not elicit a response until after the start of the school week / term.

Emails should be short and clear, and the same care and consideration should be given as when sending a letter. All emails should be in a formal structure with the use of professional language.

Parent, carers or the community may wish to contact the school via email for general enquires at info@chepstowschool.net

Therefore, staff should endeavour to respond to both internal and external stakeholders within 24 hours (working days only). This can also include an acknowledgment to say you have received their email and will respond as soon as possible. However, staff are not expected to read and respond to any incoming emails outside of working hours/directed time. Staff are encouraged to use the scheduled send feature if they wish or need to write an email outside of directed time.

Under no circumstances will staff communicate with parents or pupils using their personal email accounts.

Website

Our website is the main way for pupils, their families and the wider community to get information about the school. The majority of the information you will need, and all of the statutory information the school is required to show, is easily accessible here, including important contact details, school policies and the calendar.

The school makes every effort to maintain the website on a regular basis. If you spot any errors or omissions, please report them to the school office via email.

Absence

If a child is absent, parents and carers are asked to contact the school as soon as possible on the morning of the absence. For full details please refer to the Attendance Policy.

School trips, visits, and activities

Parents and carers will be notified by letter of trips, visits, and activities that their child(ren) may wish to participate in as early as possible, and within at least six weeks of the proposed trip, visit or activity. Occasionally opportunities arise during the academic year to offer students additional trips, visits, or activities.

Consent will need to be given by parents / carers to attend school trips and any events that take place throughout the school day.

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

Severe weather and emergency closure

In the event of emergency closure communication will be made to parents and carers via text or email. Parents and carers should also check the school website and social media channels (e.g. Facebook, Twitter).

Unacceptable Communication

We recognise that people may act out of character in times of trouble or distress. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading to contact with the school. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because communication is forceful or determined. In fact, we accept that being persistent can be a positive advantage when pursuing an issue. However, to ensure the wellbeing of students, staff and the community, steps will be taken to address unacceptable behaviour and communications. We include actions that result in unreasonable demands on the school, such as being expected to respond to lengthy and detailed emails in short time frames or expecting an immediate response to a phone call (unless it is a genuine emergency), as unacceptable communications.

Any member of staff who directly experiences aggressive or abusive behaviour from a complainant has the authority to deal immediately with that behaviour in a manner they consider appropriate to the situation and in line with our values. If unacceptable behaviour continues, we may take actions such as restricting contact with the school in different ways.

Disputes Between Home and School

It is recognised that from time to time, that parents may dispute a particular approach or viewpoint as to the behaviour or attitude of their child. Where staff are faced with potentially difficult or challenging communications with parents, they will always seek advice from the relevant line manager, rather than enter into a dialogue which may become stressful for staff and parents or make a difficult situation worse. Line managers will always look to support their colleagues in these circumstances, where necessary taking over the communication from members of their team. At all times it is vital to retain professionalism. Where parents may become abusive or aggressive in their response, in whatever form of communication is being used, staff will politely inform them that the communication will have to cease and that they may wish to speak to the relevant line manager.

Complaints Procedure

There is a system in place for monitoring the nature of complaints at the school in order to identify trends and address any recurring issues. Please refer to the Complaints Procedure for full details.

Internal communication (communication between staff)

When sending emails:

- consider whether an email is appropriate when face to face communication may be more conducive;
- consider the time of day you send an email; use the schedule send feature if you need to send an email outside of working hours / directed time.
- avoid exclusive email correspondence without requesting or organising a face-to-face meeting;
- avoid send or reply all unless necessary;
- keep emails concise, use Standard English and bullet points if necessary.

The school gives all staff their own email account to use for all school business. E-mail can be an efficient way of communicating with colleagues and passing on information, however, it should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face contact and staff must consider whether it is the best way to communicate in each situation. Staff should ensure that the sending of attachments is limited, that no chain letters are sent and that no adverts are embedded in emails. 'All Staff' emails should only be used in emergencies or for matters of great importance to the whole school community and should be sent via the nominated persons.

Staff Information Sharing

Staff Briefings take place at 8.30 on Mondays to Thursdays, where notices regarding the week's events and other information are shared. Notes from the briefing are shared by the Headteacher's PA.

A weekly staff bulletin will be published which contains a range of information – staff are invited via email to provide information for the Bulletin on a weekly basis to the Operations Officer by 8 am Thursday morning.

Staff Absence

All sickness absence or any other emergency absence must be reported to the Operations Officer by 7:00am on each day of absence.

Lesson Cover

A daily email is sent to all staff with details of any lesson and duty cover for the day, all staff are required to check this email.

Staff Handbook

A copy of the Staff Handbook is available on the Intranet and on the shared staff area. It is updated annually. This handbook contains essential information that staff should familiarise themselves with.

Communication with Students

Staff must ensure that their communications with students are always carried out professionally. Staff must not engage in private/personal correspondence with a student. Staff will not communicate with students via social networking sites or accept them as their "friends". The exception is networks or blogs set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning. Feedback to students on their progress will be given to them by their teachers on a regular basis. The intention of this is to provide challenge and support for students that will allow them to improve and develop. Feedback will come in a variety of forms, and from a range of sources.

See link to Safeguarding Policy Acceptable Usage Chepstow School Safeguarding Policy

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