



# **ARCHBISHOP BENSON C of E SCHOOL**

## **Home-School Communication protocol September 2023**

## Contents

<b>Section No.</b>	<b>Section heading</b>	<b>Page number</b>
1	Introduction	3-4
2	Roles & responsibilities	4-5
3	Communication etiquette	5
4	How we communicate with parents	5 - 7
5	How parents and carers communicate with the school	7-8
6	No response	9
7	Inclusion and SEND	9
8	Managing serial and unreasonable communications and complaints	9 - 10
9	Parental communication on social media	10 - 11
10	Monitoring and review	11
11	Links with other policies	11
Appendix 1: Some communication scenarios		12
Appendix 2: Meetings Protocol		13
Appendix 3: Managing serial and unreasonable complaints		14

---

## Introduction

### 1.1 Vision:

With **fun and learning**, **hand in hand**, **all things are possible**.

“I can do **all things** through **Him** who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

### Values:

**RESPECT**    **CREATION**    **FELLOWSHIP**    **WISDOM**    **HOPE**

At Archbishop Benson School, we are proud to be a Church of England school rooted in our local community. In keeping with our inclusive vision and values, we are committed to being the school of first choice for all local families providing an excellent education for all our pupils. Our policies and procedures are focused on ensuring that we all enjoy and achieve within a nurturing and enriching school community.

### 1.2 School Aims:

- To help fulfil this vision the school has the following aims:
- To enable each child to achieve his or her full potential in levels of academic maturity, creativity, spirituality, physical development and independence
- To educate pupils in the principles of the Christian faith, promoting respect for moral values, differing races, religions and ways of life
- To awaken and develop every child's sense of self worth
- To develop respect, commitment and responsibility for others, to equip children to be able to make a positive contribution to the community in which they live
- To provide a wide variety of activities, visits and special events which enrich children's learning

### 1.3 Purpose and scope

For the purpose of this policy we will use the word “parent” to represent parents, carers and recognised guardians

The aim of this protocol is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents
- Setting clear standards for responding to communication from parents
- Establishing clear and realistic parental expectations of the school and individuals within the school.
- Helping parents 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
- Ensuring a better understanding of the context in which teachers and leaders are working, so that work and home boundaries for staff are clear and parents/carers can modify their expectations of an immediate reply to their communications

Communicating with parents can place a significant demand upon our staff, particularly teachers, within a busy school day. We want to manage both parental expectations of staff and ensure high standards of home-school communication.

We must consider staff workload and wellbeing and we use resources like the DfE Workload Reduction Toolkit to continue to review and streamline communication processes to ensure they are focused on improving outcomes for our pupils, rather than what has become established through custom and practice.

### Staff wellbeing and workload

When creating this protocol, governors and school leaders have taken into account the Ofsted Teacher Wellbeing Research Report (2019) which is a detailed investigation of well-being in the education profession. The report

- discusses levels of occupational well-being as well as positive and negative factors that influence well-being in the education profession.
- It recognises that, according to the UK's Health and Safety Executive, teaching staff and education professionals report the highest rates of work-related stress, depression and anxiety in Britain.

*“Our respondents’ and especially teachers’ satisfaction with life is lower than that of the general public. This could, at least partially, be due to the impact of occupational well-being on general well-being in life, in view of the excessive amount of time that is spent on work-related tasks particularly by teachers and senior leaders.”*

At Archbishop Benson School, we consider ourselves to be truly fortunate in the level of support and engagement which we receive from our parents.

We know that the vast majority of our parents value the teaching profession and the hard work and dedication of the Archbishop Benson team. Building good relationships with parents is essential to our work and we take great pride and pleasure from working well with them. But maintaining these relationships is not always an easy thing to achieve and it can sometimes impact negatively on staff wellbeing and workload.

One of the findings of the Ofsted research report was:

*“Relationships with parents can be a negative factor and a source of stress. This can be due to a range of reasons: unrealistic parental expectations for their child/children which could lead to excessive pressure on staff; the frequency of emails from parents and an expectation for an instant response; and parents raising concerns or complaints inappropriately.”*

One of the recommendations of the Ofsted research report to school leaders was:

*“Senior leaders should ensure that parents are informed about the most appropriate ways of raising concerns and that they have appropriate mechanisms to respond to parents. Open access to email addresses of staff and an instant response culture often add to the already heavy workload, so senior leaders should consider alternative ways in which parents and staff could communicate, while continuing to ensure that the views of parents are heard.”*

## **2.0 Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Regularly reviewing this protocol.
- Engaging with parents where significant communication issues arise.

### **2.2 Staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this protocol and the school’s ICT and Internet Acceptable Use procedures
- 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 communications from parents within two working days. Where there are safeguarding concerns, then we do recognise that this may take place outside normal working hours.

### **2.3 Parents**

We expect parents to respect the ethos, vision and values of our school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Checking all communications from the school.
- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner.
- Seeking a constructive and civil solution to all issues.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will be referred to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors and will be treated in line with our Parent Code of Conduct and our Harassment & Bullying in the Workplace Policy.

We give parents log-ins to online communication systems (e.g. ParentPay, Class Dojo, SchoolsBuddy) and should they require any further support in accessing any of the communication systems, then we signpost parents to the school's general office.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communications outside of core school hours (8.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m. Monday to Friday) or during school holidays. We ask that parents do not use social media e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook for communicating with the school or staff.

Where staff or governors are also parents at the school, we ask that any parental communication from them regarding school is carried out through the official channels detailed below, so that their role is not compromised.

### **3.0 Communication etiquette:**

- We will be polite to each other.  
We will listen and respond respectfully to each other.  
We will consider the feelings and thoughts of each other.
- We will seek to address any significant issues face-to-face as our default method of engagement and discussion.
- We will ensure that what we put in writing is the same as what we would be willing to say to each other face-to-face.
- We will consider the workload and wellbeing of each other.

In the event of a perceived breakdown of relationship/communication between the school and parents, we will appoint a Nominated Point of Contact (NPoC). This NPoC should be a senior member of staff who can establish fresh lines of communication with the parents to seek to bring about reconciliation and closure of the matter. This is to ensure all parties involved are supported and feel heard and represented fairly.

### **4.0 How we communicate with parents**

(Please check out the communication scenarios on the final page of this document to help clarify our various channels of communication)

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 all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

It is important for parents to make sure that the school has up-to-date, personal contact information.

#### **4.1 Weekly newsletter**

The newsletter is our primary channel of communication with parents for general school information, It contains news, celebrations and a diary dates section. It is really important that parents read this as it will save them contacting the school un-necessarily with general enquiries.

#### **4.2 Phone calls and meetings**

When communicating with parents, we opt for talking directly to them as a better way for discussing and addressing an issue rather than the written word. This could be by phone or face-to-face (online or in person) depending on the nature of the issue or the meeting. (Refer to Appendix 2 Meeting Protocol)

##### **4.2.1 Phone calls**

Staff members may call parents during the day. Generally, phone calls are used to contact a parent in relation to something urgent or time-sensitive e.g. if a child is unwell or if there has been an incident in school that needs to be discussed with the parent that day. However, we may also call you when we need to chat about something. We have found that a phone conversation is better than the written word when looking to address either urgent or straightforward, daily issues.

##### **4.2.2. Parental consultations:**

- We hold parents' evening(s) in the Autumn and Spring Terms. These are online meetings using Microsoft Teams. This format is suited to information-sharing and presentations to parents. During the parental consultation meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing and any possible area of concern.

- These parental consultations are replaced by termly SEN Review meetings for the parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

#### 4.2.3 Other meetings

There will be times when it is both necessary and beneficial for staff to meet with parents in person as it allows for natural discussion and information-exchange. We know that our parents really value this direct contact as it strengthens our relationship with families.

The school may contact parents to arrange an in-person meeting

- If, between parents' evenings, we have specific concerns about a child's achievement, progress, behaviour or wellbeing.
- There is a need or issue that requires greater discussion between school and home and/or the engagement of several adults.
- Where a Teams meeting would not be appropriate or is not proving effective.

The school will consider a Teams meeting as an alternative to an in-person meeting where there may be exceptional circumstances.

#### 4.3. The role of advocates

We are open to advocates attending meetings in school. Typically, this might be a specialist advocate for a SEND meeting or a family member for a safeguarding or Child Protection-related meeting. We expect to be notified in advance by the parent that they are bringing an advocate to the meeting and who the advocate is. Where we are not notified in advance, the school may decide to ask an additional member of staff to attend the meeting to offer support to the teacher or senior leader.

The advocate is there to lend support to the parent. It is not part of their role to:

- ask questions of their own.
- pass opinions or judgements
- be challenging or confrontational.

The advocate may be asked to leave the meeting or the meeting may be ended where it is felt that they are undermining the purpose of the meeting and/or making it unnecessarily uncomfortable or confrontational

#### 4.4 Emails

Parents are asked **not** to contact class teachers by email. Emailing is not our primary channel of communication between teachers and parents (see Class/School Dojo below)

- Emails should be used for general aspects of school life such as school uniform, school meals  
Please email [secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk) for all general enquiries.
- Where a parent may require further information or support, beyond that of the class teacher, for issues such as attendance, behaviour or SEND, then they should email our secretary and she will ensure that the email is forwarded to the appropriate member of staff.

#### 4.5 School/Class Dojo

4.5.1. We use School Dojo to keep parents informed about:

- Important correspondence and documents e.g. DfE updates, new policies
- Scheduled school closures e.g. staff training days
- Upcoming school events
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- School surveys or consultations
- FABB updates

4.5.2 We use Class Dojo to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Letters relating to some visits, trips and events
- Class communication from teachers e.g. homework, class-based issues
- Sharing class activities or teacher requests
- Sending First Aid notices to parents
- Direct messaging to parents when needed e.g. pastoral update
- Arrangements for parental consultation evenings for parents who haven't booked appointments via the Teams booking system.
- Invites and details relating to additional meetings e.g. SEND, pastoral concerns
- Reminders e.g. payments for trips, up-coming school events

Families in Reception will receive information and updates about learning through Tapestry.

We do not want teachers and parents to engage in lengthy dojo exchanges. If teachers are not able to resolve an issue within a couple of dojo messages, then he/she will arrange a phone-call or quick catch-up at the end of the school day.

#### **4.5 Text messages**

- Text messages are no longer used as a form of communication

#### **4.6 School website**

Our website is our one-stop shop for key information, including:

- Newsletters
- 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
- Ordering school uniform

Parents should check the website before contacting the school

#### **4.7 Letters**

Where possible, we seek to limit the amount of paper correspondence that the school issues. In some cases, however, we do need to send out letters for the following:

- Yearly data collection forms
- Additional information/forms relating to events
- Visits and trips where parental consent is required

The prompt return of such letters and forms is really helpful to the school in trying to ensure that accurate data is maintained and events are organised as timely and efficiently as possible.

#### **4.8 Reports**

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

- Progress reports as part of Spring parental consultation evenings
- 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 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs tests and Y1 Phonics screening check

#### **4.9 Facebook**

We will use Facebook to

- share celebrations and news from school.
- advertise staff vacancies

## **5.0 How parents can communicate with the school**

(Please refer to Appendix 1 and check out the communication scenarios on the final page of this document to help clarify our various channels of communication.)

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 that member of staff is not available for some reason, the school will find the next most appropriate member of staff for the parent to talk to.

### **5.1 Communication with the school office**

Parents can communicate about non-urgent issues in the first instance using

- email ([secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk))
- ring the office (01872 273185)
- or School Dojo

All communication regarding any SEND queries or concerns should go through the class teacher in the first instance who will then forward relevant issues to the Inclusion Team.

Any communication relating to safeguarding should be sent to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) [DSL@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:DSL@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk)

Where appropriate, we aim to acknowledge all emails/dojo messages within 2 working days (or arrange a meeting or phone call if deemed necessary). Please note the school core hours are between 8.00am and 4.00pm and also bear in mind that some staff work part time.

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a specific member of staff, please email the office ([secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk)) or call the school to book an appointment.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school office on 01872 273185. Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Pupil attendance or absence

#### **Please note,**

- If your child is going to be absent from school, you must contact the school office (not the teacher) by 9am on the day of absence and inform us of the full reason for your child's absence. This will ensure our records remain up to date.
- Our school voice mail service means that you can phone the school at any time and leave an out-of-hours message.

If there is an unexpected change as to who is collecting your child at the end of the day we also ask that you inform the office rather than the class teacher who may not be able to pick up the message due to their teaching commitments. Where a person, unknown to the staff of the school, is collecting a child from the school's wraparound care, the agreed password must be provided.

Where a parent wishes to request leave of absence for their child during term time e.g. exams, medical appointments etc the relevant form (available from the office and on the school website) must be completed prior to the event. Please note that holidays cannot be authorised.

Where a child requires medication that needs to be administered during school hours, parents must complete the relevant form which is available from the office and on the school website.

## **5.2 Communication with the class teacher**

### **5.2.1. Dojo**

This is used for communications as stated above. Teachers will often not have an opportunity to check messages throughout the school day and are not expected to respond to messages outside their core working hours.

### **5.2.2 End of the school day**

Our teachers are outside at the end of the day as well as members of staff being on the gates and doors at drop off. We much prefer talking face to face and feel this form of communication is so important. So much can be lost when communicating by dojo or email – there's not the tone and sometimes they can be too short or too long making it hard to really understand each other. One quick conversation can often prevent a long trail of messages.

### **5.2.3 Meetings** (Refer to Section 4.3 and Appendix 2 Meeting Protocol)

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. Please dojo the class teacher if you would like to schedule a meeting with them. While teachers may sometimes be available at the beginning or end of the school day, if you need to speak to them urgently, we can never guarantee staff availability should parents/carers arrive at school without a pre-arranged appointment

We will seek to address any issues face-to-face, as our primary method of engagement and discussion and we recommend parents 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.

Please contact the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

- 1) Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific issue)
- 2) Phase Leader
- 3) Assistant Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
- 4) Headteacher

If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to arrange for a senior member of staff to see you.

For non-urgent meetings we will aim to communicate and/or meet with you within five working days. The school will use its discretion to determine the level of urgency and allow us to prioritise and manage the multiple messages and demands that we receive every day.

## 6.0 No Response

If you have not received a response from the school within two working days please contact the school by emailing [secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk) and we will chase up your enquiry. Communication with parents is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.

## 7.0 Inclusion & SEND

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. We currently do so in English. There is a translation service on School Dojo.

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 (e.g. provide written communications in an easy read format for those with a vision impairment). Please contact the school office to discuss these.

In addition to the staff mentioned above, in the case of a child with SEN, the SENCO/Inclusion Lead is a point of contact if a parent is unhappy about an issue related to their child's specific needs or provision. This can be instead of/in addition to meeting with the Phase Leader.

## 8.0 Managing serial and unreasonable communications and complaints

*'Ofsted found that relationships with parents can add greatly to stress at work. When parents are supportive it helps build positive relationships and allows schools to have a beneficial impact on the community. However, the report finds that parents are often a source of anxiety and increased workload. This is due to a variety of reasons, including parents' unrealistic expectations for their child, the frequency of emails expecting an instant reply and parents raising concerns or complaints inappropriately.'* Ofsted research report

### 8.1 Managing unreasonable types and levels of communications

As part of our communication protocol, it is essential that we manage parental expectations as to the role and the capacity of a mainstream primary school. We do not expect our staff to have to manage unacceptable levels of repetitive, time-consuming or un-necessary communication and we will intervene and take action to ensure that communication remains reasonable and purposeful.

#### 8.1.1 Family breakdown:

Research and experience have shown that separated parents can become particularly estranged, especially during the initial stages of the split. This is very often traumatic for any children concerned and unfortunately these personal family problems can have an impact on the schools the children attend. We have developed a Separated Parents policy to minimise any impact and to clarify to all parties what is expected from separated parents and what can be expected from the school and its staff.

The school recognises that each family situation is unique and individual and we will work objectively and constructively with all parties but we must respect and support court orders, where they are in place, and we cannot become embroiled in childcare arrangements which lie beyond the remit of the school. For this reason, we will seek and invoke legal advice to protect the position of the school, where necessary.

### 8.1.2. Behaviour

*'Teachers also spoke about a lack of parental respect, ranging from a lack of trust in staff, to inappropriate and aggressive behaviour. An imbalance of power was said to lie in parents' favour, as social media gives parents the power to publicly express negative comments about a school or teachers.'* Ofsted research report

The school has been proactive in developing and sharing with our families:

- Our Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy and curriculum
- Our Anti-Bullying Policy and curriculum
- Our Fellowship Code
- Our whole-school approach to restorative practice and our Tiered Consequences Overview

We aim to engage with parents at an early stage in relation to any behaviour matters or issues and we will use our regular Parental Consultation meetings to speak to parents face-to-face. We will also schedule additional meetings to support our children and families. Where a parent is unhappy about a behavioural issue, they are welcome to meet with the phase leader, in the first instance, and then with the Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher. Where the school judges there to be a block or barrier to the resolution of a behavioural issue or incident, the Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher may contact the parent directly and seek to resolve the matter as quickly and supportively as possible.

### 8.1.3 SEND

Alongside our class teachers, we have an experienced and skilled Inclusion Team in place. They aim to engage with parents of children with SEND and associated issues at as early a stage as possible. Termly SEN Review meetings are in place to ensure that regular communication occurs between the necessary parties/agencies involved in supporting our pupils with SEND

Parental expectations of schools in relation to their child's SEN needs can often be unreasonably high. This can be linked to the fact that parents may have received advice or recommendations from private practitioners, SENDIAS, a professional advocate or second-hand from another parent. Archbishop Benson is a mainstream primary school. We are not an additional provision setting or a specialist setting. Staff availability and capacity has to be managed equitably to meet the needs of all the pupils who fall within the remit of the Inclusion Team

The Inclusion Team can come under a lot of pressure through lengthy and emotive phone calls and emails from parents. We absolutely respect that our parents are just seeking to champion the needs of their child but that does not mean that the school will or can automatically accommodate their requests or their expectations. There is a clear SEN policy and procedures in place and this must be applied fairly and consistently so that all pupils have equitable entitlement and that no child or family is being unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged over another

We will always give time and effort to supporting concerned parents as we recognise that there will be times when they may feel particularly upset and vulnerable but there may be occasions when we have to take a more robust stance and meet with the parent face to- face to address and resolve issues. We want to do everything we can to avoid communication from home escalating to the point where it could be viewed as being intimidating, vexatious, abusive or malicious. In these situations, it may be that the school needs to raise safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action.

## 8.2 Managing serial and unreasonable complaints (refer to Appendix 3 for more detail)

At Archbishop Benson School, we recognise that complaints, both formal and informal, are an essential part of our home-school communication process. We are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour and we will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

The school will seek professional advice where needed, on a case by case basis, as to whether unreasonable behaviour has become abusive, offensive or threatening to others.

We define unreasonable complainants as those who, because of the excessive frequency or nature of their contacts with the school,

- hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints.
- cause unacceptable disruption to the school as an organization.

Where a member of staff feels unreasonably upset or intimidated by the nature and/or frequency of such communications or complaints, they have the right to invoke the

- School Complaints Procedure
- Anti-Harassment & Bullying in the Workplace Policy

## **9.0 Parental communication on social media**

9.1 We recognise fully that online channels are an important way for parents to communicate with, or about, our school.

The school uses the following channels:

- Our official Facebook page
- Our Instagram account

Parents also set up independent channels to help them stay on top of what's happening in their child's class, e.g. class/year Facebook groups, email groups, or chats (through apps such as WhatsApp).

When communicating with the school via official communication channels, or using private/independent channels to talk about the school, we expect our parents to:

- Be respectful towards members of staff, and the school, at all times
- Be respectful of other parents and children
- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels, so they can be dealt with in an open and transparent manner in line with the school's complaints procedure

We encourage everyone, including our pupils, to think before communicating through social media. People should ask themselves the following questions before posting (taken from the Forbes Social Media Etiquette Checklist):

1. Is this appropriate for a social media platform, or would it best be communicated another way?
2. Will I be okay with absolutely anyone seeing this? (Please be aware that private messages are often screen-shot and shared with the school)
3. Have I thought about who I am sharing this message with? Is it appropriate to share with everyone on this platform? Should I be selecting a specific audience?
4. Is this really something I want to share, or is it just me venting?
5. Is this post too vague? Will everyone understand what I'm saying?
6. Will anyone really care about this content besides me? How will it reflect on me?
7. Is this reactive communication or is it well thought-out?
8. Will I offend anyone with this content? If so, who?

People should run through these questions in their minds before sending any written communication.

9.2 We do not expect our parents to:

- Use private, online 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 cannot improve or address issues if they are not 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. Parents should contact the school via the school office and speak to the appropriate member of staff.
- Upload or share photos or videos on social media of any child other than their own, unless they have the direct permission of the other children's parents.

In such incidences, the school will contact parents directly and seek for comments/postings to be taken down which may be false, inaccurate, libellous or defamatory.

Similarly, we will identify and contact directly the administrator of any social media account and request them to take down such postings. We expect the administrator to monitor, intercept and review the postings and activities within that account to ensure that expected standards are being met by those using the account (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

We will seek and invoke legal advice to protect the position of the school, where necessary.

## **10.0 Monitoring and review**

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

The policy is approved by the Governing Board.

## **11.0 Links with other policies**

The protocol should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use
- Parental Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Home-School Agreement
- Mental Health & Wellbeing

Approved by FGB 13.07.2023

Next Review July 2026

## APPENDIX 1

### Some scenarios...

- ◆ I have a question about **attendance** or **absence** → call the **office** or send an e mail to [secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk)
- ◆ My child is **ill** → call the office on **01872 273 185 and press Option 1 for absence**. You can send a Dojo message to the class teacher **in addition** to phoning the office to notify the school
- ◆ The arrangements for the **end of the day** have changed due to an emergency or a sudden need to change the plan since dropping off → call the **office**
- ◆ I have a question about my child's **learning** → **chat to your child's teacher** at the end of the day or send a message via Class Dojo.
- ◆ I'm **concerned** about something → send a message via Class Dojo or **call the office** and ask them to ask the teacher to call you
- ◆ I've got **something sensitive** to discuss → Is this best **discussed in person**? Contact the Class Teacher via Dojo or phone the office to ask the teacher to **call you**.
- ◆ I'm not sure about the plans for a trip, visit, club or event → Check the **letters** we sent home and newsletters. If needed, **call the office** or send a message to the class teacher via Dojo
- ◆ I need to book my child a place at **Benson Buddies Wrap Around** → use **Schoolsbuddy** or for cancellations and emergency booking **e mail** [bensonbuddies@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:bensonbuddies@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk) or call the **school office**
- ◆ I have a query about my **ParentPay** account → **e mail** [secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk) or **call the office**
- ◆ My child needs to have **medication** during the school day → Pop into the **school office** to complete a medical form and inform the class teacher of this via Class Dojo or download a copy of the medication form from the website and email to [secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk)

### We're here to help...

These members of our Leadership Team can be contacted through the office as well as when you see us at the beginning or end of the day.

**Mrs H. Giblett** – Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Mrs C. Power** – Deputy Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Mrs H. Allies** – Assistant Headteacher

**Mrs J. Williams** – SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator)

**Mrs J. Barnard** – KS2 Phase Lead and Inclusion Lead

**Mrs H. Taylor-Browning** – Reception and KS1 Lead



**01872 273185**



**Secretary@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk**



**www.archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **MEETINGS PROTOCOL**

At Archbishop Benson School, we believe that good communication between school and the home is essential. Every effort is made to establish and maintain positive teacher-parent relations. The school recognises that parents are the primary educators of their children, and thus we seek to establish and maintain a meaningful, proactive partnership with parents which helps to maximise their child's learning and development.

#### **MEET & GREET BEFORE SCHOOL AND END & SEND AFTER SCHOOL IN THE PLAYGROUND**

- Assigned staff, including the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher, are in the playground before school to welcome families and to help with any questions or queries that parents may have.
- Teachers are in the playground after school to receive and dismiss the children safely as well as meet informally with parents. This informal engagement strengthens the openness and 'community feel' of our school.
- Staff are responsible for the safety of all children in their class at these times and so are unfortunately not able to have long conversations with individual parents in the playground. If you wish to discuss something urgently with the class teacher, please arrange a time to meet or speak on the telephone.

#### **PROTOCOL FOR MEETINGS WITH PARENTS**

- Meetings in addition to our Parents Consultation meetings are sometimes necessary in order for home and school to share information about an individual child's needs. These will be arranged in advance at a mutually convenient time.
- Meetings will be held in an appropriate and/or open area in the school, usually either the child's classroom, the Inclusion team office or the Headteacher's office.
- Staff may ask for a colleague to join the meeting in order to be able to give parents the right information and the best advice possible or to record information.
- Electronic recording of meetings (e.g. on mobile phones) is not permitted. A member of staff or a governor can take notes at meetings if necessary or requested.
- Teachers and Senior Leaders will always try to help you as quickly as possible, but please be aware that they may need to ask another member of staff for information/advice before they get back to you with a response. This is to ensure that you and your child are supported in the best possible way.
- All meeting attendees are expected to speak courteously, listen to each other and have the opportunity to respond to questions and/or statements.
- If any meeting attendee becomes concerned about their safety during any meeting, it will be stopped immediately, reasons for the meeting being stopped will be given verbally and, where necessary, the party behaving inappropriately will be escorted from the school premises. The Local Authority and Police may be informed.
- Agreed actions will be confirmed verbally or in writing at the end of the meeting.
- Follow up communication will be issued in a timescale agreed at the meeting.

## APPENDIX 3:

### Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

Archbishop Benson School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to have to manage unacceptable levels of continuous or recurring critical or negative communication. We will take action to protect staff from that conduct, including communication which is routinely intimidating, abusive, threatening and /or too time-consuming.

We define unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration and effective handing of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes inaccurate, speculative and/or defamatory information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable*' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from the school.