



1. Introduction

This policy supports our agreed school vision and values:



Christ Church School, Hampstead

A village school in London inspiring *life in all its fullness*

Jesus, The Good Shepherd, promises 'life in all its fullness'. (JOHN 10:10)

At Christ Church we believe every child and adult in our school should be able both to experience life in all its fullness now and to aspire to life in all its fullness in the future.

We all seek to inspire life in all its fullness for all in the school through:

- ensuring a **safe, welcoming and inclusive environment** for children and adults, where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute and flourish;
- the pursuit of **academic excellence** in all areas, with a determined desire for each child to make the best possible progress as a result of high aspirations, hard work and the development of a personal love for learning alongside the highest-quality teaching and support;
- offering the widest possible **breadth of curriculum** both within school and through extra-curricular activities, enriched by the vast range of opportunities locally and across London;
- **creativity and positivity** in all we do, mixing innovation with tradition;
- planned and spontaneous opportunities for **spiritual development** through reflection, discussion and harnessing curiosity, as well as the provision, at the heart of our school life, of daily opportunities for prayer and worship;
- the development and modelling of **strong, positive and loving relationships**, with peers, amongst the school community and in the wider community;
- the promotion of **respect and compassion for ourselves and for all others**, by cultivating positive emotional and physical well-being, by celebrating the diversity within and outside our school and by encouraging all of us to be empowered global citizens, guided at all times by the example of Christ's compassion alongside the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- engendering a **sense of community and responsibility** for others and for our local and global environment and enjoying working together towards our common goals and expecting and valuing contributions from all.

Our vision is brought to life through the school's five shared Christian values of **compassion, creativity, courage, simplicity and community**.

This Communications Policy aims to support our vision for *life in all its fullness* for all by supporting the development and maintenance of strong, positive and loving relationships and the promotion of respect and compassion for all, in particular.

Effective communication is a vital part of the successful running of a busy school. At Christ Church School, we pride ourselves on effective communication between all groups of the school community: pupils, parents, staff, governors, Camden Local Authority, LDBS (London Diocesan Board for Schools), volunteers, visitors and the local community.

Communication with the school takes many and varied forms, including face-to-face and telephone conversations and meetings between parents and staff members, staff meetings and written briefings for staff members, information emailed out to parents and/or governors, emails and letters between the school and parents, as well as our school website for the wider public.

This policy does not seek to cover or regulate all forms of communication that take place in school except to set out that we believe that all communication should be timely, courteous and helpful. School staff will endeavour to be courteous and professional in all communications and will expect all communications with them (in person or written) also be courteous and civil. School staff are not expected to respond to communications to them which are not courteous or civil.

All enquiries from the press will be directed in the first instance to the head teacher.

This policy was initially written by the head teacher in January 2013 in consultation with staff and governors and with advice from Camden's complaints/communications adviser. It should be read alongside the school's other policies including the Complaints, Freedom of Information and Data Protection Policies. It is reviewed regularly and at least every three years to ensure it a reflection of current best practice in the school.

2. Standards when responding to telephone contact

- We will explain to the caller what action we are taking and make sure they understand why.
- We will speak in plain English and avoid using jargon.
- We will ring the caller back if we promised to do so.
- We will tell the caller that they can contact us again if their query isn't dealt with.
- We will send the caller the information we promised within 3 school working days for standard information (leaflets and standard letters) and 10 school working days for all others (see below).

3. Standards when responding to written communication (letters and emails, this includes notes in home school diaries)

- We will reply to requests for standard school information within 3 school working days.
- We will reply to all other correspondence within 10 school working days.
- We will reply in the same format in which we received the correspondence, unless there is a good reason not to do so (e.g. legal obligations).
- We will deal with all the issues in the person's query. If it is not our area, we will consult with the appropriate member of staff to give as full a response as we can in a single letter/email.
- If we cannot reply within 10 school working days, we will send an acknowledgement following the guidelines below.

4. Acknowledgements

- If it is going to take us more than 10 school working days to respond in full, we will send an acknowledgement letter/email and update.
- The content of the acknowledgement letter/email will include:
 - when we received the letter/email
 - who is dealing with the enquiry (including full contact details) and
 - when a full reply will be available.
- We will then send a fuller response by the date given in the acknowledgement letter/email.

5. Response times

The receipt date will be the school working day on which the communication was originally received and day 1 of any response timescale will commence on the following school working day (i.e. day 3 or 10 will count as the third or tenth school working day after the communication is received).

Other policy or legislation may apply to communications (e.g. requests covered by our publication scheme, requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, subject access requests under the Data Protection Act 1998 or correspondence which forms part of our agreed Complaints Policy) and in those circumstances we will defer to the timescales in the legislation/policies.

6. Sharing contact information

- Email communications from parents and members of the public should be addressed to members of staff via the admin@cchurchnw3.camden.sch.uk email address. The school will not share staff members' individual email accounts with parents or members of the public.
- The admin email address will be checked at least once every school working day and emails forwarded to relevant members of staff.
- Members of staff do not have to respond to emails sent by parents directly to their individual email accounts.

- Staff members will under no circumstances be expected to share their personal telephone contact information with parents or pupils.

7. Confidentiality

- Letters marked 'confidential' will not be opened by admin staff and will be passed directly to the member of staff to whom they are addressed.
- Emails marked confidential in the subject line will be forwarded directly to the member of staff to whom they are addressed. Any documents labelled confidential will not be opened by admin staff but forwarded directly to the member of staff to whom they are addressed.

Most recent review and agreement by the Governing Body: March 2021