

## Communication - Parent WhatsApp Groups / Social Media / Messaging

To aid communication between parents and Parent Reps, many of our classes have WhatsApp groups, which operate **independently** of the School.

Parent WhatsApp groups have been voluntarily set up by the Parent Reps and try to include all parents with children in the class/school. There is no requirement to join these groups and participation is voluntary.

Parent WhatsApp groups can be a useful and efficient way of communicating between all parents in a class, or to a group of parents involved in a shared activity. They have been used to bring parents together socially; to enlist support of parent volunteers for school events; to receive reminders about school events published by the School; to share information of general interest to all parents and as a forum to offer any supportive peer parenting advice/practical help.

The messages in the WhatsApp groups come from parents and carers in their personal capacity, or are messages forwarded on behalf of the Parent Reps Group. The School does not post directly on any WhatsApp Parent Group. All information about school events, trips etc, will be sent through text and email direct from the School (not through WhatsApp). Parents may wish to check with each other about these, but any clarification should be sought direct from the School.

At Cardiff Steiner School, we believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents
- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct) and pupils (through our behaviour policy). This following parent code of conduct gives guidelines for appropriate and relevant communication and our behaviour expectations for parents around this.

### Code of Conduct

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils

- Treat all members of the school community with kindness and respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- Approach the right member of School staff to help resolve any issues of concern, and try to resolve any issues directly with the School before sharing problems with others

When discussing school-related topics on any form of social media or messaging we advise parents to take note of some basic ground rules:

- These should never be used as a platform to air views/questions/concerns regarding a member of staff, child or parent in the class or school\*
- These are not political platforms for airing opinions on current affairs or promoting other causes or businesses
- They should not be used for private conversations with anyone else using a group
- Groups should be used keeping in mind mutual respect and cultural sensitivity between all its members
- Communication between a parent and staff member should not be posted on WhatsApp/Social Media – this breaks both confidentiality and trust
- Check all information with a reliable source or directly with the School before sharing with others
- Ensure you have the consent of other parents (and pupils age dependent) before sharing any of their personal data, including contact details and photos
- Under no circumstances share personal information about pupils or others at the School outside of groups or in any way which may be searched online

\* For concerns regarding pupil performance, school policies, staff conduct etc. please raise any issues directly with the School rather than using WhatsApp as a platform to air views. There are contact details for this at the end of this document.

Please note, the school considers the following online activity inappropriate:

- Abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils or other parents or any member of the school community
- Displays of anger including swearing, or using offensive language
- Bringing the school into disrepute
- Posting aggressive, defamatory or libellous comments
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children

- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language

The School takes safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately.

### **GDPR and Moderation**

Please be aware that any parent administering WhatsApp groups could have legal responsibility, and potential legal liability, for managing personal data shared within these groups. Any person acting as moderator should satisfy themselves that they are comfortable in their obligations of this role. The name of any administrator/moderator should be notified to the School.

Each group has a parent/carer moderator (this will be the Parent Rep who set up the WhatsApp group) who is responsible for monitoring posts in order to oversee and ensure appropriate use and making sure only parents/carers of a child in the school are included in the group. If another parent considers a message inappropriate they should contact the person who posted it, and/or the parent moderator and seek removal of the message if desired.

There are several risks that using WhatsApp and similar platforms can pose. Inappropriate or inaccurate content can be accidentally or purposefully shared. Comments which are defamatory, or distress other members of the school community can be widely distributed and difficult to remove. WhatsApp oblige users to share personal data to participate in a group. Some parents are not comfortable with this and therefore cannot, or do not wish, to take part.

The School ask Parents at Registration if they are happy for contact details to be shared with Parent Reps who manage Parent WhatsApp Groups and Parent to Parent communication, independent of the School. Where a parent agrees this the School will pass on these details to Parent Reps for these purposes. The School has no responsibility or liability after this as to how Parent Reps handle this data and parents should contact Parent Reps directly regarding their data and its handling.

The School will notify Parent Reps when a child leaves the School and it is the responsibility of Parent Reps to remove/amend any data they handle.

If any parents who are also staff members are in a Parents WhatsApp group or similar, they are there in their parent and personal capacity only. They have no 'staff/school' responsibility in the group.

### **Raising Concerns**

If you are concerned about inappropriate comments on a Parent WhatsApp group or social media, please contact our School Business Manager and Data Officer, in confidence, by emailing the school on [gadmin@cardiffsteiner.org.uk](mailto:gadmin@cardiffsteiner.org.uk)

If the School becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct detailed above, the School will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent/carer about the incident. Depending on the nature of the incident, the School may then follow its relevant policies to address these. It could also result in parents being removed from a Parents WhatsApp group by a parent moderator.

### Who do I contact?

<b>Concerns</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The School is committed to treating concerns seriously and to finding solutions that work for those involved. We have a Concerns and Complaints procedure (see <a href="#">website policies page</a>) that helps us to listen to and acknowledge concerns and to treat people fairly and consistently. If you have a concern you are <b>first encouraged to go directly to the person directly responsible for the subject of your concern</b>. Normally this would be as follows. If you are unsure of who to contact please email <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a></li> </ul>		
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>How</b>
Concerns about teaching or any aspects of your child's education	Your child's Kindergarten Teacher, Class Teacher, Class Guardian	It is always best to make an appointment to ensure the teacher is available and sufficient time and attention can be given (via <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a> ).
School Management issues	The School Management Team	via <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>
Safeguarding, Child Protection and Safety	Miranda Knight School Administrative Manager and Designated Senior Person for Child Protection (DSPCP)	02920 567 986   07969 140 390 <a href="mailto:miranda.knight@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">miranda.knight@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a> Also see <a href="http://cardiffsteiner.org.uk/safeguarding">cardiffsteiner.org.uk/safeguarding</a> for other contact options
<b>Other Contacts</b>		
<p>Our Parent email address <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a> is a one-stop shop for any parent enquiries. It is managed by Kamila Klimczewska, our Administration Officer, who will direct and forward your query appropriately within the School. If you have a question, or are unsure who to go to, please don't hesitate to contact Kamila on 029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a></p>		
Queries about your child's education and progress, wellbeing and emotional development	Your child's Kindergarten Teacher, Class Teacher, Class Guardian	You can make an appointment for a weekly Class Surgery slot with Kamila
General Enquiries and making appointments to meet with staff	Kamila Klimczewska, Administration Officer	029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>

Reporting a pupil's absence or illness	Kamila Klimczewska, Administration Officer	029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>
Late pick up or drop off	Kamila Klimczewska, Administration Officer	029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>
Drop Ins and changes to regular Wrapround Care	Kamila Klimczewska, Administration Officer	029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>
Changes to Kindergarten days	Please discuss first with your Kindergarten Teacher then confirm to Kamila Klimczewska, Administration Officer	029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>
Fees and Payment queries	Jenny Grewal, School Business Manager and Jeff Herrington, Accounts	029 2056 7986 <a href="mailto:finance@cardiffsteiner.org.uk">finance@cardiffsteiner.org.uk</a>
Other parents	Each Class has a <b>WhatsApp group run by the Parent Reps</b> – you can use this to get messages out to other parents	<b>Parent Reps</b> <b>Kindergarten</b> - Emma Phillips 07854 425930 <b>Ty Crisial</b> (1/2) - Dan 07579 831765 and Anja 07985 436 214 <b>Ty Seren</b> (3/4)- Emma Ryan 07528 824766 <b>Ty Haul</b> (5/6) - Eynav 07823 884 791 <b>Ty Afon</b> (7/8) - Adam 07878 502258 <b>Ty Tan</b> (9/10) - Lucy 07798 520648 <b>Ty Enfys</b> (11/12) - Rita 07982 242637 and Noa 07383 566155

---

### Issue date

This policy was published in March 2025

### Review date

This policy will be reviewed and revised by the School Business Manager as required

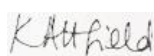
### Endorsement

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name: Kate Attfield

Position: Trustee

Signed:



Date: 24 February 2024

---