

Your potential comms plan

Comms item	Description	Audience	Communication channels	Timing or frequency	Notes and/or examples
Key update	An update on any changes to school policy and processes or to communicate information relating to health and safety.	Parents, students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Email — SMS — Print — Social network 	Daily or as needed.	<p>There is a sea of information out there at the moment so key updates need to be very brief and specific. These often are best written in the BLUE format, (Bottom Line UpFront) so that people can quickly answer “what does this mean for me” in the first few sentences before you dive into detail. You can include answers to common questions or discuss the rationale behind any new decisions after you’ve got the main point across.</p> <p>Don’t be afraid to send an update out each day, even if there is no change. People will appreciate the reassurance and knowing that you’re on top of the situation. However, make sure to clearly label key updates in the subject, e.g. prepend the subject line with “Important Update.”</p>
Survey for teachers	Initially survey teachers to forecast what potential issues you processes might need to handle and generate ideas.	Teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Email — Chat 	Prior to setting a policy if possible, and then weekly thereafter.	This needs to include questions such as “What issues do you foresee with a move to online learning?”, “What do you think your responsibilities are going to be during this time?”, “What can we do to better support you during this transition?”

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Survey for parents	Initially survey parents to understand what potential issues you processes might need to handle and generate buy-in from your community.	Parents	— Email	Prior to setting a policy if possible, and then weekly thereafter.	This needs to be roughly the same as the survey for teachers. The team at St Mark's very graciously shared with me the survey the sent out to their parent community. We'll share the findings of that in a follow-up article, and we'll add a link here when it's available.
Process guide	A document setting out how online learning will work at your school.	Parents, teachers, students	— Email — Social	At the time your online learning plan is released.	The more specific the better. Make sure to include how you'll release updates to this process and where to go with questions about it.
Expectations for online learning	A document setting out the expectations of parents, teachers, and learners.	Parents, teachers, students	— Email — Print	At the time your online learning plan is released.	This sets out the expectations of each stakeholder in the process. It's better to release this as a single document rather than one for each group so that everyone knows who's responsible for what and what the expectations are of them. This will help each group hold the other accountable for making the process work.
Survey for students	Survey to understand if your process is working and what needs to be changed.	Students	— Email — Chat	Weekly following the release of your online learning plan.	Each week, send out a survey that at least includes questions to help you identify what's working well, what's not working well and what should be changed going forward.
Community group	An avenue for your school community to support each other and those in need.	Parents	— Email — Print	At some regular cadence.	Members of your school community might need help during this crisis. If you've got a Facebook group, community page, or something of that sort, make sure you've shared where to access it and encouraged your community to reach out both if they need help and if they can offer it.