



# **Communication guidelines for parents**

The parent/teacher relationship is vital in supporting a student's progress throughout their academic career. To make communication as easy as possible for both parties we have drawn up some guidelines to clarify expectations.

Where 'school' is mentioned please read 'academy' where relevant.

Regular reports and consultation afternoons/evenings help to keep parents/carers up to date with student progress; however, you may wish to speak to a member of staff about a particular issue.

### **Contact the right person**

If your query is subject related, the teacher would be the first line of approach, followed by the Faculty Head. If your concern is related to progress in general, the Progress Leader and for pastoral care matters, firstly the student's Tutor followed by the Pastoral Leader.

Reception can help you with the correct email addresses for these and direct you to the appropriate person for any other queries.

### **E-mail**

- This is a fast and convenient way to send messages, but please be mindful that some teachers read their e-mail messages in the morning before school, some at the end of the day, and some read them during the school day. Therefore, consider the time sensitivity of your email. If you send an e-mail message to a member of staff, you may not get an immediate reply.
  - For example, do not use e-mail to inform a teacher that your child is to wait for you after school or meet you somewhere when the day ends. A teacher may not have time to read your message before the event. Instead use the telephone to contact reception, to be sure your message is received, clearly understood and can be passed on if appropriate.
- When agreed between the teacher and the parent (following face to face or phone conversation) e-mail may be used as a form of regular communication about a student's day at school, for an agreed period.
- Please remember that e-mail is not necessarily confidential. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or personal contact. The school maintains and monitors e-mail accounts for teachers to facilitate parent/teacher and internal communication, as well as system-wide staff communication. The school reserves the right to block or filter e-mail messages that are not directly related to school business.
- Please identify yourself in the subject line of your e-mail message and, if appropriate, the name of your child.
- For all non-emergency medical or health concerns, please contact the Senior First Aider.
- For all Years 7-11 absence matters, please email or telephone the School Student Absence team.
- For all Sixth Form matters, including absence please contact the School Sixth Form Administrators.
- The staff member you contact will determine how best to respond: by e-mail, phone, or by scheduling a meeting. Staff will aim to acknowledge / respond to parental e-mails within 2 School days.

## **Telephone**

- Many teachers prefer to use the phone to speak directly to parents. Please bear in mind teaching commitments will mean that a member of staff may not be available to speak to you immediately.
- We will not tolerate or respond to e-mails or telephone messages containing threatening or offensive language.

Whilst staff will endeavour to respond to all emails and calls, if a member of staff is made to feel uncomfortable, or feels that the correspondence is becoming abusive, the correspondence may be terminated, and you may be directed to a member of the senior leadership team.

## **Meetings**

- Often a face-to-face meeting can be reassuring for parents and staff will facilitate this wherever possible. However, staff are not available to meet without a scheduled appointment due to teaching and staff management commitments. Please make an appointment in advance if you wish to meet with a member of staff.
- We politely request that all visitors consider their behaviour when on site. In cases of unreasonable behaviour a visitor may be asked to leave.

## **Social Media**

When communicating with or about the school whether on private or public platforms, our expectation is that parents are respectful and do not name individual members of staff or students. In cases of defamation or malicious intent, the Trust has the right to instigate legal action.

Parents are asked not to post photographs of students, other than their own children on social media without permission.

Any concerns or complaints should be addressed to the school directly, the procedure for this can be found easily on the school's website.