

# Home-Academy Communication Policy

October 2022



# Wichelstowe Trinity Learning Campus

LIFE IN ALL ITS FULLNESS

Approved by:	[Name]	Date:	[Date]
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## 1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the academy and parent has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- › Gives parents the information they need to support their child's education
- › Helps the academy improve, through feedback and consultation with parents
- › Builds trust between home and academy, which helps the academy better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

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

- › Explaining how the academy communicates with parents
- › Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents
- › Helping parents reach the member of academy staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- › Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- › Regularly reviewing this policy

### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- › Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the academy's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- › 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 communication during core academy hours 8:30 – 15:30pm or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

A copy of our ICT Acceptable Use Policy can be found at <https://www.dcea.org.uk/504/policies>

## 2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the academy is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the academy (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the academy

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core academy hours 8:30 – 15:30 or during academy holidays.

A copy of our Parent Code of Conduct can be found at <https://www.dcea.org.uk/504/policies>

## 3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in academy.

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

### 3.1 Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming academy events
- Scheduled academy closures (for example, for staff training days)
- Academy surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

### 3.2 Text messages/Notifications

We will text parents about:

- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the academy day
- Emergency academy closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

### 3.3 Academy calendar

Our website includes a full academy calendar for the year, which can be found at <https://www.dcea.org.uk/2004/calendar-1>

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the academy calendar.

### 3.4 Phone calls

#### Inbound

All telephone calls will be answered by staff in the main office. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, we aim to do this **within 2 working days**.

#### Outbound

Telephone calls will be made where immediate contact with a family member is required i.e. for injuries or accidents, truancy, significant events, safeguarding and/or responding to a complaint. A member of staff will call the first named emergency contact as listed. Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth. In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will either leave an answer phone message or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers, where possible. Call should be logged in SIMs.

### 3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our fortnightly newsletter

### 3.6 Homework

We know how important parental involvement is in ensuring every child flourishes. Supporting your child in tasks related to the learning in class, will strengthen their long-term memory and enable them to retrieve this knowledge in the future. We support children to make meaningful connections between knowledge, understanding and skills.

Each project will provide opportunities to be involved in your child's learning. These collaborative tasks will be set on Satchel One, our online homework platform.

### 3.7 Reports

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

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance

- Termly progress reports
- A report on the results of public examinations
- Information about vocational qualifications gained (or credits gained towards these)

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

### 3.8 Meetings

We hold one parents' evening(s) per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The academy may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

### 3.9 Academy website

Key information about the academy is posted on our website, including:

- Academy times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-academy provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the academy.

### 3.10 Home-academy communications My-Ed app

Parents can keep up to date with school news, key dates and the latest happenings as and when they happen using the MyEd app:

- Sporting results
- Examination information
- School events, such as fetes
- Parents' evenings
- Changes to policies

With MyEd we deliver these important school communications straight into the hands of busy parents, ensuring they don't get ignored.

## 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the academy

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the academy office number and email address.

## 4.1 Email

Parents should always email the academy, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the academy.

## 4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the academy office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 2 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the academy office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the academy office.

## 4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1), or call the academy to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the academy day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

## 5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the academy.

We currently make whole-academy announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

Parents who need help communicating with the academy can request the following support:

- Academy announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the academy office to discuss these.

## 6. Monitoring and review

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

The policy will be approved by the Academy Council.

## **7. Links with other policies**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-academy agreement
- Staff wellbeing

## Appendix 1: academy contact list

### Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the academy office on [admin@dcea.org.uk](mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk) or 01793 236611
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

**Remember:** check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within 48 working hours.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's subject teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's tutor or Head of Year
Payments	Academy Office ( <a href="mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk">admin@dcea.org.uk</a> )
Academy trips	Academy Office ( <a href="mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk">admin@dcea.org.uk</a> )
Uniform/lost and found	Academy Office ( <a href="mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk">admin@dcea.org.uk</a> )
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01793 236611 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact <a href="mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk">admin@dcea.org.uk</a>
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's tutor or Head of Year
Academy events/the academy calendar	Academy Office ( <a href="mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk">admin@dcea.org.uk</a> )
Special educational needs (SEN)	Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) ( <a href="mailto:sendco@dcea.org.uk">sendco@dcea.org.uk</a> )
Before and after-academy clubs	Head of PE and Enrichment
Hiring the academy premises	Lettings ( <a href="mailto:lettings@dcea.org.uk">lettings@dcea.org.uk</a> )
PTA	Academy Office ( <a href="mailto:fowtlc@dbat.org.uk">fowtlc@dbat.org.uk</a> )
Academy Council	Clerk of Academy Council ( <a href="mailto:clerk.wtlc@dbat.org.uk">clerk.wtlc@dbat.org.uk</a> )
Catering/meals	Academy Office ( <a href="mailto:admin@dcea.org.uk">admin@dcea.org.uk</a> )



## **Complaints**

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which is located at <https://www.dcea.org.uk/504/policies>