



Excalibur Academies Trust
Home-School Communication Policy

This policy is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current regulations.

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Other Policies and Documents Associated
Privacy Notices

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1. Introduction and aims

- 1.1 We believe clear and open communication between the school and parents/guardians has a positive impact on students' learning and development because it:
- 1.1.1. Gives parents/guardians the information they need to support their child's education;
 - 1.1.2. Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/guardians; and
 - 1.1.3. Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:
- 1.2.1 Explaining how the school communicates with parents/guardians;
 - 1.2.2 Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/guardians; and
 - 1.2.3 Helping parents/guardians reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.
- 1.3 In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and guardians.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 Staff
- 2.1.1 All staff are responsible for:
 - 2.1.1.1 Reviewing communication from parents in line with this policy;
 - 2.1.1.2 Working with other members of staff to make sure parents receive timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves); and
 - 2.1.1.3 Using AI to support communication, in line with the Trust's AI Responsible Use Policy and Privacy Notices (GDPR).
 - 2.1.2 Where a response to an email is required, whilst staff will seek to answer communications as quickly as possible, they must make all reasonable endeavours to reply within five working days. Additional consideration will be given to staff who work part-time. This may require sending a holding email to the parent if they are awaiting further information from other members of staff. Response times may

also vary due to non-working days or holiday periods, during which automatic replies may be sent with relevant instructions and/or information. Please note that not all emails will require a response; for example, where the communication is for information only or does not necessitate further action.

2.2 Parents

2.2.1 Parents are responsible for:

2.2.1.1 Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times;

2.2.1.2 Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner; and

2.2.1.3 Checking all communications from the school.

2.2.2 Any communication that is deemed disrespectful, abusive, or threatening will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with our Parental Code of Conduct. Serious breaches may result in further action, including restricted communication channels or escalation to the appropriate authorities.

2.2.3 Parents should not expect staff to respond to communications outside of core school hours; however, staff may choose to respond at their discretion.

2.2.4 For routine matters, staff will not respond to emails, messages, or other forms of communication during weekends or school holidays.

2.2.5 The only exception to this is if the communication relates to a safeguarding concern, in which case it should be reported through the appropriate safeguarding channels.

2.2.6 Conversations or meetings with staff should not be recorded without the explicit consent of the staff member. If the staff member does not consent to being recorded this must be respected. The school reserves the right to refuse to accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without informed consent of all parties being recorded.

2.2.7 Communications via social media deemed inappropriate may result in the removal of parents from school social media accounts.

3. How parents and guardians can communicate with the school

- 3.1 Parents should refer to the contact details on the school website to identify the most appropriate member of staff to contact about a query or concern. This includes key email addresses and the school office phone number.
 - 3.1.1 For non-urgent matters, parents should contact the school by email in the first instance - either via the main office or directly to the relevant staff member.
 - 3.1.2 Where a response is required, staff will aim to reply within five school working days, with consideration given to staff who work part-time.
 - 3.1.3 If the issue is urgent or time-sensitive, parents should phone the school rather than email.
- 3.2 Phone Calls
 - 3.2.1 Parents are welcome to call the school regarding any queries or concerns. If the staff member you wish to speak with is unavailable, they will aim to return your call within five school working days, with consideration given to staff who work part-time.
 - 3.2.2 For urgent matters, such as family emergencies or safeguarding/welfare concerns, please contact the school office directly.
- 3.3 Meetings
 - 3.3.1 To arrange a meeting with a staff member, parents should email the relevant contact or call the school office to request an appointment. We aim to schedule meetings within **five school working days** of our email response.
 - 3.3.2 While staff may be available briefly at the beginning or end of the school day, we recommend booking a formal appointment if you wish to discuss:
 - 3.3.2.1 Concerns about your child's learning
 - 3.3.2.2 Pastoral or wellbeing matters
 - 3.3.2.3 Changes at home that may affect your child at school

4. Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring that all members of our school community can communicate effectively with the school.

- 4.1 Parents with Additional Communication Needs
 - 4.1.1 We aim to make all school communications as accessible as possible. To support this, we endeavour to take the following steps:

- 4.1.1.1 Whole-school announcements (e.g., email alerts, newsletters) are available in multiple formats;
 - 4.1.1.2 Written communications are clear and concise;
 - 4.1.1.3 School websites are designed with accessibility in mind; and
 - 4.1.1.4 Staff will endeavour to provide information in accessible formats.
- 4.1.2 Parents needing support with communication can request reasonable adjustments such as:
 - 4.1.2.1 School communications in accessible formats; and
 - 4.1.2.2 A sign language interpreter for meetings.
- 4.1.3 Please contact the school office to discuss your needs.
- 4.2 Parents with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
 - 4.2.1 We provide additional support for parents who use English as an additional language. This may include:
 - 4.2.1.1 Translated versions of key school communications; and
 - 4.2.1.2 Interpreters for meetings or phone calls.
 - 4.2.2 If you require translation or interpreting support, please contact the school office to discuss the available options.

Appendix 1: Procedures for contacting parents and guardians

The sections below explain how we keep parents up to date with their child's education and school life. Each school will establish its preferred communication system and ensure this is clearly communicated to parents and carers.

1.1 Parents should check the following channels regularly to avoid missing important updates or announcements.

1.1.1 Email/Parent Portals (for example Class Dojo, ParentMail and My Child at School)

We will email parents about:

1.1.1.1 Upcoming school trips/events, including parent/guardian evenings and holidays;

1.1.1.2 School surveys or consultations;

1.1.1.3 Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days); and

1.1.1.4 Reports

1.1.2 Letters

Letters are sent about:

1.1.2.1 Trips/visits;

1.1.2.2 Consent forms; and

1.1.2.3 Newsletters

1.1.3 Text Messages

Text messages are used for urgent/pressing information, such as:

1.1.3.1 Attendance concerns; and

1.1.3.2 Time-sensitive announcements

1.1.4 Phone Calls

Staff may phone parents to discuss:

1.1.4.1 Attendance;

1.1.4.2 Behaviour; and

1.1.4.3 Progress or well-being

We appreciate your availability for these conversations.

1.1.5 Reports

Parents receive written reports on their child's learning and subject progress.

1.1.6 Parent Meetings and Events

We host one or two parent evenings each year. Families are expected to attend.

Additional meetings may be arranged for:

1.1.6.1 Concerns about a child's achievement, progress or wellbeing between parent evenings

1.1.6.2 Students with SEND or additional needs

1.1.7 School Website

Regularly updated with:

1.1.7.1 Emergency school closures (for example due to bad weather);

1.1.7.2 Term dates, times, INSET days and early finishes;

1.1.7.3 Events, curriculum info, and policies;

1.1.7.4 Contact details; and

1.1.7.5 Before/after-school provision

1.1.8 School Calendar

Available on the school website, the calendar aims to give reasonable advanced notice for events such as:

1.1.8.1 Charity/fundraising events;

1.1.8.2 Special assemblies; and

1.1.8.3 Visitors or themed days

1.1.9 Newsletter

Sent via the school communications system with:

1.1.9.1 Key dates and event updates

1.1.9.2 Achievements, celebrations, and initiatives

1.1.10 Social Media

We share news and highlights via official channels which may include Facebook, Instagram or other platforms.

Parents are encouraged to follow these social media channels.

Staff will not respond to messages, or enter discussion, on social media platforms.

Please note that the above communications are available in other formats on request