

“Treat everyone you meet with dignity. Love your spiritual family. Revere (worship) God. This is the kind of life you’ve been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He never did one thing wrong, Not once said anything amiss.”

1 Peter Chapter 2: Verse 17-23



Contacting Parents Policy

Author: Vice Principal (PDBW)

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Introduction

Our Academy vision is “Living Well Together in Dignity, Faith and Hope”. We aspire to take dignified decisions and afford dignity to all members of our community, regardless of background or circumstance. Our position as a Voluntary Aided Church Academy means that the Christian faith has a central role in all of our actions and decisions. We strive for excellence in all that we do, enabling our student to transform their lives and to hope for happy and successful futures.

This policy outlines our commitment to working with parents and carers by ensuring that we have implemented systems to support effective communication with the Academy believing that students and families will achieve dignity in their interactions, faith in the work of the Academy and increased aspiration and hope through the positive support they receive.

We welcome contact with parents/carers knowing that positive working relationships foster mutual understanding and support which has a positive effect on student performance and well-being. Effective communication promotes a partnership. The Academy wants to ensure that parents/carers always have an appropriate and helpful response to their communications.

Purpose

In order to achieve the most effective outcomes for students, parents/carers and teachers, we have always followed the following principles:

- We welcome contact from our families and operate a number of systems to facilitate effective communication.
- We respond as promptly as possible to concerns and requests, aiming for a maximum response time of 48 hours.
- We actively seek opportunities for families to be involved in the work and life of the Academy.
- We share information as often and as fully as possible with parents/carers.

Communication to Parents/Carers

We use a variety of methods and systems in order to ensure swift and effective communication with parents/carers:

- **SMS Messages:** We use the PSEngage messaging system within the Academy. SMS messages concerning attendance, absence, behaviour sanctions or other quick messages are often communicated using this method. The PSEngage system permits texts to be sent between the hours of 06.00 and 20.00, although we will always endeavour to communicate during the working day.
- **Emails:** Email can be a very effective way of sending more detailed information to parents/carers and we send emails through the PSEngage system and through our own Academy mail system. Email will always be relevant and professional in tone.
- **MyEd App:** PSEngage offer the MyEd App which allows for all of our information to be brought together on one app directly to your phone or smart device. Parents/Carers can access attendance, behaviour and achievement data, alongside text messages and emails and can also access our calendar, website and other key documents through this medium, which is provided free of charge.
- **Letters:** Letters will either be posted to home addresses or will be given to students to take home. Copies of letters which are sent to full year groups, or other large cohorts, will be available on our website.
- **Website:** Our website provides excellent support information for families and includes policies and procedures, information about activities at the Academy and also provides Academy contact details. The Academy seeks to put as much up-to-date information as possible on its website. Most general information that parents/carers would seek can be readily found by logging on at www.allsaintsacademydunstable.org. The website also contains our monthly newsletter which is our main means of communicating to parents/carers. Parents/carers are encouraged to view the website on a regular basis.

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We update our contact details for families annually and ask that parents/carers notify us if their address, home phone number, mobile number or email address change.

Communication from Parents/Carers

The following guidelines show how we aim to respond to parents/carers when they contact the Academy:-

- **Emails:** We operate the email address office@allsaintsacademydunstable.org for general contact with the Academy. We also have a central email address to support communication with the Academy parentcontact@allsaintsacademydunstable.org. This may be particularly useful when parents/carers are unsure as to who is best placed to deal with their query.
- **Telephone calls:** All telephone calls from parents/carers are received through the main switchboard by the Receptionist or the option menu which will result in connecting callers to the appropriate extension.
- **Urgent calls:** If the teacher requested is not available, the call will be put through to the most appropriate or available member of staff.
- **Non-urgent calls:** If the teacher requested is not available, the Receptionist will normally take details of the parent/carer’s name and telephone number and purpose in calling. This information will be given to the teacher concerned who will try to respond as soon as possible and by the end of the next Academy day whenever possible. If more time is required to provide a fuller response or to arrange a meeting, teachers will try to include in the acknowledgement details of when these will happen.
- **Messages for students:** In emergencies or at other times when it is unavoidable, reception staff will help parents/carers by taking messages for students. As we operate a “no mobile” policy at the Academy, parents/carers are asked to refrain from contacting their child on their personal mobile devices during the Academy day.
- **Letters:** The Academy will always try to acknowledge letters and emails received from parents within two working days. The Academy email is office@allsaintsacademydunstable.org. Teachers will try to respond to the most pressing concerns of parents as quickly as possible. It is our intention to try to respond to any letter or e-mail as soon as we can and within 7 working days.
- **Planners:** Every student is provided with a planner, free of charge. The planner is a two-way means of communication between families and the Academy. We encourage all parents/carers to communicate with Form Tutors using the planners. Replacement planners can be purchased from Student Reception at a cost of £2.00.

Meeting the Needs of All Families

The Academy understands that situations and circumstances are different from family to family. We also understand that communication can be difficult and, in order to support families, we can produce duplicate copies of correspondence, reports and information. Parents/carers who require duplicate information to be sent to them should contact the Academy to arrange this.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body has delegated to the Principal the responsibility for reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The Governing Body will approve all major changes to this policy. The policy will be promoted and published throughout the Academy.