

University Academy Holbeach

UNIVERSITY ACADEMY
HOLBEACH



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

Home-School Communication Policy

Approved by: S Paige - Principal

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Contents

1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Roles and responsibilities	2
3. How we communicate with parents and carers	3-5
4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school	5,6
5. Inclusion.....	6
6. Monitoring and review.....	6
7. Links with other policies.....	7
Appendix 1: school contact list	7

1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- › Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
- › Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- › Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school 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 school communicates with parents/carers
- › Setting clear standards for responding to communication from parents/carers
- › Helping parents/carers 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

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

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Principal / Vice-Principal

The Principal / Vice-Principal is responsible for:

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

2.2 Data Manager

The Data Manager is responsible for:

- › Ensuring that SIMS Parent App works effectively and parents are able to access the app in a timely manner.

2.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- › Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school'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 themselves)

It is not an expectation that staff will respond to communications outside of school hours: 8.30-4.30, or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

Please see ICT and internet acceptable use policy for further details.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- › Ensuring that communication with the school 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 school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- › Checking all communications from the school

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

Our parent code of conduct can also be found on our website

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 school.

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 SIMS Parent App

All parents are sent an invite to access SIMS Parents App. This keeps parents updated daily on:

- Attendance
- Behaviour (positive and negative)
- Pupil timetable
- Messages and information about school events

If you experience problems accessing the App then please contact either Main reception or enquiries@uah.org.uk and our Data Manager will be able to resolve the problem

3.2 Email

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

- › Upcoming school events
- › School surveys or consultations

3.3 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- › Key events

- › Key information
- › Intervention and Saturday school details

3.4 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the academic year.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions.

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.5 Phone calls

Teaching or pastoral staff may call parents to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative), or regarding any welfare concerns that they may have.

We understand that both parents and staff are very busy during the working day. If staff leave you a voicemail please return their call at the earliest opportunity, but please also be understanding that the member of staff is likely to be unavailable at that time due to teaching commitments. If this is the case we would request that you leave a message at Main Reception detailing when you are available for the member of staff to return your call.

3.6 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- › Letters about trips and visits
- › Consent forms
- › Our half termly newsletter
- › Information about intervention and additional classes

3.7 School planners

Every student has a UAH planner, this is an invaluable tool to record homework and notes.

There is also a space for home-school communication on each weekly section. Staff may write positive "green" comments and "red" comments about any concerns they may have in the planner - this highlights particular points with parents.

Parents can also add points they wish to communicate with staff – the student is responsible for showing the note to the correct teacher.

There is space each week for parents and tutors signatures to help ensure that this vital communication takes place effectively.

3.8 Reports

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

- › A written report covering: their achievement in each part of the curriculum; how well they are progressing; behaviour and effort
- › Termly tracking reports that highlights progress, behaviour and effort

We also arrange an annual parent consultation evening (for each year group) where parents can speak to their child's teachers about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.9 Meetings

During parent consultation evenings, 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 school 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), and/or disabilities, or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

3.10 School website

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

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about
 - Attendance
 - Uniform
 - Careers
 - Meals and our cashless system
 - Travel
 - Internet Safety
 - Before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

4.1 Email

Parents should email enquiries@uah.org.uk about non-urgent issues.

Emails are then passed on to the relevant member of staff. The school does not permit teachers to respond to emails during lessons, as the expectation is that while in the classroom, the teacher's focus is on the students' learning

We therefore aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days, and to respond (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 5 working days.

Please be aware that if the issue is complex, or involves outside agencies then a response in full may take longer than this time frame.

If a query or concern is urgent, please call the school and your enquiry will be redirected as appropriate

Occasionally emails do go astray. So, if you do not get a reply within 3 working days, please contact Main Reception, who will pursue your enquiry for you.

Please note that the School, in caring for its staff, has advised teachers that there is no expectation to respond to queries in their personal/family time, such as at evenings and weekends. This is essential to protect the work/life balance of our staff.

4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please email enquiries@uah.org.uk or telephone Main Reception – which is manned between 8am and 4.30pm.

Reception staff will relay any message to the member of staff as soon as they can. Please note that there are no phones in classrooms and lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 days of your request.

Teachers will respond to parents queries at the earliest opportunity; however teachers time is taken up with teaching lessons, pre-booked meetings, planning, marking, running clubs or intervention sessions and being on break time or lunchtime duties.

If your calls is extremely urgent, please explain the circumstances to the reception staff and they will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or serious welfare issues

4.3 Meetings

The School commits teachers to meeting with parents on parent-consultation evenings annual for each year group (years 7, 8, 9,10,11,12 and 13).

Other meetings may be arranged with members of staff, but these must always be **by appointment** in order for appropriate arrangements and preparation to be made.

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email enquiries@uah.org.uk or telephone main reception to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all **non-urgent** meetings within 7 working days of the request.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or serious welfare issues

In these circumstance the Reception staff will do their best to find a Senior Member of staff to see you within 1 working day.

Please note:

- **Parents who present themselves at Reception without an appointment will not be seen unless it is due to a family emergency or safeguarding concern.**
- The Academy will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

5. Inclusion

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

We can make additional arrangements to support parents who need help communicating. Please email enquires@uah.org.uk, phone Main Reception or put a note into your child's planner to discuss.

6. Monitoring and review

The Principal monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- › ICT and internet acceptable use
- › Parent code of conduct

Appendix 1

Who to Contact

In order to ensure that a query is dealt with as swiftly as possible, it is important that it is directed to the correct person.

In the first instance please contact:

- Subject enquiry – your child's Subject Teacher
- Pastoral enquiry – your child's Form Tutor

If it is felt that the matter needs to be addressed at a higher level:

- Subject enquiry – the Head of Department
- Pastoral enquiry – The Learning Coordinator Team for your child's year group

If the matter is considered to be of the utmost importance / urgency then it may be referred on to the SMT member that is linked to your child's year group and/or a Safeguarding Team Member.