



Communication Policy

Guidance for parents on
communicating with school.

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Introduction

It is our aim to enjoy professional and productive relationships with our parents so that our young people can achieve their potential. Academy@Worden is a community academy and as such we need to have clearly laid out systems and protocols for communicating with parents so that we can respond promptly and consistently.

This communication policy articulates how parents and carers should communicate with school and how the school will respond.

Communication lines to be followed:

Absence

To register an absence please ring school and leave a message on the absence line (01772 421021 'Option 1'). This includes part-day absences.

Alternatively, you can report an absence via School Synergy.

Information

If there is information relating to a pupil that you wish staff to know about, the first point of contact is via School Synergy, using the Pastoral tab.

Emergencies

In case of emergencies parents should contact the school by telephone (01772 421021).

Concerns

We are delighted that parents choose to place their children in our care. The contract between Academy@Worden and its parents is laid out clearly in the Home/School agreement signed by parents in Year 7. During school time the school is '*in loco parentis*' meaning that school is empowered legally to make decisions on behalf of pupils and in their best interests.

There may be, from time to time, concerns that parents wish to raise. We will do our best to address concerns promptly and consistently; however, **it is important to emphasise that a number of issues, in particular setting, uniform and sanctions (including detentions), are entirely internal matters for the school and therefore not for negotiation.**

Our preferred form of contact is via 'School Synergy', this is a dedicated and secure online system accessed via the contact tab at the top of the home page on the school website, and via the 'Contact Us' section on the school website.

To raise a concern using School Synergy:

- Please register your concern as concisely as possible using the appropriate tab on School Synergy to ensure we have all the necessary details.
- Your concerns will be passed on by the administrator to the most appropriate person to deal with your query.

- In the case of concerns relating to subject issues it is likely that the Behaviour Manager will respond. Other concerns will normally be dealt with by the Progress Managers.
- In normal circumstances, we would hope to respond within five working days. The member of staff dealing with your concern may respond via School Synergy or by phone or may ask you to come into school.
- Staff emails are for internal purposes only; **emails sent to individual staff addresses will not receive a response.**
- Staff will not be able respond to requests for telephone conversations unless full details are given to the school office.
- We regret it will not be possible to transfer phone calls directly to staff; the receptionist will transfer any concerns or requests onto School Synergy, and they will be forwarded to the appropriate person who will respond.

N.B. It is always best to use contact function within School Synergy rather than going through the website 'contact us' tab as all communications registered through School Synergy are trackable by parents.

If contact via School Synergy is not possible:

Parents may phone school during office hours (8am – 4pm). The receptionist will take details of your concern and transfer it onto the School Synergy system.

Making an appointment

If, following communication on School Synergy, the school feels it necessary to make an appointment, parents will be contacted. It will not be possible to see any member of staff without a pre-arranged appointment.

The Senior Leadership Team also holds a drop-in on the first Thursday of every month from 9:15 – 10:15am when appointments are not needed. These sessions are held off-site in the community in order that **ALL** parents have the opportunity to attend. Details of their location will be published on a yearly basis.

When attending for an appointment, parents must sign in at Reception on arrival. A visitor's badge will be issued, and a member of staff will escort parent(s) to a meeting room.

Threatening or abusive behaviour

Abusive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated, either on the phone, in a message/email or in a meeting.

Such behaviour is likely to result in a parent/carer being prohibited from coming on site, removal of communication facilities on School Synergy or referral to the Police.

Contacting a pupil in school

Pupils are not allowed to leave lessons to come to the telephone to accept an incoming call.

Parents who wish to contact pupils to relay an urgent message may do so by telephoning the school office. To minimise disruption to teaching and learning we would request that this facility should be reserved for emergencies. Any urgent messages will be passed to the pupil concerned.

Pupils must keep their mobiles switched off during the school day in their school bags. Parents **should not** use this as a method of communication during school hours.

The use of mobile phones by pupils during the school day is strictly prohibited. If pupils use a mobile phone to contact parents during the school day this will be treated as a significant breach of this rule and will result in the confiscation of the phone under the school's behaviour policy. If pupils need to contact home during the day, they should go to The Hub at break and lunchtime.

Complaints

Complaints are covered by a separate policy that can be found on our website. Please follow the guidance in this policy when making an informal or formal complaint.