

Overview

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives.

We aim to respond to parents and carers within two working days – whether by email or telephone unless it is a safeguarding matter.

Communications should focus on the learning experience of students and personal progress. If the issue is linked to a pastoral matter, then the first email should be directed to the student's tutor followed by the Head of Year.

When contacting the academy, the language used should always be respectful and not emotive or judgemental. Our staff are very important to us and should always be respected and not have their professionalism called into question. Anyone involved in communication between home and the academy is asked to reflect on the tone and content. For example, calling into question the ability of a member of staff undermines them and does not help to resolve issues arising from the collaborative efforts of the learning process.

If the professionalism of a teacher is brought into question, please be aware that the school can only progress this if the Complaints Procedure is evoked and followed.

The Principal has the right to ask a parent or carer or other stakeholder to stop communication if the contents of that verbal or written communication are deemed libellous, slanderous or if repetitive communications that may be deemed as vexatious are used.

We have a duty of care to our students and staff and therefore will take any necessary steps to protect students and staff whilst undergoing work or activities associated with the school. If emotive, aggressive or unpleasant behaviour is shown verbally or face to face, the Principal also reserves the right remove a visitor from site and ask them not to return. If a phone call becomes aggressive then staff are asked to end the call in a respectful manner and to report it to their line manager.

Contacting the School

Communication by email is the preferred method.

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so. However, the majority of a teacher's time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time. We aim to respond to parents and carers within two working days – whether by email or telephone unless it is a safeguarding matter.

Telephone

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Reception staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.

- If a call is urgent, please inform the receptionist who will attempt to find a Head of Year or member of the Academy Leadership Group to speak to you.
- We will try to respond to you within two working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.
- Please do not contact any student during lessons by text, social media, telephone or email if you do not receive a reply.

Email

Please use staff email addresses if you need to contact staff directly or the contactus.wla@changinglives.education address

Teachers are not generally in a position to check emails throughout the day and the academy does not expect work email to be checked during a teacher's personal time.

We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and usually within two working days. Part-time staff may take longer to reply due to their pattern of working.

Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them; their tutor and Head of Year.

In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

1. Form Tutor or Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
2. Head of Year (pastoral matters, learning across multiple subjects)
3. Subject Leader (specific subject matter)
4. Assistant or Vice Principal
5. Principal

Most meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff. If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you. For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days. The academy will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

Contacting You

Our preferred method of contacting you is via School Comms or email. We may also contact you via telephone, letter or text.

Social Media

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information and generic educational information. You can find these by searching Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.

Any concerns that lead to friendship issues with regard to the inappropriate use of social media outside of the academy need to be discussed between parents and families and not, in the first instance, with the academy. The reason for this is that the school cannot monitor

the use of social media outside of school hours. Parents need to discuss with students about the appropriate social media and sites to access. The academy can provide guidance if requested.

No Response

If you have not received a response from the academy within two working days please contact the academy by emailing contactus.wla@changinglives.education and a senior member of staff will follow up your enquiry.

Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.