



Communication Policy

Policy in effect from: February 2024
Review Date: February 2026



Key Objectives:

All communications at Mighty Oaks Academy Trust should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon-free English and be easily understood by all
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context and audience

Communication with parents and other important stakeholders

Effective communications enable us to share our school aims and values as well as keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the vital role that parents play in supporting the school and their child/ren.

Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, it is essential that relationships are professional and parents are addressed in a formal manner in all written communication, whatever the form.

Mighty Oaks Academy Trust aims to make our written communication as accessible and inclusive as possible, we will ensure that all of our parents can access a form of communication, making alternative arrangements where necessary (e.g. EAL, SEN, IT access or literacy issues). We will seek parental feedback on the school communication via our annual parent survey.

Communication Procedures

The school office can be contacted between 8.15am and 4.00pm on school weekdays.

	Postal Address	Telephone	Email:
Mighty Oaks Academy Trust	Priorslee Avenue, Priorslee, Telford, TF2 9RS	01952 387 927	Enquiries@MightyOaks.uk
Buildwas Academy	Buildwas Road, Buildwas, Telford, TF8 7DA	01952 387 827	Admin.Buildwas@taw.org.uk
Priorslee Academy	Priorslee Avenue, Priorslee, Telford, TF2 9RS	01952 387 927	Admin.Priorslee@taw.org.uk

Message, Queries, Concerns	Person to Contact
If your child is absent from school...	Please notify the school office each day of absence by 9.15am either by telephone or in person. Please note that this notification does not guarantee that absences will be authorised. If you have been unable to make contact via the above means, you can use the Admin emails. Parents will be contacted if children are absent without reason.
If you have a quick message for your child's teacher about	Please see the Class Teacher at the end of the day. Or please contact the School Office and leave a message for your Class Teacher.

Message, Queries, Concerns	Person to Contact
collection, concerns, home learning...	
If you would like to talk about your child's learning progress...	Make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher via the school office. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant School Leader.
If you are concerned about social behaviours or bullying...	Make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher via the school office. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant School Leader.
If you would like to discuss something related to your child's teacher...	Make an appointment to meet with the Head of School via the School Office.
If you would like to discuss your child's special educational needs...	Make an appointment to meet with the SENCO via the school office or directly via the SENDCo email. Buildwas SENCO: Jason.Millington2@taw.org.uk Priorslee SENCO: Becky.Brewer@taw.org.uk
If you have a query about Breakfast or After School clubs...	Please contact please contact the School Office.
If you have a pay query ...	Enquiries can be made to the school's office staff.
If you have a school dinner enquiry...	Please contact the school office directly.
If you wanted to check if the school is open...	Please wait for communication from the School. Or check Closures - School/Nursery Closures - Telford & Wrekin Council

If having followed the above the steps above, your question or concern is not resolved, please make an appointment with the School Office to meet with the Head of School.

If you would like to contact the Governing Body, they may be contacted directly, in writing, via the School Office. All correspondence must be sealed and addressed to the Chair of the Governing Body.

We would ask that parents/carers:

- Communicate in a respectful and reasonable way at all times when communicating with members of staff – it is not acceptable for any stakeholder to use insulting, abusive or threatening language, or to adopt a threatening or aggressive tone when communicating with staff. If any stakeholder does communicate with staff in this way a range of responses will be used. These could involve limits being imposed on the ways in which that stakeholder can communicate with school staff, and, in more extreme cases, contact being made with the police to report the incident. Adhering to the Parent Conduct Policy.
- Follow the school's Complaints Policy if they have any significant concerns

Communication maybe via the following forms:

Formal letters (sent via the school office)

Staff will endeavour to reply to parents' letters as quickly as possible. Letters will be acknowledged in within 3 working days from receipt and a reply sent within 10 working days. Letters must be approved by the Head of School before posting. Copies of correspondence with parents will be placed on the pupils file.

E-Mail

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information. However, it does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required. All e-mail should be treated as letters and should be checked carefully for technical errors and tone. Staff should acknowledge e-mail within 3 working days and send a full reply within 10 working days, unless the sender has been given a legitimate reason for the delay, such as consultation or investigation. Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses.

Telephone calls

All telephone enquires will pass through the main school office, who will direct the call to the relevant member of staff. In the likely event that the member of staff is not available to answer the call a message should be left, and a return call will be placed at the earliest appropriate time.

Staff should take notes about the content of telephone calls, as they would with meetings with parents. Notes from telephone calls, including main points of discussion and action required/taken should be logged and filed in their pupil's CPOMs. If a child is absent from school and we have no indication of the reason, administrative staff will contact a parent on the same day, to find out the reason for the absence.

Meeting with parents

We encourage parents to contact the school if issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being. For everyday issues parents should contact their child's class teacher. For persistent or serious issues, parents should contact the Head of School. Any parent wishing to meet with a member of staff should contact the School Office in advance and request a meeting with that member of staff. This will then be arranged at a time convenient to both parties. The subject for that meeting should be shared in advance to help staff to be fully prepared to ensure the meeting is productive.

Parents should not come to the school to talk to a member of staff without an appointment. Staff members may be unavailable to meet should this happen.

Parents (like all visitors) should report to reception prior to meeting with a member of staff. If the meeting is due to take place outside office hours, separate arrangements can be made.

If a meeting with a parent is taking place outside normal school hours, the member of staff should try, where possible, to ensure that another colleague is nearby. It is perfectly acceptable to call a meeting to a close in order to allow time for further investigation.

When a pupil is accompanying a parent for a meeting, it is perfectly acceptable to ask a pupil to remain out of the meeting for part of it, particularly when a parent is criticising a teacher or any aspect of the school. It is damaging to the relationship with the pupil for them to witness this, but parents may need to air particular feelings and this is a useful mechanism for this. The teacher should not feel threatened at any time and is encouraged to stop a meeting should this be the case. Children can attend Wrap Around Care, free of charge whilst the meeting takes place.

Estranged/separated parents

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the same information to both parents, provided that contact details have been furnished. Copies of communications can be sent via the student if both parents are in agreement.

Planned meetings

Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents of planning, content and arrangements.

A meeting for new reception parents is held in July each year. Additional meetings may include a Reception settling in /social event for parents and pupils.

There are two parents' evening per academic year.

Possible contentious meetings

A member of staff may ask for another member of staff to accompany them and should always do so when the meeting may be contentious in any way or if their input will add value to the meeting. When possible, a Key Stage Leader or SLT will attend this meeting. The key discussion points, actions and decisions should be recorded.

Staff should call a meeting to a close in the event of the parent becoming angry or abusive. The member of staff should report such an incident to a member of the leadership team and seek further advice. The Head of School should either accompany the member of staff to a further meeting with the parent or hold it without the original member of staff present.

Social Networking Sites/Blogs etc (See also E-Safety Policy)

Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites nor accept them as their "friends". The exception is networks or blogs set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning.

Complaints

Any letters of concern or complaint should be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

Written reports

Once a year, a full written report is sent to parents on their child's progress. The report identifies areas of strength and areas for further development. In addition, parents meet their child's teacher twice a year, at parents' evening. When pupils have special educational needs, or if they are making less than expected progress or experiencing behavioural or disciplinary difficulties, we may arrange to meet with parents more regularly or outside the cycle of parents' evenings.

School Website

The school website and Facebook pages provides information about the school and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience and provide guidance on admissions for prospective parents and pupils. It also has a regularly updated area for information for current parents. In addition, it has up-to-date policies available for parents to view.

Public Access Documents

Curriculum information, policies and copies of recent letters will be available on the school website. Key dates for the year (where possible) are sent out in September.

A calendar of school events is available on the website, and is updated on the key dates that are sent out at the start of each term. The upcoming terms dates are always shared in the weekly newsletter.

Communication with other schools and outside agencies

Before joining new pupils are encouraged to visit in the school prior to starting. We offer taster days/sessions. We will contact the previous school to help gather key information to aid this process. We will receive the individual pupil file from the previous school once that child is on roll.

Visits from External Agencies (See also Equality Information and Objectives Policy)

As part of our curriculum and extra-curricular provision, we will regularly invite guest speakers, experts and representatives from a range of organisations and institutions to the school to speak to and engage with our pupils. Prior to these visits, we will agree the terms and content of their input into the provision and ensure that it is in accordance with our policies. From time to time, for PSHE provision for instance, these individuals may represent partial groups or promote partial political views. Where this is the case, this will be clearly explained to pupils, along with the reasons for the partiality. We will also ensure pupils have access to alternative views, in order to give them access to a balance of views. No group or individual will be allowed to present views which are contrary to our Equality Information and Objectives Policy.

Safeguarding including child protection (See also Safeguarding Policy)

We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our schools should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help abused children. Because of this when any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Leader, who may share this information with the Social Services should it meet the correct thresholds.

We are supported by and regularly communicate with various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on ways to meet pupils' needs, to ensure that all pupils can participate fully in school life. Support comes from such services as Educational Welfare, Educational Psychologists, Social Care etc.

Confidentiality

We hold information on pupils in our school and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details will be sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. (Please see our data protection policy and privacy statements).

Communication with colleagues at Mighty Oaks Academy Trust.

All formal meetings should be minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda. It is important that these are focused on developmental, not administrative, matters and time is set aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to the school's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans. For all formal meetings, notes should be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff.

Minutes of meeting should be copied to relevant staff, the Headteacher and saved on staff shared area in the pertinent folder.

All staff are expected to read the minutes to ensure they are aware of the content and then can receive further information should it be required.

E-mail (See also E-Safety Policy and Agreement)

The school gives all staff their own email account to use for all school business. Email can be an efficient way of communicating with colleagues and passing on information. However, it should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face contact and staff must consider whether it is the best way to communicate in each situation and understand that there is permanent record of any communication.

Teachers should ensure that they:

- Do not engage in private /personal correspondence with a pupil. This includes texting and social networking.
- Under no circumstances should they contact pupils or parents, or conduct any school business, using personal email accounts or text messaging.
- No chain letters are sent and no advertisements are embedded in any communication.
- Any political views are neutral or balanced.

Staff should not send non-urgent emails before 8am or after 6pm or during the weekend. Emails should instead be saved as drafts and sent during work hours or scheduled to be sent later/the next day.

Staff are not expected or encouraged to respond to emails outside of these hours or have the Outlook app accessible on their personal devices.

Staff should also not be contacted on their personal phone numbers, about non urgent communication before 8am or after 6pm or during the weekend, unless absolutely necessary. Communication should be through work emails wherever possible to allow staff to choose when to access this.

Staff Briefings and Meetings

Staff Briefings take place once a week. A written summary of the week's events and information are shared with all teaching staff, where any issues are raised and events from the next week are shared. An electronic calendar of events is available on Outlook. All meetings will be reviewed to ensure that they have had the desired impact.