



MOUNTS BAY ACADEMY

Home-Academy Communications Policy

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Home-Academy Communications Policy

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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 and expectations 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

Related policies

ICT and Internet Acceptable Use

Managing Aggressive Behaviour from Parents and Visitors

Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

Data Protection

Complaints

Safeguarding

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents/carers are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy ➤ Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents/carers in line with this policy and the school's ICT and Internet Acceptable Use and Data Protection policies
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents/carers get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8am and 4:00pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance,

staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so. Staff are not expected to respond to emails/phone calls straight away due to their work commitments. All staff will aim to respond to emails/phone calls within 3 working days, unless there is a specific urgency to respond sooner.

2.3 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers 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 Managing Aggressive Behaviour from Parents or Visitors and Allegations of Abuse by Staff policies.

Parents/Carers should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8am to 4pm), or during school holidays.

2.4 IT Department

The IT department are responsible for:

- Managing parental access and log-ins to online communication systems such as ParentMail and EduLink.

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 EduLink & ParentMail

We use these on-line communication systems to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Short-notice changes to the school day ➤ Payments

3.2 Email messages

We will email parents about:

- General communication and responding to emails from parents

- Staff may email parents to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative) and arrange meetings.
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such events will also be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Phone calls

Staff may call parents to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative) and arrange meetings. We may also call parents if their child has not arrived at school and we want to check where they are.

If appropriate we may phone to provide important information or if there is an important time factor or other reason for not sending an electronic communication.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our weekly newsletter
- About attendance and un-authorised holidays

3.6 Reports

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

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- Progress reports
- A report on the results of public examinations
- Information about vocational qualifications gained (or credits gained towards these)

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.7 Meetings

We hold 1 parents' evening for each year group per year. During these meetings, 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 hold additional parents' meetings across the year.

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), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

3.8 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 before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.9 Home-school communications app

We use EduLink for sending messages and information home.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list on our website (<https://mountsbay.org/contact-us/>) to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school number and email address. For example, a lot of queries and questions can be answered by your child's Tutor or their subject teacher. They will escalate to other staff as necessary. Other staff may be appropriate to contact, such as administrative staff, the SENCO, attendance officer or pastoral staff.

4.1 Email

Parents/carers should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to respond (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 3 working days, but this may not always be possible.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents/carers need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

If parents/carers need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the member of staff and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them within 3 working days.

We aim to make sure parents/carers have had contact with to the appropriate member of staff within 3 days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents/carers should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

Parents/carers can phone the school and use the extension options to speak to various support staff. Phone messages will be passed to the relevant member of staff.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate member of staff, or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers may be available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

We are not able to facilitate meetings with specific members of staff without an appointment. In the instance of a parent/carer/visitor arriving at the Academy asking to meet with someone without an appointment, the Academy will endeavour to find a member of staff who is available at this time. The Academy recommends the email methods described elsewhere in this policy or a phone call to reception requesting a meeting/callback/email from the named member of staff.

4.4 Home-school communications app

We use EduLink and ParentMail for communicating with parents/carers. Please refer to our ICT and Acceptable Use Policy for further details on how we manage this.

5. Inclusion

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

Parents/carers who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls
- School announcements and communications in alternative formats

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The principal monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every year. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there, and contact details can be found on www.mountsbay.org

