



Sharnbrook Academy

Home-School Communication Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Sharnbrook Academy we believe that clear, open communication between the academy 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 academy improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers.
- Builds trust between home and the academy, which helps the academy 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 academy communicates with parents/carers.
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers.
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of academy 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

The principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents 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 in line with this policy and the academy'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 or send the information themselves).
- Ensuring the consistency of any cohort communications by sharing for approval with their SLT link prior to being sent home.

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication within **two working days**, during core school hours (8.30am – 3pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time), however where this is not possible, an acknowledgment will be sent identifying an approximate timescale in which you can expect to receive a fuller response. 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. A copy the Meridian Trust ICT and internet acceptable use policies can be found [here](#).

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the academy 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 academy (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner.
- Keeping the academy updated with any changes to contact detail (for example, email addresses and phone numbers).
- Checking all communications from the academy.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30am – 3pm) or during school holidays.

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 Email / EduLink Messenger

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

- Upcoming events (for example, subject consultations and parent forums).
- Extra-curricular opportunities, trips and residential.
- Scheduled academy closures (for example, for staff training days).
- Feedback surveys or consultations on changes to academy policies.
- Consent forms.
- Afterschool detention notifications.
- Class activities or teacher requests.
- Principal's updates and termly newsletters.

3.2 School calendar

Each termly newsletter includes a provisional school calendar for the following term.

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

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.3 Phone calls

Whilst email remains our primary communication tool, staff may choose to call parents to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative) or to discuss individual incidents. Where the call is not answered, a brief voicemail will be left.

3.4 EduLink (home-school communications app / online browser)

In addition to its messenger facility, we use EduLink to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Homework assignments.
- Praise points and behaviour concerns.
- Student timetables.
- Examination timetables (for example mocks, GCSEs, and A Levels).
- Attendance and punctuality.

3.5 Reports

Parents receive the following formal reports from the academy about their child's learning:

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

3.6 Meetings

Throughout the year we hold curriculum information evenings, where we share information pertinent to each year group. We also host forums to share with parents key priorities and updates in the academy's development.

We hold one subject consultation evening for each year group. During these online meetings, parents can talk with subject teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, or any other area of concern.

We also hold tutor-parent meetings once per year. During this in-person meeting parents can discuss with the form tutor their child's wellbeing, general academic progress, or any other areas of concern.

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. The academy may also contact parents to arrange additional meetings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

3.7 Academy website

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

- School times and term dates.
- Important events and announcements.
- Curriculum information.
- Copies of key communications emailed home.
- Important policies and procedures.
- Important contact information.

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.8 Facebook and Twitter

We use social media platforms to publicise achievements of both the academy and our pupils, as well as to provide timely reminders for parents of key events and dates. We do ask that parents are mindful of the public nature of this forum and as such, contact the academy directly should they have any specific questions or concerns that need addressing.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue.

4.1 Email

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

We **aim** to respond to all emails within two working days, however where this is not possible, an acknowledgment will be sent identifying an approximate timescale in which you can expect to receive a fuller response.

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

4.2 Phone calls

Due to teaching and other commitments it is not possible to speak immediately with named members of staff.

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the relevant member of staff who will aim to contact them within two working days. If unsure of who to contact, please email main reception who will direct emails as appropriate.

If the issue is **urgent**, parents should call main reception.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies.
- Safeguarding or welfare concerns.

For more general enquiries, please contact your child's tutor or House SSA (Student Support Assistant).

As the academy is a mobile phone free site, parents should not be contacting their child directly during the school day. Messages can be left with main reception who will, using our runner system, discretely pass this onto your child. As per our behaviour policy,

any phone seen by a member of staff will be confiscated, regardless of the reason for it being out. We therefore ask that parents do not put us, or their child, in this position.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1) to schedule an appointment.

4.4 Safeguarding Concerns

Any concerns regarding safeguarding matters can be sent directly to safeguarding@sharnbrook.academy . This inbox is checked daily during term time. Out of hours, if you have an urgent safeguarding concern regarding a child who resides in Bedfordshire, please contact Bedford Borough Integrated Front Door (previously known as MASH) on 01234 718700 during office hours or 0300 300 8123 for out of hours support. If your concern relates to a child who resides in Northamptonshire, please contact the Northamptonshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0300 126 1000 or email MASH@nctrust.co.uk . For out of hours support, call 01604 626938. If you believe that a child is in urgent danger, you should call 999.

5. Inclusion

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

We currently make communications (such as the principal's update and termly newsletters) available to parents in English. However, we want to ensure that all members of our parent community can access our information, so please let us know if we can support with translated versions of our communications.

Parents who need help communicating with the academy can request (subject to availability) support. Our site is accessible to all; however, we can make personalised or additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact main reception to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The principal monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every three years.

The policy will be approved by the academy council.

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email the most appropriate address.
- Include your child's initials and year group in the subject line.

We aim to respond to all emails within two working days.

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

A staff list can be found on the academy website [here](#), although all academy email addresses do follow the same format of initialsurname@sharnbrook.academy,

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning, progress, class activities, lessons, or homework	First contact: Your child's class teacher Second contact: The relevant head of subject or department Third contact: The relevant Assistant Principal or senior lead for that subject or department.
My child's wellbeing, general progress, behaviour, safety, or potential bullying	First contact: Your child's form tutor Second contact: Your child's Head of House or SSA (student support assistant) Third contact: The relevant Assistant Principal or senior lead for your child's House.
Payments	administration@sharnbrook.academy
School trips	The trip leader or administration@sharnbrook.academy
Uniform, lost and found	administration@sharnbrook.academy
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, please call our dedicated absence line 01234 782211 (option 1). If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact attendance@sharnbrook.academy to request a copy of the necessary form.
Academy events or the academy calendar	administration@sharnbrook.academy
Special educational needs (SEN)	Mrs Carrie West, SENDCO Lead: CWest1@sharnbrook.academy
Parent Association	Mrs Laura Watt, Assistant Principal: LVatt@sharnbrook.academy
Governing board	administration@sharnbrook.academy
Pupil Premium or Free School Meals	Mr Alan Lovesey, Assistant Principal: ALovesey@sharnbrook.academy

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Looked After or Previously Looked After Children	Mrs Laura Watt, Designated Teacher: lwatt@sharnbrook.academy
Sixth Form	Mr Daniel Baxby, Director of Sixth Form: 6thFormAdmin@sharnbrook.academy

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our [complaints policy](#).