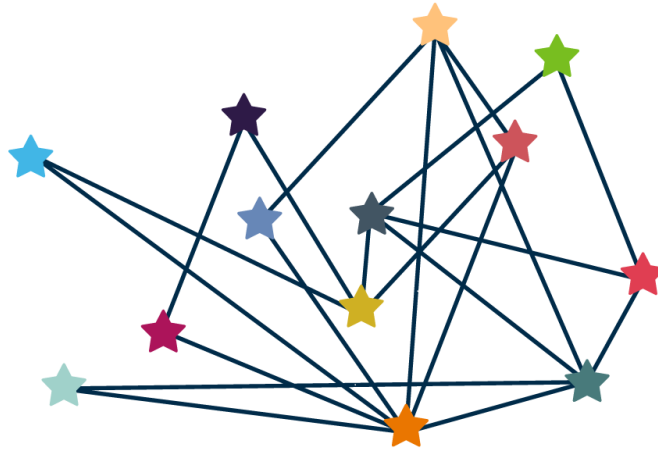


# ULT Home – School Communication Policy



**UTTOXETER**  
LEARNING TRUST  
INSPIRED TEACHING  
INSPIRING CHILDREN

**Approved: Summer 2021**

**Due for review: Summer 2022**

# Home – School Communication Policy

## 1. Introduction and aims:

We believe that clear, open communication between our schools 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 our schools improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers;
- builds trust between home and school, which helps our schools better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.

How schools communicate with parents will differ depending on the size of the school, but all will have a policy to make clear how it communicates with parents/carers. All our schools will set clear standards for responding to communication from parents/carers and will help you reach the member of staff who is best placed to address your specific query or concern so that you get a response as quickly as possible. A copy of the school specific policy can be obtained from the school office and will also be available on the school's website.

In the following sections of this policy the term 'parents' will refer to both parents and carers.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities:

### 2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate;
- regularly reviewing their home-school communication policy.

### 2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- responding to communication from parents in line with their school's policy and the school'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).

Staff **will not** be expected to respond to communications outside of school hours or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

## **2.3 Parents**

Parents 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 the school's parent code of conduct.

## **3. How schools communicate with parents and carers:**

The sections below explain how we expect our schools to keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in their 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**

Schools will use email to keep parents informed about school activities, including:

- upcoming school events;
- scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days);
- school surveys or consultations;
- class activities or teacher requests.

### **3.2 Text messages**

Schools will use text messages to inform parents of certain school matters, including:

- payments;
- short-notice changes to the school day;
- emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather).

### **3.3 School calendar**

All our schools will have a full school calendar on its website and parents will also be regularly reminded of various school activities through a parental newsletter.

Where possible, schools will 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 event will be included in the school calendar.

### **3.4 Phone calls**

Schools may choose to call parents should a member of staff wish to speak with a parent regarding a child's illness, or absence from school, or if they wish to discuss a pupil's performance (both positive and negative).

### **3.5 Letters**

Schools will regularly send letters home, including:

- letters about trips and visits;
- consent forms;
- a school weekly/monthly/termly newsletter.

### **3.6 Homework books/school planners**

Schools may choose to use planners or homework books to send messages home and it is important that these are regularly read.

### **3.7 Reports**

Parents may 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;
- termly progress reports;
- a report on KS1 and KS2 SATs tests;
- a report on the results of public examinations;
- information about vocational qualifications gained (or credits gained towards these).

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

### **3.8 Meetings**

Schools will hold regular parents' evenings and 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 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.

### **3.9 School website**

Key information about the school is posted on their 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.

## 4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school:

A school specific home-school communication policy will also make clear how parents are best advised to contact the school and the appropriate email address or telephone number to use.

### 4.1 Email

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

Our schools will aim to acknowledge all emails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days of the initial response.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, then you should call the school.

### 4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, you should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you within two working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. The school will aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within five days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, you should call the school office. Urgent issues might include things like:

- family emergencies;
- safeguarding or welfare issues.

For more general enquiries, you should call the school office.

### 4.3 Meetings

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

The school will try to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request.

Teachers will often be available at the beginning or end of the school day if you need to speak to them urgently, but parents are encouraged to contact the school in the first instance to book an appointment. Such meetings will include:

- any concerns you may have about your child's learning;
- updates related to pastoral support, your child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

## **5. Inclusion:**

It is important to us that all parents can communicate easily with their school.

Where possible, and if necessary, schools will make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in languages other than English.

Parents who need help communicating with their school should contact the headteacher to request support in the following ways:

- school announcements and communications translated into additional languages;
- interpreters for meetings or phone calls.

If necessary, schools will make additional arrangements. You should contact the school office to discuss these.

## **6. Monitoring and review:**

The Trust Board will regularly monitor how schools communicate with its parents to ensure that communication strategies remain effective.

The headteacher will also regularly monitor how the school communicates with its parents and the home-school communication policy will be reviewed annually by the school's governing body.

## **7. Links with other policies:**

The policy should be read alongside other ULT/School policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints