TyneCoast
Academy Trust

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Approved by:	TCAT Trust Board	**Date:**	17 December 2025
Last reviewed on:	December 2025		
Next review due by:	December 2028		

1. Introduction and Aims

Tyne Coast Academy Trust (the Trust) believes that clear, open communication between a school and parents/carers has a positive impact on students' 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.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of and regularly reviewing this policy.

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the Trust's/School's ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Working with other members of staff to ensure parents 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, 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.

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
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner

- Checking all communications from school.
- Demonstrating an understanding that staff may not always respond promptly to communication outside of their individual working hours or during periods of school holidays.

3. How we communicate with Parents

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 avenues of communication regularly to ensure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Email

We may use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- General information sharing
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (e.g. inset days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Short notice changes to the school day or normal routine
- Sharing reports and/or updates on matters in school specifically relating to their child

Text Message

We may use text messages to inform parents about:

- A recently sent email
- Short notice changes to the school day or normal routine
- Emergency closures (e.g. due to bad weather, loss of power etc)
- General information sharing
- Sharing reports and/or updates on matters in school specifically relating to their child.

School Communication App

We may use individual school communication services and/or apps to inform parents about:

- A recently sent email
- Short notice changes to the school day or normal routine
- Emergency closures (e.g. due to bad weather, loss of power etc)
- General information sharing
- Sharing reports and/or updates on matters in school specifically relating to their child.

School Calendar

Our website includes a full school calendar for the current academic year.

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 students to bring in special items or materials).

Phone Calls

Phone conversations with parents are part of the culture in school and occur on a daily basis. Phone calls can be initiated by both school and parents.

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Newsletters
- Letters about changes in school and other important information.

Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning. The school calendar sets out the timings of reports across the academic year and is published on each school's website.

Reports are also proceeded for statutory annual EHCP review meetings.

Parent consultations and review meetings

Parents evenings are held for each year group throughout the year. During these meetings parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum, their child's wellbeing or any other area of concern.

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

Parents of students with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

Academy 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
- Copies of letters and other communications with home.

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4. How Parents can communicate with the school

Parents should use the contact us page on the website to obtain contact details for the most appropriate person to deal with their query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

Email

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

If a query or concern is urgent, parents should call the school.

Phone Calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them as promptly as possible.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff as swiftly as possible. If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

Meetings

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

While teachers are often 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

5. Inclusion

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

Parents 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.

Please contact the school office if you require any additional support.

6. Protocol for families with separated/divorced parents

The Trust recognises that, while the parents of some students within Trust schools may be divorced or separated, both have a right to be informed of, and involved in, their child's education.

The information provided to the school when a student was enrolled detailing whether both parents have parental responsibility for the student will be presumed to be correct unless a court order or original birth certificate proving otherwise is provided to the school.

Our schools wish to promote the best interests of the student(s), working in partnership with both parents, unless directed by a court order. In the event that the school is not informed of such action, neither parent will have rights superior to the other.

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the school when there is a change in the family's circumstances. We need to be kept up to date with contact details in addition to any other information that may have an impact on students within our schools.

Communication

We hope and expect that parents, whatever the nature of their separation, will do all they can to communicate with each other and share information from and for the school, for the benefit of their son/daughter. This also considerably reduces the possibility of errors being made and upset caused.

However, in the event that this may cause difficulty and have a negative effect on the student(s) and their learning, letters, texts and emails can be sent to both parents if this is agreed by parents and the school together.

Information on all the main school events, including productions, sports days, parent's evenings, trips, etc. are available on the school website. Occasionally items are given directly to students such as letters, notes in their planners or educational resources. We would expect parents to share these with each other as and when appropriate. The school will not provide duplicates of such information.

Both parents are welcome to parents' evenings, attending the same appointment unless exceptional arrangements have been agreed with school in advance. We would expect parents to communicate with each other regarding the arrangements for these.

We expect that parents would liaise and communicate directly with each other in matters such as the ordering of school photographs; tickets for performances and other instances. The school will not normally deal individually with these requests.

Progress reports and student records

Both parents have the right to access progress reports. If the parents are separated or divorced, separate reports can be provided to parents provided the school is aware of the need for this and updated contact information has been supplied to the school.

All parents are recommended to use our website and communication and learning platform regularly. They contain most of our communications and have a range of information and links.

Requests for Leave of Absence from School

If one parent seeks leave of absence from school for an extended period, the school may contact both parents to discuss the situation and establish their views before a decision is made as to whether or not the absence will be authorised.

In the event that the parent with whom the student ordinarily resides cannot be reached, the Headteacher or staff member dealing with the issue may make a decision based upon all relevant information available to him/her.

The Headteacher or staff member may have to refuse permission if consent cannot be obtained from both parents.

In extreme circumstances if there is a belief that a possible abduction of the student(s) may occur, advice will be sought from children's services and/or the police.

In the Event of the Break Down of a Relationship

The Trust acknowledges that relationships can break down suddenly or traumatically, even for a temporary period, and that we may not be aware of this.

Our position is not to attribute blame but to support the student and to ensure his/her safety which is paramount. We would ask therefore that one parent at least contact the school if a relationship has broken down and inform us of any changes to plans or arrangements, for example emergency contact numbers.

We may well need to meet with you to discuss these arrangements. Parents can be assured we will treat the matter with care and sensitivity. In the first instance, please contact the main office. However, if there is an emergency and you have safety concerns for your son/daughter, please contact the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Trust monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every three years. The policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Approval	Date
1	Policy first developed as a Trust wide policy.	M Dobrianski Chief Operating Officer	Trust Board	15/12/2022
2	Policy reviewed no amendments required.	M Dobrianski Chief Operating Officer	Trust Board	17/12/2025