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The Fierté Multi-Academy Trust

# Parent and Carers Communication and Email Protocol



## Document and Version Control

<b>Document Title</b>	Parent / Carers Communication and Email Protocol
<b>Effective Date</b>	Autumn 2023
<b>Policy Owner</b>	CEO
<b>Policy Approver</b>	Trust Board with consultation from the Trust Parent Forum

Version	Date	Amended by	Comments
V1	Spring 2023	Linda Webster	New Protocol
V2	Summer 2023	Maria Hamblin	Amendments have arisen from the Leaders Strategy Day Spring 2023 and include: timings and response periods from staff to parents.

Section	Changes Made
Page 4 Staff Wellbeing	Includes the timings that corresponds with the Staff Communication and Email Protocol

## Introduction

Our academies recognise that parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning and that strong partnerships impact positively on children's outcomes. Effective dialogue between parents and school is a continuing priority for all. Leaders regularly revise and review their systems of communication to ensure that they meet the needs of all parents. This is a dynamic and ongoing process, individual to the needs of each school community.

## Rationale

Whilst the Fierté Trust oversees this protocol, all staff and parents are expected to adhere to this approach to encourage a fruitful, reciprocal communication partnership that ultimately will ensure every child flourishes.

Our Trust Parent Communication Protocol is based on key recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation so that the reciprocal partnerships between school and home are maximised. Parent representatives have been consulted in relation to this document.

## Guidance for Parents / Carers

When contacting the school by telephone, please use the school number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Office staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform office staff who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will try to respond to you within three working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons will not be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

When communicating by email staff want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their utmost to do so, however, the majority of teachers' time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time.

Please use **school office email** addresses from your individual academy ([office@dosthill.org](mailto:office@dosthill.org)), if you need to contact staff directly, emails to the school office will then be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff. If you are contacting the school office, please include within your communication:

- Name of the teacher or member of staff in the subject line
- Name of the child

*e.g., FAO Mr Shakeshaft, 6S, re: My Child*

## Social Media

Both the Trust and Academies regularly use Social Media platforms (Twitter / Facebook) to share pupil achievements, Trust / Academy news, subject, and generic educational information. Our expectation is that parents / carers are always respectful when responding to any communication on these platforms.

## Staff Wellbeing

The wellbeing of all staff is important to us and to ensure staff do not feel pressured to access their email accounts outside of school-working hours, the following rules apply:

- There is no expectation for staff to answer emails outside school hours and there is a Trust expectation that this is followed by all.
- Emails sent by parents must have the expectation that they may not be answered outside of the agreed period from 8.00am-6.00pm or over a weekend. This is to encourage a better work-life balance for our staff and to make parents think carefully about the emails they are sending.
- Staff are not expected to check emails before 8.00am or after 6.00pm on working days, or over the weekend.
- In terms of replies to parents, we expect that any emails are responded to within a three working day period. Staff may not always monitor their email accounts during the school holidays, so they may not be able to respond within three working days during these periods.
- Staff will check their email accounts regularly throughout the working week.
- If appropriate, staff will activate their 'out-of-office' notification when away for an extended period i.e., more than 5 working days.
- Staff will never open attachments from an untrusted source, so parents must ensure that they send communications from a valid source.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The protocol will be monitored and evaluated regularly considering any incidents which occur or technological developments which might need a change in the protocol.

This protocol should be read with reference to the following policies:

- Internet Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy