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Orion Academy

Parental Communications Policy

2026-2027

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SLT Leads:	Luke Franklin Julia Hyde
Chair of RIB:	Simon Terrington

The Orion Academy Parental Communications Policy

Overview

We want to promote the essential partnership between the school, parents, staff, students and the wider community through efficient and effective communication.

We strive to ensure an open, clear and beneficial communication pathways between parents / carers and the school: we understand that effective communication between school and home (and visa versa) is key.

Communication is a fundamental aspect of school life and we recognise the role it plays in creating a positive, purposeful learning environment, which builds understanding and helps people to thrive. We all have a collective responsibility to communicate in a manner that is respectful, thoughtful and kind.

We remain committed to being an open and approachable school that engages with our community and puts children at the heart of our decision making. As a school, we also greatly value your support in enabling us to do this in an effective, timely and sustainable manner.

We recognise that it will be difficult to communicate with teachers and other key staff during the school day, due to their roles and commitments to the students. We also recognise that parents / carers also have busy lives, which can sometimes make the window of opportunity for contact small.

Parents / Carers and visitors should be aware that a request for an appointment must be made and agreed in advance, alongside a sharing of the purpose of the visit, should they wish to see a particular member of staff. We greatly value the support of parents and the wider school community and thank you for adhering to this notice.

Contacting the school

Communication by email or leaving a message with a member of the school office are preferred methods of initial contact. When you have built up regular communication with a particular member of staff (for example, the classteacher of your child), direct email communication is the best way to get a message to a teacher promptly and should be used for the majority of everyday communication. Though if a matter is urgent, please also contact the school office - due to school day commitments, access to emails for most staff is limited and occasional whilst the students are on site.

At Orion Academy, teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so. However, the majority of teachers' time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Their responsibilities additionally extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made.

We have agreed with all staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries from parents / carers during their personal time. All communication must be made through school equipment and through school email addresses.

Phoning school staff

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher or another member of staff to contact you - if the message is urgent (e.g. regarding a change in school pick-up), our Office Staff will relay messages as soon as possible.

If a call requires a quick response, please be patient if the member of staff is not available. At this time, please leave a message, which includes the best contact number to reach you on and the reason for your call. If it's regarding a student, please leave the name of the student too.

Be assured that our Office Staff will pass on your message as soon as practicable. If your message is not urgent, we will endeavour to respond to you within three working days, if it is not possible to return your call the same day.

Please note lessons (and the routines of staff members who are supporting our students) will never be interrupted for staff to receive calls.

Emailing school staff

If you would like to contact staff directly, please send them an email. If you have yet to make contact with this member of staff, please send your email to the school office in the first instance, which also outlines the purpose of your communication.

Teachers and other staff at Orion Academy are not in the position to check emails consistently throughout the day, and the school does not expect work emails to be checked during a teacher's personal time.

We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and within three working days; though part-time staff may take longer to reply.

We thank you for your patience and understanding, and know that it can be difficult waiting for communication to be returned. Please remember that we do care, and we will respond as soon as we are able to.

Scheduling meetings with school staff

The day-to-day learning, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. This will typically be the classteacher of your child; though at times other members of staff may hold key information.

When considering communication with the school and arranging meetings, please be take the steps below (commencing with Step 1):

Step 1	Classteacher
Step 2	School Business Manager
Step 3	Phase Lead
Step 4	Community Learning Team Manager
Step 5	Deputy Headteacher
Step 6	Executive Headteacher

Unfortunately we are not able to hold meetings in school that are not pre-arranged and agreed with members of staff. If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.

For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

Meetings will be most effective when the purpose of the meeting is made clear. Please do not be surprised if you are asked what the reason for the meeting is, if you would like any particular or specific information shared with you, if the meeting is about something new or existing, or if the school needs to be made aware of any access needs (or other).

Receiving contact from the school

Our preferred method of contacting you is via email, telephone or other electronic communication. If you have any needs or disabilities related to your receipt of communication, please do not hesitate to let us know.

The school website contains a wealth of information about the school: if you have any particular questions once you have been onto the website, please let us know.

Following up communications to the school

If you have not received a response from the school within three working days, please contact the school by emailing office@orionacademy.co.uk (for the attention of Luke Franklin (School Business Manager)) and we will chase up your enquiry.

Communication with parents and carers is important to us all at Orion Academy, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.

We look forward to being in communication with you soon.