

# Westfield School

## School-Home Communication Guide

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# Westfield School

**Chorus** Education Trust

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## Aims

Clear and relevant communication between school and home is key in helping students to achieve their best. We work hard to ensure that communications are:

- Clear: easily understood and provided in a form that is accessible.
- Relevant: we try only to send information that is useful, timely and applicable to the student or family receiving it.
- Respectful: we use, and expect only acceptable language, tone and behaviour in our communications.

This guide outlines the systems in place to enable effective communication from school to home, and from home to school. The following policies and procedures have been considered and incorporated in our approach to school-home communications: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Accessibility Plan, Attendance Policy, Data Protection Policy.

## Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<b>School leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that communications are clear, relevant and respectful.</li> <li>• Monitor implementation of this guidance.</li> <li>• Regularly review this guidance.</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that communications are clear, relevant and respectful.</li> <li>• Respond to communications in line with this guidance and Chorus Trust's ICT acceptable use policy.</li> <li>• Maintain and use contact data in compliance with GDPR and safeguarding requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Parents/carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that communications are clear, relevant and respectful.</li> <li>• Ensure that student and parent/carer contact details held by the school are up to date.</li> <li>• Check all communications from school.</li> </ul>

## Respectful communications

All communications should be carried out in a respectful manner, using acceptable language and behaviour. We appreciate that parents/carers care deeply about their child(ren) and therefore ask that you also appreciate that our staff are professionals, who try to do their best for the many students under their care.

If, at any time during a conversation, attendees' language, tone or behaviour is unacceptable (for example, by being rude or aggressive) the staff member can warn them about this. If such

behaviour continues the staff member has the right to either schedule a short break or end the conversation. If this happens during a phone call, the member of staff has the right to end the call.

## Communications from school to home

Methods that we use to communicate are:

Type of communication	Method
<b>Urgent communications (individual student)</b>	<p>If a student is taken ill or is unexpectedly absent from school we prefer to make contact by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone</li> </ul>
<b>Urgent communications (whole school)</b>	<p>If there is a need to contact you regarding a situation affecting a large group of students or the whole school (such as school closure due to extreme weather) we will make contact by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email: an email to the primary parent/carer (where we have an email address). Note that the delivery of emails can sometimes be delayed.</li> <li>• SMS: text messages will be sent.</li> <li>• Website: a message on the home screen.</li> <li>• Social media: notices will be added to the school's social media platforms: Facebook and Instagram.</li> </ul>
<b>Routine communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email: an email to the primary parent/carer (where we have an email address).</li> <li>• Phone: we will phone you if there is an issue to discuss regarding your child.</li> <li>• Meetings: occasionally, there are times when it is helpful to meet staff to discuss an issue. If so, a mutually convenient date and time will be agreed.</li> <li>• Student reports: reports that contain information about your child's Attitude to Learning (which drives their academic performance) are sent to parents/carers five times a year via the Arbor Parent App/Portal. Students in Years 10 and 11 will receive additional reports showing attainment and forecast grades twice a year.</li> <li>• Parents' evenings: parents and carers are invited, via the Parents Evening online system, to an annual subject evening for an opportunity to discuss academic progress with teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>Public sources of information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website: is updated with information relating to the school calendar, term dates, contact details etc.</li> <li>• Social media: the school social media channels are used to share general news about student achievements and life at school. Social media is not used for sending or receiving routine messages to/from parents/carers. Guidelines for use of social media are available in Appendix A.</li> </ul>

## Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Our website is translatable into many different languages and communications can be sent in hard copy for those without access to online technology.

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school on [enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org](mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org) or by calling 0114 248 5221.

## Communications from home to school

In order to keep communications with school as efficient as possible, please use the following methods:

Reason	Method
<b>To report absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:attendance@westfield.chorustrust.org">attendance@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year, form and a reason for absence, or</li> <li>Call 0114 248 5221 and choose the option to report a student absence, or</li> <li>Complete the absence notification form available at <a href="http://www.westfield.chorustrust.org/attendance">www.westfield.chorustrust.org/attendance</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>General enquiries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org">enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>, or</li> <li>Call 0114 248 5221 to speak to our reception staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Complaints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the Chorus Trust complaints policy which can be found at <a href="http://www.chorustrust.org/policies">www.chorustrust.org/policies</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Student pastoral queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org">enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year and form.</li> </ul>
<b>Subject related queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org">enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year and form.</li> </ul>
<b>Exam related queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:exams@westfield.chorustrust.org">exams@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year and form.</li> </ul>
<b>Payment related queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:finance@westfield.chorustrust.org">finance@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Update parent/carer contact details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the Arbor Parent App/Portal, or</li> <li>Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org">enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org</a></li> </ul>
<b>Safeguarding concerns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email <a href="mailto:safeguarding@westfield.chorustrust.org">safeguarding@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>, or</li> <li>Call the school on 0114 248 5221 during school working hours. If you feel a young person is at immediate risk of harm, please contact the police on 999.</li> </ul>

## Reason

## Method

### Meeting staff

If you wish to meet a staff member, please make an appointment:

- Email [enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org](mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org), or
- Call 0114 248 5221 to speak to our reception staff.

It is not possible to meet with a member of staff without an appointment, due to their teaching and other student-related commitments.

## Timeframes for responses

Our staff spend the majority of their time teaching, planning lessons, assessing student work, undertaking lunch duties, running extracurricular clubs and activities and looking after the well-being of the young people in our care. Consequently, they are unable to respond immediately to queries. Our school aim is to respond as follows:

- An initial response to indicate that an email has been received within two school days.
- An initial response within five school days. This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response.
- A fuller response where necessary within a suitable agreed timescale.

Staff are not expected to monitor or respond to emails out of school working hours.

## Appendix A: Guidelines for social media interactions

School social media accounts are used for the public sharing of news and information about the achievements and activities of students, and life in general at school. They are not used for sending or receiving messages to/from parents/carers.

### Safeguarding students

We will never identify a student, without the express permission of the student and their parent/carer. This is key to keeping our students safe. We expect parents and carers to assist in safeguarding our students this by:

- Not naming a student.
- Not tagging students or their parent/carer in relation to a school post.

We will take action, for instance by removing comments, if necessary to ensure the safety or reputation of students, staff and the school in general.

### Communications via social media

Communications channels outlined in the communications guide are designed to enable appropriate and timely communication between school and home. These do not include social media platforms, except in the instance of urgent whole school communications such as school closure and, on these occasions, social media is one of many forms of communication used to spread the urgent message quickly. There is no expectation for parents and carers to use any particular social media channel to receive messages from school.

Contact made with school should be via the usual routes, which are:

- Email: [enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org](mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org)
- Phone: 0114 248 5221

## Appendix B: Systems used for communication

System	Description	Method
Email	Parents and carers should ensure that their email address held by the school are up to date.	<a href="mailto:enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org">enquiries@westfield.chorustrust.org</a>
Phone	Parents and carers should ensure that their phone numbers held by the school are up to date.	0114 248 5221
Arbor Parent App/Portal	Used to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement</li> <li>• Assessment and reporting</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Exam timetables</li> </ul>	<a href="https://login.arbor.sc">login.arbor.sc</a>
Parent Pay	Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments to school including dinner money</li> </ul>	<a href="https://app.parentpay.com/public/client/security/v2/#/login">app.parentpay.com/public/client/security/v2/#/login</a>
Parents Evening	Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bookings to see subject staff at subject evenings</li> </ul>	<a href="https://westfieldsch.schoolcloud.co.uk">westfieldsch.schoolcloud.co.uk</a>
Website	Used to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General information</li> <li>• Home learning</li> <li>• School calendar</li> <li>• Term dates</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• School policies</li> <li>• Links to online systems</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.westfield.chorustrust.org">www.westfield.chorustrust.org</a>