CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

FEBRUARY 2026

Next Review Date: February 2029

Staff should make themselves aware of all policies and amendments or updates to policies and adhere to the same, which will be made available on relevant websites and internal data and computer systems.

Executive Summary for the CET Communications Policy February 2026:

Purpose of the Policy

- To promote clear, open and respectful communication between schools and parents/carers
- To strengthen partnerships that support pupils' learning, wellbeing and personal development
- To set clear expectations for how schools and parents communicate with each other

Core Principles

- Communication should be timely, effective and appropriate
- Parents should receive the information they need to support their child
- Feedback from parents is valued to help improve schools
- Staff wellbeing and work–life balance are recognised and protected

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher / Head of School / Principal

- Ensure communications are effective and appropriate
- Monitor and review the policy regularly

Staff

- Respond to parents within 5 school working days
- Communicate mainly during core hours (8:30am–4:00pm)
- Are not expected to respond during evenings, weekends or holidays

Parents/Carers

- Communicate respectfully at all times.
- Contact the appropriate member of staff first
- Read and respond to school communications promptly
- Abusive or threatening behaviour is dealt with under a separate Trust policy

How the School Communicates with Parents

- Arbor Parent App: main channel for messages, attendance, trips, payments, events, closures and surveys

- Phone calls: for attendance concerns, safeguarding, behaviour, wellbeing, or medical incidents
- Reports: annual reports and statutory assessment outcomes
- Meetings: two parents' evenings per year plus additional meetings if needed
- Website: key information, policies, calendar, curriculum and contacts
- Social media: celebrating achievements and sharing general information (not for individual issues)

How Parents Communicate with the School

- Arbor Parent App: update details, make payments, view reports and attendance.
- Email: preferred method for non-urgent matters (5-day response target
- Phone: for urgent matters (e.g. safeguarding, family emergencies)
- Meetings: must be pre-arranged; usually offered within 5 working days

Escalation Path for Concerns

Parents should contact staff in this order, where appropriate:

1. Classroom Teacher
2. Head of Year
3. SENCO (for SEND issues)
4. Assistant Headteacher
5. Deputy Headteacher
6. Headteacher

Inclusion

- The Trust is committed to accessible communication.
- Parents can request alternative formats or support if needed

Review and Governance

- Reviewed every three years
- Next review due February 2029

CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

Chancery Education Trust and its Academy Schools believe that positive relationships with parents/carers and working together in partnership for the benefit of their child, has a positive impact on their child's learning, personal development and well-being. Clear, open communication between the Academy School and parents/carers is key to this aim because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education, personal development and well-being
- Builds trust between home and the Academy School, which helps the school and parent/carer better support each child's educational and pastoral needs
- Helps the Academy School improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the Academy School communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Setting clear expectations for parents/carers when communicating with the school
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of Academy 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/Head of School/ Principal

The headteacher/head of school/principal is responsible for:

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

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the Academy School's Data Protection, E Safety & 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 aim to respond to communication during core school hours, 8.30am to 4pm, or their working hours (if they work part-time) and within 5 Academy School working days of receiving a communication. 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 Academy School is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance and to communicate with staff during core Academy School hours, avoiding evenings and weekends, where possible
- Respond to communications from the Academy School (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking and reading all communications from the Academy School

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, bullying or threatening will be treated in line with the CET Dealing with Abusive Parents/Carers and Visitors Policy.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core Academy School hours, 8.30am to 4pm, or during school holidays.

Please refer to the CET Dealing with Abusive Parents/Carers and Visitors Policy which is available to view on the Academy School website in the policy section.

3. How We Communicate with Parents and Carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening at the Academy 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 Arbor Parent App

This allows the Academy School to communicate with you as required, including but not limited to:

- General Academy School communication
- Letters about your child
- Your child's attendance (if absence is not reported as per policy)
- Upcoming Academy School events
- Scheduled Academy School closures (for example, for staff training days)
- Emergency Academy School closures (for example, due to severe weather)
- Short-notice changes to the school day

- Academy School surveys or consultations
- Trips and Visits
- Updates on residential trips and if your child's return from any school trip is delayed
- Payments

We may also communicate information to Parents via the Academy School Safeguarding, Inclusion and Office email accounts as appropriate.

3.2 Phone calls

The Academy School will telephone parents:

- If your child's lack of attendance/safety is a concern the Attendance/Safeguarding Team will try to contact you
- To discuss with you any concerns around your child's behaviour, attendance and/or progress and well-being
- To alert you to a medical or first aid incident that warrants your attention
- To alert you to a safeguarding concern or disclosure where appropriate

3.3 Reports

Parents receive reports from the Academy School about their child's learning:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance for the year
- The results of any statutory assessments

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

3.4 Meetings

Each year group will have two parents' evenings per year. 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 Academy 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 (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings with the SENCO to address these additional needs.

3.5 Academy School Website

Parents should check the website before contacting the Academy School. Key information about the Academy School is posted on our website, including:

- Academy School times and term dates
- The Academy School calendar

- Extra-curricular activities
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

3.6 Social Media

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information and generic educational information. You can find these by searching our Facebook, Instagram and X (Formerly known as Twitter) accounts for each respective Academy School.

4. How Parents and Carers can Communicate with the Academy School

4.1 Arbor Parent App

This allows parents to:

- Update their child's personal information (for example, emergency contact information, change of address and permissions)
- Pay for school lunches (each Academy School operates a cashless catering system)
- Pay for Academy School trips and visits
- View their child's reports, attendance, timetables, rewards and sanctions, in addition parents can view their child's homework on the app.

4.2 Email

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

The Academy School aims to respond to communications within five working days, allowing staff to give appropriate consideration to messages, while maintaining their core responsibilities to teaching, learning, and pupil welfare.

If a matter is urgent or relates to safeguarding, please make this clear in the subject line or contact the Academy School office by telephone so it can be addressed promptly. Alternatively, the safeguarding email is available for urgent and confidential safeguarding matters (please refer to the Academy School website safeguarding pages for contact details).

4.3 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should email the Academy School office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 5 working days.

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 within 5 days of your request.

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 or email the Academy School office. Contact details can be found on the Academy School websites.

4.4 Meetings

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

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are 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

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them.

- In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

    1) Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
    2) Head of Year
    3) SENCO (if your query relates to your child's special educational need)
    4) Assistant Headteacher
    5) Deputy Headteacher
    6) Headteacher

- Meetings should always be pre-arranged 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 5 working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the Academy School. Please contact the Academy School office if you require any assistance accessing emails or require alternative methods of communication.

6. Links with Other Policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Data Protection, E-Safety and Acceptable Use Agreement
- Home School Agreement
- Dealing with Abusive Parents/Carers and Visitors

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Staff Mental Health and Well-Being
- Remote Learning

7. Monitoring and Implementation Policy

The policy is reviewed every three years, although the Trust may vary or amend it periodically to ensure that we fulfil our obligation around the Communications Policy. All proposed changes to this policy would be made following the approval from the Committee.

	Name	Date
Policy written by	Trust	January 2026
Review by Committee	CET Board	February 2026
Approved by Committee	CET Board	March 2026
Adopted by Governing Board	Local Governing Board	June 2026
To be reviewed every three years		
Review by	February 2029	