



Bristol Brunel
Academy

Communication Policy

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Approval	Full Academy Council
DfE Status	Non-Statutory

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1. History of most recent Policy Changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change (e.g. TU request, Change in legislation)	Actioned By
Apr 2018	Whole document	Document Creation		Actioned by I Garforth
May 2018	Whole document	Ratification		Policy ratified by academy council. Staff training undertaken to ensure staff are aware of implications.
Dec 2018	Whole document	Formatting and whole document review		Ian Garforth Vice Principal
October 2020	Whole document	4.2.B Attendance 'policy' changed to 'procedures' 4.1.D Reference to SIMS and CPOMS 4.2.F added 'other forms of communication' 4.2.M Differentiation between day and overnight trips 4.2.N Reference to RSE	Changes to processes	Vic Boynton Vice Principal
November 2021	Whole document	Equalities Impact Screening. Reference to communications with families finding written or verbal communication challenging. Reference to EAL guidance.	Greater focus on EDI	Vic Boynton Vice Principal
January 2023	Whole document	Policy review Additional Methods of communication: social media		Jen Cusack Vice Principal

2. Equalities Impact Screening

Date of screening: February 2023						
Name of person completing screening: Jen Cusack						
	Does this policy have the potential to impact on people in any of the identified groups?		What is the expected impact of this policy on any of the identified groups			Notes
	Yes	No	Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Age		x		x		
Disability	x			x		See below
Gender Reassignment		x		x		
Race or Ethnicity	x (EAL only)			x		See below
Religion or Belief	x			x		See below
Marriage		x		x		
Pregnancy/ Maternity		x		x		
Sex		x		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		x		
Carers / in-care		x		x		
Should the policy have a Full Equalities Impact Assessment? No						
If no – please state reasons:						
The policy refers explicitly to support for parents/carers with English as an Additional Language and those who find communication in writing or verbally more challenging.						
There is reference to decision making related to RSE withdrawal decisions.						

3. Introductory Statement

This policy addresses the main ways in which Bristol Brunel Academy ensures effective two-way communication with parents/carers, students, and the community.

The Academy believes that effective communications systems promote effective learning, promote the well-being of students and strengthen the quality of our work and the relationships between stakeholders. All stakeholders will be provided with support, guidance and access to information in a quick and efficient manner.

4. Aims

This policy aims to promote the partnership between the Academy, parents/carers, students and the community through efficient and effective communication. Good communication

should allow and encourage all parties and stakeholders to participate in the development and enhancement of the Academy, and its varied activities.

Good communications should be:

- interactive, all parties having opportunities and clear mechanisms for communication with one another;
- timely;
- responsive to all parents', staff and students' needs;
- personal or impersonal, as appropriate;
- correctly targeted at mass or small audiences, or individuals.

5. Responsibilities

All stakeholders are responsible for communicating in a considered and courteous manner regardless of the method of communication.

Below are particular areas of responsibility for the Academy and its staff and for parents/carers.

4.1 The Academy

- A. Ensuring that the spirit, principles and procedures of this policy are followed, particularly the pastoral, welfare and educational aspects.
- B. Communicating proactively with parents/carers about student progress and helping parents/carers to support their children's learning.
- C. Responding to incoming communication in 2 working days using the most appropriate form of response.
- D. Recording all important outgoing contact with parents/carers and other agencies using the CPOMS¹ or SIMS² system, as appropriate.
- E. Keeping the Academy website up-to-date with all essential information for students, parents/carers and stakeholders.
- F. Facilitating feedback from parents/carers and other stakeholders (through questionnaires, publicised meetings and other activities); and acting upon this evidence, as appropriate.
- G. Where the Academy identifies that written or verbal communication is a challenge for specific parents/carers, they make efforts to communicate key messages appropriately.
- H. Will manage the Academy's social media accounts based on the CLF Social Media Policy and Social Media Guidance.

¹ CPOMS: Child Protection Online Management System – a secure system to record and monitor safeguarding, well-being and pastoral issues in schools.

² SIMS: School Information Management System – a secure data management system used in schools.

4.2 Parents / Carers

- A. Ensuring that all contact information for them held by the Academy is up-to-date (including when parents/carers no longer reside at the same address, or where there is a request for information to be sent to different homes, to both parents/carers); and leave details of availability and preferred method of contact.
- B. Ensuring that the Academy is informed of absences of their child(ren) in accordance with the attendance procedures.
- C. Informing the Academy of medical conditions or allergies and supplying the necessary medical documentation.
- D. Informing the Academy of any child protection issues, legal matters, or relevant duties, using appropriate documentation.
- E. Informing the Academy of their child(ren)'s involvement in any notable sporting or artistic activity.
- F. Reading, acting on and, if applicable, meeting the deadlines in all communications sent by the Academy and other forms of communication.
- G. Being aware of information provided by the Academy about learning programmes and homework.
- H. Participating in parent/carer consultations.
- I. Sharing concerns about progress with class teachers and/or tutors.
- J. Informing the Academy if there are challenges regarding understanding written or verbal communications.
- K. Use the Academy's social media accounts in a respectful & appropriate manner.

Non-resident parents

- L. The academy recognises that non-resident parents vary in how they wish to receive information. Accordingly, the Academy will assume that non-resident parents wish to receive all communication but allow an 'opt-out' in the new student information form.
- M. Where a parent opts to receive all communication, the Academy will undertake to duplicate all communication in so far as it can. The Academy is unable to guarantee this is possible in all situations.
- N. Details of all trips are sent to both resident and non-resident parents (where they have requested communication). Permission is only required from the resident parent for day trips. For trips overseas or overnight, permission is obtained from both parents.

- O. The Academy will seek the permission from both parents if there is a request to withdraw a child from non-statutory elements of RSE³.
- P. The Academy has a legal duty to provide an annual written report to the parents of all registered children. In cases where the Academy does not know the whereabouts of a non-resident parent, it will make the resident parent aware that the other parent is entitled to be involved in their child's education and request that information is passed on, where possible.
- Q. Where possible, parents are encouraged to attend parents' evening together.

5. Methods of communication

5.1 We communicate with parents/carers through:

- Letters home – information, in the main part, is emailed home and also posted on the website. All letters are processed via the Academy admin team to ensure quality control.
- Text messages
- The Academy website
- Bristol Brunel Academy Facebook page – a 'live' version of events, newsletters and information. This is an open page and is intended for parents, carers, students, prospective parents/ carers and the wider community.
- Instagram Bristol_brunel_academy - a 'live' version of events, newsletters and information. This is an open page and is intended for parents, carers, students, prospective parents/ carers and the wider community.
- Twitter @BristolBrunel. The purpose of this account is enhance the reputation of the academy within the wider education establishment.
- Termly newsletters - emailed home, posted on the website and Facebook.
- Transition meetings
- Parent evenings / events (e.g. options evening)
- Progress reports at least once a year
- Termly pastoral reports
- Informal communication between staff and parent/carers

5.2 Provision of student specific information

Attendance, behaviour record, lesson scores, academic performance and other information specific to an individual student will be communicated via the methods below.

- Once or twice yearly data report (depends on the assessment points)
- Daily absence/lateness text
- Parents' evenings x1 per year (x2 in year 11).
- Postcards home – celebrating something the student did that was above and beyond our usual expectations
- Home visits
- Communications Agreement – where regular contact between school & home is necessary
- Face to face meetings

³ RSE – Relationships and Sex Education

- Emails from individual Teachers, Tutors or the Year Team
- Telephone calls from individual Teachers, Tutors or the Year Team
- Homework App: ShowMyHomework; Logins to ShowMyHomework are sent to parents at the start of year 7.

5.3 We communicate with students through:

- Assemblies
- Tutor announcements
- Tutor time
- Tutors
- Workbooks and planners
- Student voice
- Parent meetings

6. Emergencies, closures and unusual events

6.1 Academy to Home Communication:

A. Emergency Communication

In the event of an academy wide emergency e.g. the academy has to close due to snow, we would use a selection of the following to keep parents updated.

- Text the priority contact parent(s) or carer
- Email the priority contact parent(s) or carer
- Post a message on the website
- Post on our social media sites

To ensure all messages are received, parents/ carers must keep the Academy up to date with any changes to contact details.

In the case of an emergency that affects a single student or small group of students e.g. an injury in PE, we will phone home directly.

B. Communication in the event of a behaviour incident

If a student receives a behaviour point at any point in the day, the student will be expected to attend a restorative conversation at the end of the school day. Parents and carers will be advised of this via text during the day. The teacher will phone home that evening to explain the incident with the parent/carers. Teachers will record this call (or a missed call) in the SIMS communication log.

If a student is suspended, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the year team will phone home to discuss the incident prior to the suspension. A formal letter will be sent home by post.

6.2 Home to Academy Communication

A. Routine enquiries

Please email info@bba.clf.uk

Our reception staff will forward the email to the relevant member of staff who will reply within 2 working days by phone or email, within normal working hours. Individual staff emails will not be published on the website. Each year group have a dedicated team email address as follows:

BBAYear7team@clf.uk

BBAYear8team@clf.uk

BBAYear9team@clf.uk

BBAYear10team@clf.uk

BBAYear11team@clf.uk

You can also call the Academy on 0117 377 2700 and select option 4.

B. Urgent Enquiries

In the case of an urgent enquiry, please call the academy on 0117 377 2700, select option 4, and our receptionists will forward the call to an available member of staff. Reception is open 8am to 4:30pm.

Examples of urgent communication are:

- Any concern about the safety of your child or any other child
- If there is a change to where your child has to go after school

7. The website

The Academy website is designed to provide parents/carers, students, staff and the wider community with information about the Academy and its activities. Included on the website is:

- Term Dates
- Catering Information
- Department information
- Learning Support information
- News from around the Academy
- Policies and other important documentation
- Academy calendar
- Access for students and staff to their Academy accounts
- Letters home
- Events
- Transition Information

8. Feedback

From time to time, we will send out Parent/ Carer surveys on varying aspects of the Academy. We will use the feedback from the surveys to inform strategic planning for the academy. We urge parents/carers to take this opportunity to provide constructive feedback.

9. Dropping into the Academy

It is usually not possible for staff to see parents/carers without an appointment as they are likely to be teaching or unavailable.

Please email info@bba.clf.uk to request an appointment or contact the Year Team via the direct email address.

10. Respectful Communication

The principle is that our communication is respectful and professional. It is recognised that emotions can run high, but it is expected that all communication is respectful and staff are treated with dignity. If this is not the case, staff have the right to finish a phone call or end a meeting, once a polite warning has been given.

We will not permit conversations to be recorded electronically, if this is attempted, we will end a call/a meeting. A written record can be kept of any meeting.

As an academy we want to ensure that parents and carers are good role models for their children when they use the internet. We are particularly keen to ensure that no-one connected to the academy uses social media to bully, intimidate or cause distress to other people.

11. Communication with parents / carers who speak English as an additional language

When necessary, communication with parent/carer will be carried out using a translator or translated materials. The Academy will ensure that every effort is made to support parents/carers who speak English as an additional language at our Academy events, such as at parents' evenings and options evenings.

It may sometimes be possible to use translators who are members of staff and/or from the wider Federation, and this has proven to be an effective method of translation for students and parents in a variety of contexts.

12. Other linked policies

- Lockdown Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Guidance
- CLF Social Media Policy

13. Other relevant documents

[Understanding and Dealing with Issues Relating to Parental Responsibility \(2018\)](#)