

# LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE

## HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

This policy was approved:	May 2023
This policy will be reviewed:	May 2024
Member of staff with responsibility for review:	Carey Mayzes
This policy was consulted with:	LGB
This policy was consulted with external unions (HR policies):	
This policy was distributed to:	

## **Introduction**

The aim of this policy is to establish a shared understanding of effective home-school communication. Effective communication between the College and home is an integral part of securing academic success and positive well-being for students at Linton Village College. It also outlines procedures and expectations of behaviour between the College, parents/carers and students in line with the following principles.

## **Principles for Communication**

- To harness and foster community relationships.
- To keep staff, students, parents/carers, governors and the wider community well informed about the work of the College.
- To be open, honest, ethical and professional at all times.
- To be timely and effective.
- To use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience.
- To be compatible with LVC's core aims and values.

## **Procedures for Communication**

To ensure effective and regular communication the College provides:

- A weekly newsletter.
- Targeted SchoolComms emails.
- A regularly updated school website including College policy updates.
- The College calendar available on the College website.
- Access to live on-line assessment data and progress reports via 'Go 4 Schools'.
- Access to on-online details and deadlines for home learning via Satchel One.
- Annual Parents' Evenings and targeted Parents' Meetings.
- Linton postcards of praise to recognise specific student achievements.
- Additional information letters as required to groups or individuals.
- Monthly contributions from the Principal to parish newsletters.
- Contact home via email and telephone as and when appropriate.
- Social media updates from the College via Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter).
- Parent forums and information evenings to address specific and / or timely issues.

## **Behaviour and Protocol for Communication**

### **Staff will**

- Use an appropriately formal and polite tone in emails and letters to parents.
- Send out a letter only after it has been checked by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Respond to emails and phone messages within two full working days. Staff are not expected to reply to any message received during a weekend or holiday until the working week begins. During the week

staff are not expected to email, phone or contact parents beyond the working hours of 8.00am – 5.30pm or during other working commitments.

- Respond using a holding message if more than two days is required to investigate the matter raised.
- Consult with line managers before responding to sensitive issues raised in emails from parents/carers.
- Not reply to any email, letter or communication that is rude or aggressive in tone or content; or engage in excessive continued dialogue via email. Such emails, letters or communication will be referred to their Head of Department to reply on their behalf. If necessary Heads of Department may need to seek advice from the Senior Leadership Team.
- Inform parents of significant incidents during the school day and behaviour/or sanctions that their child has received, as required by the 'College Behaviour and Discipline Policy'.

### **Students must**

- Discuss reports and targets with parents as outlined in the College Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy.
- Bring in and present signed parental consent forms to the appropriate member of staff.
- Be honest and truthful in their communications between home and college.
- Behave in a responsible and caring manner in line with Linton Learner values: to report, in a timely manner, any inappropriate activity to the relevant organisation, e.g. website/app provider, police and/or College Safeguarding team if this activity is likely to impact upon the safety or well-being of a student at the College.
- In the event of an *emergency* if students need to contact home they must do so via reception or the Support Hub. Direct contact home with parents via mobile phone is a breach of the Home-School Communications Policy and College Mobile Phone Policy.
- Use an appropriately formal and polite tone in emails and letters to teaching staff. Students must only email staff using their LVC email address.

### **Parents/Carers should**

- Read the weekly LVC Newsletter and respond to the letters sent home.
- Sign the 'Home/School Agreement' alongside the admissions form and return to LVC.
- Update any changes to personal details on the SMS/Parent/Student App.
- Keep the College informed of changes in contact information and their child's personal circumstances.
- Attend calendared Parents' Evenings and specific invitation Parents' Meeting.
- Use an appropriately formal and polite tone in emails and letters to staff.
- Acknowledge receipt of and, where appropriate, respond to emails, phone messages and communication from the College within two full working days.
- Book appointments in advance to meet the appropriate member of College staff. Requests or demands for immediate appointments will not be met; exceptions to this will only be made in circumstances such as to Safeguarding emergencies.
- Ensure email communication is with the appropriate member of staff, as outlined on the College website. If parents/carers remain uncertain they should contact reception. Please note the College or staff will not respond to any messages sent via social media accounts.

- Support the College's policy that every teacher's main priority is to teach and support students achieve their academic potential. Excessive emailing and communication is disruptive and counterproductive.
- Inform the College if separated parents require access to reports, newsletters, 'Go4Schools' and 'Satchel One'. Requests by parents may need to be supported by relevant documentation demonstrating they are entitled to receive such information.
- Report inappropriate activity to the relevant organisation, e.g. website/app provider, police or College Safeguarding team if this activity is likely to impact upon the safety or well-being of a student at the College in a timely manner.
- In the event of an *emergency*, contact the College reception via telephone, or email, if parents/carers need to contact their child. Direct contact with students via mobile phone is a breach of the 'HomeSchool Communication Policy' and 'College Personal Mobile Device Policy'.

***In the case of emergency communication, the College will:***

- Make an urgent phone call to students' parents.

***In the case of emergency school closure, the College will:***

- In the case of school closure before the start of the College day, provide messages on the LVC website, LVC Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter) as well as the LA website ([www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk))
- In the case of school closure during the College day, provide messages via SchoolComms email, the LVC website, LVC Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter). Students will be instructed to phone/text home individually once a final decision has been made.
- In the case of an unexpected change of arrangements in clubs, fixtures or trips on the day students will be instructed to phone/text home. A College telephone will be available for student use. In exceptional circumstances, subject to staff express permission, students will be instructed to use their own phones.

## **Home-School Communication Issues**

The overwhelming majority of parents/carers are extremely supportive of the College and the work of its staff. The College endeavours to maintain a positive relationship with parents and carers; in cases where home school communication becomes challenging or unproductive it will be referred to someone more senior in the College.

The College works hard to resolve matters of dispute however in cases where parents wish to make a complaint, they should refer to the Anglian Learning's 'Complaints Procedure'.

Where parents become abusive or aggressive in their response, in whatever form of communication is being used, that communication will cease. In extreme cases it may be necessary to contact other authorities. For persistent complaints and harassment, the Anglian Learning's Complaints Policy' will be applied. Any member of the College community should be aware that raising matters on social media can make

resolution of Home-School communication issues more challenging and undermine the positive relationship the College seeks to foster.

The College does not permit electronic recordings of meetings or telephone calls by parents or staff without prior mutual consent.