



Inspiring All to Excellence

The Fierté Multi-Academy Trust

Communications Policy



Document and Version Control

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Version	Date	Amended by	Comments
01	Autumn 2019	CEO	Issued
02	Autumn 2020	CEO	Amended to represent a Trust Policy
03	Autumn 2022	CEO	See below
04	Autumn 2023	CEO	See below- removal of information

Section	Changes Made
Section 7	Removal of Covid-19 specific communications
Section 7.6	Addition of communication in relation to the Trust Attendance Policy 2022-2023
Section 8.2	The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is now named the Safeguarding Policy.

1. Introduction

1.1 Across our Trust, all schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school itself. Effective communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Objectives: All communications at the Fierté Trust should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents, and stakeholders well informed.
- Be open, honest, ethical, and professional.
- Be jargon free and easily understood by all.
- Be actioned within a reasonable time.
- Use the methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message, and audience.
- Take account of relevant Trust and school policies.
- Be compatible with our core values.

1.2 In our schools we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values, through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the significant role that parents play in supporting our schools.

1.3 We have various strategies for communicating with parents. Some of our communications are in accordance with a statutory requirement, while others simply reflect what we believe is important for our schools.

1.4 We try to make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We use an easy to-read font and add pictures wherever appropriate. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial discrimination. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our schools.

2. Parents and Carers Home School Agreements

2.1 Each school's home-school agreement has been in place in each academy since September 2019 and has been updated in September 2020. It is a requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It explains the school's aims and values, the school's responsibilities towards the children, the responsibilities of parents, and what the school expects of the children. Each individual school signs the agreement and we also ask the parent and child to sign when the child starts at school. This contract is renewed each year.

2.2 The agreement covers the standard of education in our schools, the ethos of the trust and school, and our expectations regarding attendance, behaviour, and homework. Our

governors review the agreement annually and publish the details of their review in the Governors' Annual report to parents. This is available on each school's website.

3. Annual Written Report to Parents: Children's Achievements

- 3.1 In all our schools each year we provide a written report to each child's parents on the child's progress in all curriculum subjects. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. In each of our schools we ask the children to comment on their own progress, and we ask parents to make a similar comment. We also give children in Year 2 and Year 6 (where appropriate) the details of their performance in national tests, as well as national comparisons.
- 3.2 As well as receiving the annual written report, parents meet their child's teacher each term for a parent consultation. This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes, and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement. Parents are able to see their child's work during these meetings. We encourage parents to contact their school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.
- 3.3 When children have special educational needs or EAL, or if they are making less than the expected progress, we find it helpful to meet with parents more regularly.
- 3.4 We welcome the presence of any other adult the parent wishes to invite to any school meetings to act as interpreter or as a support. We will also make any reasonable adjustments to our arrangements if this will enable a parent with a disability to participate fully in a meeting at their school, or to receive and understand a communication.
- 3.5 We will ensure that wherever possible non-English speaking parents are supported by interpreters or any other way in which any potential language barrier can be removed.

4. Local Governor Body Annual Report to Parents (this is not required to be presented on an annual basis)

- 4.1 During each school year the local governing board from each school may publish an Annual Report for their Parents. This can be at any point during the school year. Local governing boards may also hold an annual meeting for parents if more than 15 parents agree to attend, at which the report is discussed. The report must contain information relating to:
- Details of the annual meeting.
 - Action taken on resolutions made at the last annual meeting.
 - Details of the membership of the governing board, and of any vacancies.
 - Information on pupils' attendance.
 - A statement on the progress of the action plan, following the last Ofsted inspection.
 - Budget details.
 - School security information.

- Admission arrangements for children with disabilities, and arrangements to ensure that these children are not treated less favourably than others.
- Information about the progress of the school's SEND (Special Educational Needs) policy.
- A summary of the school's national test results.
- The school's targets for Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments.
- Information on the professional development of staff.
- Information relating to the school's monitoring of its data on racial equality.

5. School prospectus

5.1 Each school within our Trust produces a prospectus containing a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at each school. These are updated for each school year and are also available on each school website.

6. Public access documents in each academy

6.1 Each school makes a range of documentation available to parents. A master set will be kept in each school office, and a copy of these documents will be available on request. Documentation will consist of minutes of governors' meetings, and all individual school policies, including those that the governing body are required to draw up in relation to the following matters: charging and remissions, sex education, health and safety, curriculum, performance management, admissions, and action planning following an inspection. It also contains a range of national documentation.

7. Home-school communication in each academy

7.1 Under normal circumstances regular letters giving general details of school events and activities are sent to parents in each school and they appreciate the regularity of the contact. However, a few families do lose letters, so copies of these are kept in the school office should extras be needed.

7.2 At the beginning of each half-term in our schools all teachers write to the parents of the children in their classes with details of the work to be covered during the forthcoming half term. We invite parents to support their child's work through a range of suggested activities to be shared with the child at home. We also invite parents to take part in any educational visit that is linked to the work.

7.3 Children in all schools have a home-school diary/homework book. This enables parents to record a wide range of information that they wish to share regularly with the teacher. Teachers use the home-school diary to record homework assignments, and as a regular channel for communication with parents. In addition, we expect parents to read daily with their child/ children and to then sign the book.

7.4 All schools encourage parents to share any issues about their child at the earliest opportunity. Teachers see parents immediately, if at all possible. Where this is not possible,

the parent makes an appointment. All schools will endeavour to allow parents the opportunity to have a word with the teacher when they bring their children to school, or when they collect them after school.

- 7.5 Our schools will arrange quarterly curriculum meetings for parents. These are meetings to explain areas of school curriculum. A meeting will be held for new parents each June/July and a meeting for Year 2 and Year 6 parents each March, concerning the format of the national tests. Residential visits that Year 6/ Year 2 children make to an outdoor education centre involves a meeting with parents regarding the planning and content of the visit.
- 7.6 If a child is absent from school, and school has had no indication of the reason, the parent will be contacted on the first day of absence (by telephone, if possible) to find out the reason for the absence. If contact is not possible, parents or carers will be contacted via text message/phone call and /or email. This in accordance with our Trust Attendance Policy.

8. Communication with other schools and outside agencies

- 8.1 The Trust recognises that children have diverse needs, supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep schools informed on better ways to meet these needs, so that children may participate more fully. Support comes from medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy), from child development centres, from local doctors and specialists, and from school nurses. It also comes from various welfare-focused services, such as Educational Welfare, Social Services, Malachi, and Behaviour Intervention units.
- 8.2 As a Trust we recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our schools should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify, and help abused children. So, when any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Head teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may share this information with the Social Services. (Also see Safeguarding Policy).
- 8.3 Schools will hold information on pupils in our schools, and from time to time are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details have been sent to parents in each school about the types of data they hold, why they hold that data, and who they may pass it on to. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 2018. Parents have a right to view the information schools hold and have contact details of the agencies to which any information is passed.
- 8.4 Toward the end of their final term in Year 6, schools will pass on information about the children to their intended secondary schools. They will try to give a view of the whole child, and include their expected national test results, their strengths and weaknesses, their interests, and responsibilities (e.g., library monitor, football captain, school council

representative, school newspaper editor, playground buddy, etc.). There is also an electronic transfer of further information about the child, organised by the government.

9. Internal communication within our schools and responsibilities

This section details the responsibilities of the distinct groups within the school.

Senior leadership team (SLT)

- To ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner and via appropriate channels, where practicable face to face.
- To ensure that staff have the relevant information available to communicate with colleagues effectively.
- To maintain open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comment from all staff.
- To keep parents informed of developments and concerns.

All staff

- To communicate regularly with each other, preferably face to face, to ensure information is available and understood within the context of the classroom and working environment.
- To ensure they are informed and have access to information in order to be as effective as possible in their role and to support their work within the school.
- To use open channels of two-way communication to keep the leadership team and colleagues informed.

Internal Methods of Communication

- All staff receive an information folder providing them with valuable information about organisation and procedures within the school.
- An integrated programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff both formal and informal: e.g., teachers'/ staff briefings and meetings, teaching assistant meetings, Office meetings, Key Stage meetings, whole staff meetings and Forums through Teams (Office 365).
- All formal meetings should be structured and minuted and members invited to contribute to the agenda.
- E-mail is a quick, effective way of communicating information however it should not replace face to face meetings where discussion is required.
- Written communications should be placed in pigeonholes, in the staffroom, which staff must check daily and clear regularly and where possible e-mailed to staff.
- Staff meetings & SLT (Senior Leadership Team) meetings take place every week. Events are discussed in advance at meetings, but staff also have the responsibility to check future actions.
- Support Staff meeting and Office meetings take place regularly within each Trust school.

- Weekly Overviews are placed in the pigeonholes in the staffroom weekly and are emailed to staff
- Reminders or letters to individual parents are sent to classes to be given out by the class teachers and must be given to children the same day. Every class must have a system for distributing letters and other materials to go home with the children.
- The schools use Integris and Teachers2Parents to communicate with parents by text or e-mail. (Could be added here?)
- A list of all those not subscribing to Integris will be kept by the office & hard copies sent to all those on the list.
- Telephone contacts to the office from parents will be recorded on a Parental Communication Sheet by office and given to appropriate member of staff. Parental Communication Procedure should be followed.

External methods of communication

- Schools have many lines of communication to maintain with parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Our aim is to have clear and effective communications with all parents and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the key role that parents play in supporting school.
- Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional.
- To this end parents should always be addressed in an appropriate manner.
- All staff should not accept friendship requests from parents on social media. All staff should follow Policy and Procedures.
- We will try to make written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias.

9.1 So that staff have a comprehensive insight into all aspects of school life, there is a timetable in each staff room of the week's activities, and a whiteboard for the day's messages. These are updated on an ongoing basis. All trust schools hold an additional briefing for all staff and key aspects of safeguarding, health and safety are communicated to all staff.

9.2 All school procedures are detailed in a Staff Handbook, and these are shared with all new members of staff at their induction. Communication in relation to staff sickness or absence and contact details for key staff are also given.

9.3 Written communications continue to be delivered through pigeonholes, but emailing is also used extensively throughout our Trust. All staff will have access to a Fierté or school email address and these are expected to be checked through the school day and normal working hours. All correspondence is expected to be respectful and following GDPR and safeguarding protocols as well as the Staff Communication and Email Protocol.

- 9.4 New members of staff or supply teachers can find additional information in each school's Staff Handbook.
- 9.5 Staff members' personal details will not be shared with other members of staff.

10. Use of IT in communication

- 10.1 Electronic Communication in each academy is via Teams (Microsoft). This is an agreed Trust wide system for communication between and across all schools. Information is passed between different forums and is forming the basis to meet remote learning requirements.
- 10.2 Trust schools use the Internet and e-mail, and each school has a specific school website. In addition, there is a Trust website. This is used to support communication with parents and the wider community.
- 10.3 All school members can communicate with others through the Internet/ Office 365 and Teams. There are many benefits, but also a number of possible dangers. Rules for the use of the Internet are contained in our Safe Use of the Internet policy. Safeguards in each school include constant adult supervision. Sites in our schools are filtered by our service provider, controlled links, and the use of child-friendly search engines.
- 10.4 Telephone calls: Office staff will not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency.
- 10.5 The Internet may be used in lessons (and remotely) to support learning and teaching and for interactive teaching programs. Approved resources e.g., Oak Academy will support remote learning.
- 10.6 Each school websites provide information about each individual school and are updated regularly with communications to parents and the wider community. Essential statutory details are contained within.
- 10.7 Members of staff, classes, and individual older children will all have their own school provided e-mail accounts.
- 10.8 Parents and pupils are required to sign permission slips for their child to use the Internet in each school. A record of those who do not have permission is held by each class teacher, and by each school office.
- 10.9 Twitter and Facebook support trust leaders communicating vital information, updates, and celebrations of learning. In addition, they support the sharing of vacancies across the Trust. Social Media Sites/Blogs: Staff are advised not to communicate with parents via social networking sites or accept them as "friends." Staff will not accept pupils or ex-pupils as "friends" and follow Policy and Procedures.

11. Use of photographs and names

- 11.1 Permission from parents is needed for photographs to be used in and around all schools for many purposes, including displays and displays of practical work i.e., art or technology projects, P.E. evidence and records of important school events.
- 11.2 Schools may use photographs of children in the school prospectus and the local or national press may, on occasions, publish photographs of children participating in events at school.
- 11.3 Parental permission must be obtained before using photographs of children or their work as detailed in 11.1 and 11.2 above. All parents must sign a disclosure before giving permission for a photo to be used. Lists of those children for whom permission has NOT been given will be held by each class teacher, and by school offices.
- 11.4 Photographs will be checked to ensure that they are suitable i.e., photographs of children in swim would be deemed as unsuitable.
- 11.5 Photographs used will not be captioned with children's names unless individual permission for the usage of forenames is sought from parents on specific occasions.

12. Monitoring and review

- 12.1 This policy will be regularly monitored, and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if required.