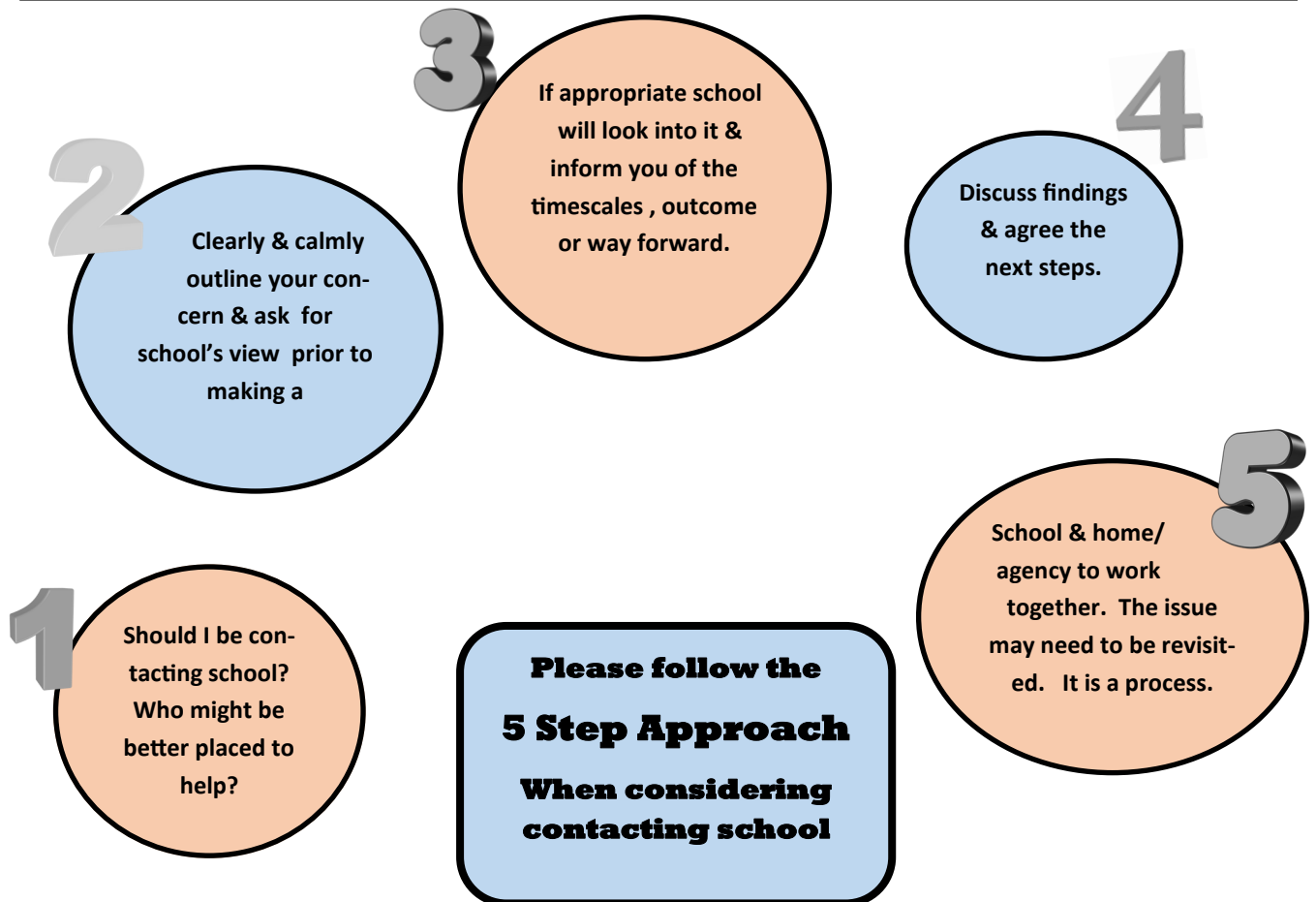


OUR COMMUNICATION POLICY



COMMUNICATION

Communication is a fundamental aspect of school life and we recognise the importance it plays in creating a positive, purposeful and safe environment for all. We all have a responsibility to communicate in a manner that is respectful, thoughtful & kind.

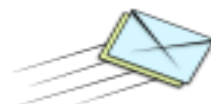


WCHS

Our Communication Policy supports our mission statement:

We want our school to be : a safe place where all students make great progress because of the school's impact; all stakeholders buy in, and are committed to excellence; and where our *'Climbing Higher'* vision is evident in the outstanding outcomes, ambitious culture and respectful ethos of the school.

The following principles should ensure that we can effectively support our students with their learning, and promote staff and student wellbeing, offer clarity to all members of our community and create a safe, sustainable and purposeful environment for our staff.



All communication should be kind, thoughtful & respectful

There is no place for aggressive behaviour or threatening language. Please refer to our Parent/Carer Code of Conduct.

Consider which communication method is best for the situation.

Some conversations are best face to face, whilst others, given their nature may be quickly resolved over the phone or via email.

Our Business hours are 8.00 am — 4.45 pm

Staff are not expected to be available in evenings or weekends. We strongly recommend using the schedule send function outside of those hours. Colleagues have been advised that there is no expectation to respond to emails outside of their normal working hours

We will respond within 3– 5 working days

We will prioritise communications based on need but must stress that we cannot operate as an emergency service.

Parents & carers must book an appointment with a member of staff in advance. The school will determine who is best placed to meet a parent/carers.

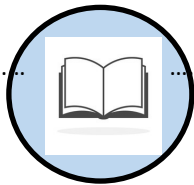
Many of our staff will be teaching or in meetings during the course of a school day. Anyone arriving to reception unannounced will be advised to request a meeting by contacting reception. If you have an appointment please ensure you arrive on time to ensure you can be seen.

Which communication method should I use?

We encourage all parents/carers to use EduLink One wherever possible and this can be found on the homepage of our website. This will allow us to monitor and manage all communications. Our communications policy provides a helpful guide with regards who to contact as well as information relating to other methods of communications.

* It is important to note that Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are the school's platforms to share news and celebrate achievements. Any concerns or queries should be raised via the appropriate communication method and all comments made should adhere to the guidance within our communications policy.

Why do we have a Communications Policy?



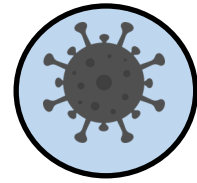
We want to support your children

Working together to ensure communication is effective is in the best interests of our students.



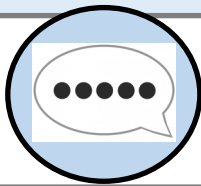
Demands far outweigh our resources

We send and receive a high number of communications per day and this inevitably can detract from our core business of educating, nurturing and keeping children safe.



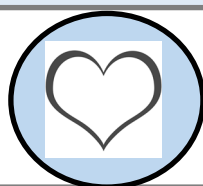
To clearly outline what we can and cannot do

The needs of our community are greater than ever but whilst we are committed to help young people and the families, we must redefine expectations and acknowledge our limitations.



You make all the difference

We greatly value the role you play. Support with home learning, revision, preparation for school events and assessments are all incredibly helpful. Your listening ear and knowledge of your children are invaluable.



The school cannot control social media use

We have provided guidance to support parents with managing their child's social media use at home. Issues arising from social media use must not be allowed to dominate our time, energy and focus. We do not have capacity to investigate all issues that happen outside the school day.



We'd love to hear the positives.

If you do find a few moments however, our staff always love to hear what is going well in school.



Finally,

We would like to thank you for engaging with and adhering to our policy. Your support, trust and understanding are greatly appreciated.



WHITWORTH COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Communications Policy

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Date effective from: | Summer 2025 |
| Prepared by: | Mr A Oliver |
| Date of next review: | Summer Term 2026 |

Introduction & Aims

This policy aims to promote the essential partnership between the school, parents/carers, staff, students and the wider community through efficient and effective communication. Good communication should allow and encourage all stakeholders support our overarching aim of 'Climbing Higher'.

The school believes that engaging and working with all stakeholders, particularly our parents/carers, is vital in our role to provide children with an excellent education and a safe learning environment, as well as helping our students become well rounded citizens with a strong set of values. We believe that effective communication underpins our Schools Expectations. We remain committed to being an open and approachable school that engages with our community and puts children at the heart of our decision making. As a school, we also greatly value your support in enabling us to do this in an effective, timely and sustainable manner.

Key Features of our Communications Policy

Our Parent/Carer Code of Conduct is displayed in the reception area and is shared with all families alongside our Communications Policy.

We strive to be an open and approachable school that remains committed to engaging with all stakeholders. We would like to thank the overwhelming majority of visiting and parents//carers who are consistently pleasant and polite in all their communications with the school. However, we have a duty of care to our staff as well as to our students and we remain wholeheartedly committed to both.

All staff at school are expected to show respect for everyone that they come into contact with during the course of their duties by being respectful at all times. They will endeavour to deal effectively with reasonable requests they receive from visitors and callers to the school. The school also expects all those who visit or contact our school to treat our staff respectfully at all times. The same level of respect is expected with email communication. All those who may wish to communicate with our school must do so in a manner that does not discriminate against any member of our diverse community and consistently adheres to our Communications Policy. In particular, any correspondence should have due regard to the 5 step approach.

We take any aggressive behaviour or threatening language towards any member of our staff seriously, whether this is during a telephone conversation, email or during a visit to the school. If a caller or visitor's behaviour is deemed discriminatory, rude, abusive, aggressive or raises their voice to any member of our community, they will be advised to stop their behaviour. If the behaviour persists, we will terminate the call, ask the visitor to leave the premises, or bar the visitor from the site. The school may also take any other action outline in our Parent/Carer Conduct of Conduct.

Parents/carers and visitors should be aware that a request for an appointment must be made in advance via reception if they wish to see a member of staff. We greatly value the support of parents/carers and the wider school community and thank you for adhering to our policies and standards.

What to do if I have a concern—5 step approach

1. Should I be contacting school? Who might be better place to help?

Why do we have this step?

The school is keen to play its role in supporting all students but parents/carers must also acknowledge and accept that we do not have capacity to deal with all issues, particularly those that take place outside of school. On a regular basis, the school is asked to resolve issues that would be better placed with another service. We need the support of the Police, the NHS, Children's Social Care and parents/carers to reduce the volume of these communications and allow us to prioritise our workload efficiently.

2. Clearly and calmly outline your concern and ask for the school's view prior to making a decision

Why do we have this step?

We appreciate that emotions can run high when something has happened that may involve your child and we remain committed to supporting students and their families. However, it is important that any concern is presented to school in a clear and calm manner and avoids making any assumptions prior to the school being given the opportunity to gain a better understanding of events.

3. If appropriate, school will look into it and inform you of the timescales, outcome or way forward.

Why do we have this step?

The school will outline any actions and inform you of the timescales involved. This will depend on existing commitments and the urgency of the situation. Whilst we appreciate that a quick resolution is in everyone's best interests, there needs to be a recognition of the extensive commitments colleagues have. Patience and understanding are a key feature of this step and are greatly appreciated.

4. Discuss findings and agree on the next steps

Why do we have this step?

Where appropriate, a member of staff will discuss the situation having considered all perspectives and will seek to outline any necessary support as well as any associated sanction that may be felt necessary. There are likely to be actions for all parties involved. All views will be listened to carefully and form part of the decision making process. The school cannot share details of actions taken regarding other students.

5. School and home/agency to work together. The concern may need to be revisited. It is a process

Why do we have this step?

Support is a process that may need to be revisited and refined depending on how the situation develops for those concerned. We expect all parties to continue to work together, to share information promptly, and remain committed to collectively finding a positive resolution.

Communication as a school

How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents/carers up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school. We recommend that all parents/carers monitor the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

EduLink

Why we use this method

WCHS uses EduLink as a communication tool between parents/carers and students, allowing access to a range of information including:

- School reports
- Upcoming school events/trips

- School closures (for example bad weather / strike action)
- School surveys or consultations
- Newsletters from the Headteacher
- Timetables
- Attendance
- Homework

Why it helps:

We believe it provides parents with access to a wide range of information relating to their child in a clear and effective manner. It reduces the number of phone calls and emails being sent and also allows parents the opportunity to provide or up-date vital information such as contact details and attendance information.

Text Message

Why we use this method

Text messages are used where there is a short message that is quite often time sensitive.

Why it helps:

Text messages give us greater flexibility and allow the school to contact at short notice, particularly for unforeseen circumstances such as the weather or as a reminder of a previous communication.

Social Media

Why we use this method

The schools uses Facebook and Twitter as a positive tool to celebrate school life, events or students achievements. Subscription to these is not expected and therefore key messages will be relayed primarily through formal school communication channels eg. Edulink/school website.

Why it helps:

We are aware that social media has the power to reach a broader audience and it remains a privilege of our role to celebrate students' success. Whilst there are always risks posed when engaging with social media, provided we continue to use it as a one-way method of communication we believe it adds additional value to school life.

School Website

Why we use this method

The school website provides a range of information about the school. In the first instance, parents/carers should check the website for answers to general queries. The website includes information on the following areas :

- School times and term dates
- School aims
- Admissions
- Uniform
- Policies
- Home Learning
- Pupil Premium Information
- Staff Vacancies
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information

- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information

The school calendar is house within our website, alongside other features that are regularly visited throughout the course of any academic year. It is the primary source of information for all parents/carers or those with an interest in the school.

Phone calls

Why we use this method:

Our school staff regularly communicate with parents and carers to discuss individual information relating to their child.

Why it helps: We know that some communications are better dealt with verbally due to their nature. A telephone conversation allows for all points to be raised and considered and often leads to a positive resolution.

Letters to specific parents /carers

Why we use this method:

To provide /seek information about a particular student

Reports

Why we use this method:

Each academic year, parents and carers receive a report on a termly basis which provides information on Attitude to learning (ATL) and progress. These will be available via Edulink to both parents/carers and students.

Why it helps: This provides specific an up to date information in relation to progress and attitude to learning.

Meetings

Why we use this method:

Parents and carers are able to attend parents' evenings via School Cloud. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievements and progress, the curriculum or schemes of learning, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The 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 students with special educational needs (SEND), those who are looking after, or who have other specific requirements may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

How parents/carers can communicate with the school

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with school. Parents who need help communicating with the school are invited to discuss any additional support they may need. We will try to identify a family member, member of staff or where possible, an external agency, to provide the following :

- School announcements and communications being translated into additional languages
- Organising an interpreter for a meeting or a phone call.

We will endeavour to make any additional arrangements as necessary. Please contact the school reception to discuss these

Communication with your child during the school day

Parents/carers can contact school during the day if they have an urgent message for their child.

How students should communicate in school

Positive relationships between staff and students underpin our friendly, supportive and productive learning environment. When communicating with a member of staff, students should :

- Address the member of staff with their formal title e.g. Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Sir etc.
- Be respectful. Students should not talk over, answer back, raise their voice or walk away before the conversation has concluded.
- Follow all instructions at the first time of asking

Students are expected to check their Edulink One at home at least once a day. Staff and students should only communicate through Edulink or school email, not personal email addresses.

All students should also be aware of our email protocol:

- Complete the subject line
- use the formal title of the member of staff eg. Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Sir, etc
- Use standard English, avoiding abbreviations or slang
- Sign email off appropriately with a 'thank you' or 'kind regards'

Communications with parents/carers during the school day

In line with the school's mobile phone policy, students are not allowed mobile phones on the school site. Provision will be made , where appropriate, for students to use the school phones to contact home.

Communication with peers

In line with the school's expectations, respect should be a central theme in all interactions with peers. Communications with other students should be kind and respectful.

We expect the same standards of behaviour from all members of our community beyond the school day. We recognise that social media is a communication method that brings both positives and negatives. It is not our role as a school to investigate incidents that take place outside school and strongly recommend that you adopt the same principles online as you would in school.

We have provided a range of advice for students and parents in relation to safe and appropriate use of social media that can be found on our website.

Contact us Guidance

Who should I contact?

The guide below provides a helpful list of the options available to you. In all communications we ask that you share your child's name, their form, your name and the reason for your contact with the school. We ask that this communication adheres to steps one and two of the 'What to do if I have a concern—A 5 step approach'.

| I have a question about | Who you need to contact |
|--|--|
| A safeguarding concern | Designated Safeguarding Leads Mr A Kewin Mr P Bland Mrs J Ashworth Mr A Oliver |
| Curriculum or subject query | Curriculum Leader/ Subject Teacher |
| My child's wellbeing/pastoral support | Pastoral Manager/Form Tutor |
| Payments/Parent Pay | Finance Officer |
| EduLink Queries/Accounts | Reception/Office Manager |
| School Trips | Trip Leader |
| Uniform/Lost & Found | Reception |
| IT | Email the IT department at: |
| Attendance & Absence Requests | Attendance Team |
| Special Educational Needs (SEN) | SENDCo |
| After School Clubs | Reception |
| School events/school calendar | We would ask that you check the school website in the first instance |
| Request a phone call/meeting | Reception |
| General (something other than the above) | The school Reception team will direct this to the most appropriate person |
| Exams & exam results | Exams Officer |
| Careers, & work experience | Ms Grenaghan |
| Admissions | Headteacher's PA |