

Home College

Communication Policy

Version 1.1 – April 2025

This policy outlines the principles and guidelines for communication between ESPA College, The Social Hub and parents/carers to support student's learning and well-being. It aims to foster **open, respectful and effective communication** while ensuring staff maintain healthy workplace boundaries. This policy is based on the understanding that **colleges and parents share the responsibility of achieving the best outcomes for students**.

1. Principles of Home-College Communication

- Communication should be two-way, ensuring parents can share their perspectives on supporting learning.
- College communications should be structured to promote positive dialogue about learning.
- Messages should be personalised, learning-focused and framed positively (e.g., celebrating achievements).
- The College should maintain a collaborative and proactive approach when engaging with parents.
- Communication strategies should be reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.
- The College will strive to communicate in ways that empower parents—reinforcing their role as valued partners in education.
- Communication should be discrete, respectful and sensitive, avoiding any form of stigma, blame, or discouragement.
- The College will accommodate the needs of parents who may face language or literacy barriers.

2. Communication Expectations

To ensure effective communication, the following guidelines apply:

- **Contact:** Parents should initially contact the student's Keyworker, designated tutor, or designated learning support worker for any daily concerns. If additional support is required, the matter can be escalated to the College site's management team.
- **How to Contact Staff:** The primary methods for contacting staff are via the College sites office phone number. Individual staff ESPA email addresses may be provided for specific purposes and must adhere to this policy.
- **Unacceptable Communication Channels:** Personal social media, WhatsApp, or text messages to non-work devices are not appropriate and may not receive a response. Any messages received through these channels will be redirected to official communication methods.
- **Response Time Expectations:** The College aims to respond to parent inquiries within a College day during College term time, excluding weekends and bank holidays.

3. Types of Communication

- **Email Communication:** Staff will use **automatic email replies** during absences or outside working hours to reinforce communication expectations.
- **Telephone Communication:** Voicemails should include the student's name, tutor group and a brief message outlining the reason for the call. Response times follow the expectations outlined above.
- **In-Person Communication:** Meetings with tutors should be scheduled in advance through the College office to ensure staff availability. Parent-tutor meetings will be held as required to discuss student progress.
- **General College Communications:** Information on College trips, consent forms, newsletters and other matters will be communicated via phone call, email, letters or daily communication books. These channels will reinforce healthy communication boundaries.

4. Content of College Communications

- Communications will provide parents with **updates on their student's progress**.
- Where relevant, they will include information on **learning topics** to encourage home-College engagement.
- Updates may include **progress reports, target sharing and study strategies**.
- Attendance-related communications will be **personalised**, informing parents about absences and seeking their support in improving attendance.

5. Responsibilities

Parents/Carers:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy.
- Ensure that communication with the College is **respectful**.
- Use the appropriate communication channels as outlined.
- Be mindful of staff working hours and response time expectations.
- Engage in positive dialogue about learning programmes.
- Update the College with any changes in contact details.

College Staff:

- Adhere to this policy.
- Communicate with parents in a **timely, respectful and professional manner**.
- Use approved communication channels.
- Set clear expectations for parental involvement in learning.
- Log significant communications as per College procedures.
- Direct parents to the appropriate contact channels and methods.

Senior Leadership Team:

- Regularly review and update this policy.
- Ensure staff and parents are informed about this policy.
- Provide staff with training and support for effective parental engagement.
- Address any breaches of this policy consistently and fairly.

6. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the College Leadership Team and updated as necessary. Parent and staff feedback will be considered in the review process.

By working together with open, respectful and constructive communication, we aim to ensure the best educational experience and outcomes for all students.

Appendix 1

If you have any concerns, questions, or information to share about your young person, please follow the procedure below to ensure they receive the best possible support:

First Point of Contact: Class Tutor or Designated Learning Support Assistant
The tutor group staff team knows the student best and can usually provide the most relevant and personalised support.

Second Point of Contact: College Site Management Teams
College Site Management Teams and administrative staff can offer a broad range of advice and support. They can also seek additional assistance from colleagues within the College, including the admissions department, Quality Manager or our Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT).
College Site Management Teams and administrative staff can also help coordinate and facilitate meetings with some external professionals.

Third Point of Contact: Senior College Leadership
Vice College Principal
or
College Principal

This process ensures that students will receive the most appropriate and effective support at each stage.