



Communications Policy

Date of adoption of this policy	9 th December 2025
Policy approved by	Board of Trustees
Date of last review of this policy	12 th November 2025
Date for next review of this policy	9 th December 2026

Communications policy

- 1 **Professional boundaries:** Professional boundaries must be maintained at all times and in all communications under this policy.

Communications with the media

- 2 **The media:** You must not make contact with or communicate with any member of the press or media or anyone so connected, on behalf of the Trust or any of its Academies unless you have obtained the prior permission of the Head.
- 3 **Authorised:** The employees authorised to give press releases will be the Principal
- 4 **Statement:** If you are approached by any member of the press or media to make a statement on behalf of the Trust or one of its Academies you should decline to make any statement whatsoever and refer the matter immediately to the Principal

Communications between staff

- 5 When communicating with other staff members, you will be required to comply with the following guidance:
 - 5.1 Use respectful, collegial language in all interactions.
 - 5.2 Follow agreed school procedures for meetings, planning, and information sharing.
 - 5.3 Communicate concerns or disagreements privately and constructively.
 - 5.4 Use approved internal channels (school email and staff meetings).
 - 5.5 Confidential matters must not be discussed in public areas or with unauthorised personnel.
- 6 The SLT will only communicate with staff in face-to-face meetings and by email during school day between Monday and Friday. Staff are also encouraged to communicate with SLT during this time. SLT will schedule emails between 8:00am-6:00pm and only email if necessary. SLT will only reply to staff emails between these hours.
- 7 As part of staff wellbeing, we have minimised meetings and do not have morning briefings. Staff are advised to check their work emails before work and at least once before the end of the school day, for any important messages.
- 8 SLT will not communicate with staff via social media including WhatsApp.
- 9 Whole-school communication is via email, where necessary, and sent via APSolStaff email to include everyone. Whole school communication will not be done via social media or any social apps such as WhatsApp.

- 10 Staff can contact SLT in person or by email. For urgent matters contact the Headteacher in person or by phone.

Communications with parents/carers

- 11 All communications with parents or carers should be through school email, school phone, or at scheduled meetings. Staff should not use personal phones, email addresses or social media to contact parents or carers. (see Acceptable use policy)
- 12 Responses to any communications from parents or carers should be within two working days. Where matters are urgent, please speak with the parent at pick-up or drop-off to avoid escalation.
- 13 Written communications with parents or carers should be kept clear and professional. Overly casual language, sarcasm, or unnecessary detail should be avoided.
- 14 If matters are sensitive or challenging, these should be escalated to a member of the SLT or the Principal.
- 15 Any significant interactions, especially concerning student wellbeing or behaviour, should be recorded in accordance with school procedures – CPOMS.

Communications with students

- 16 Staff should not engage in any personal or one-to-one communications with students via any digital platforms outside of school systems (See Staff Code of Contact, Safeguarding policy)
- 17 Lone working with students should be avoided, unless agreed with the SLT.
- 18 Appropriate language must be used at all times in communications with students. This should include:
 - 18.1 Avoiding words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo, avoiding displays of affection either personally or in writing
 - 18.2 Praising and correcting students respectfully and constructively in line with the school behaviour policy.
 - 18.3 Avoiding any words or actions that are over-familiar
 - 18.4 Avoiding the use of sarcasm, aggressive or threatening language.
 - 18.5 Using clear, age-appropriate language and instructions.

Right to anonymity

- 19 **Teachers' right to anonymity:** Teachers have the legal right to anonymity when facing allegations of criminal wrongdoing involving a registered pupil of the Trust until such

time as they are formally charged with an offence. The right to anonymity has been introduced by law to protect teachers against malicious allegations.

- 20 **Criminal offence:** It is a criminal offence for any person to publish information that could lead the public to identify the teacher concerned. Publication of information includes any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public. Therefore any statement made by you to a member of the public which leads to a teacher's loss of anonymity could potentially result in your criminal prosecution. In particular, messages posted on social media regarding the allegation and those involved, even if not named directly, could contravene the law.
- 21 **Criminal sanction:** If you are found to have breached the teacher's right to anonymity you may be personally liable to criminal prosecution and a maximum fine of £5,000 as well as disciplinary action in accordance with the Trust's procedures.
- 22 **The public:** In addition to the prohibition on making statements to the media you must not at any time make any statement or publish any information in any form to any person, group, company or organisation, whether on your own behalf or on behalf of the Trust or one of its Academies which includes in staff meetings, parent meetings or any conversation regarding any incident or allegation:
- 22.1 involving any current or former member of staff or pupil of the Trust; and
- 22.2 which is under investigation by the Trust and / or the relevant authorities or is likely to be the subject of such an investigation.
- 23 In particular you must under no circumstances divulge the name or any other information which could reveal the identity of a member of staff accused of a criminal offence involving a pupil or any information that could identify the pupil making the allegation save for in accordance with the whistleblowing policy, if appropriate.

Breaches of this policy

- 24 **Gross misconduct:** Any action taken in contravention of this policy may constitute gross misconduct.
- 25 **Reporting your concerns:** Nothing in this policy shall prevent you from disclosing any safeguarding concern in accordance with the Trust's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures and whistleblowing policies. Reporting your concerns in accordance with these procedures is actively encouraged by the Trust (see Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy)
- 26 **Statements to proper authorities:** Nothing in this policy shall prevent you from giving a statement to the police or such other proper authority in co-operation with any safeguarding or criminal investigation.