



Vyners School

Stakeholder Communication Policy 2024

Vyners School recognises the importance of clear and timely communication with its stakeholders (parents/carers, students, governors, members of the local community and outside agencies) and is committed to being open and accessible to all those who have an interest in the school.

This policy sets out the ways in which the school will facilitate this two-way dialogue.

Methods of Communication

There are a number of ways in which stakeholders can routinely access information about the school:

- The school website (www.vynersschool.org.uk) contains a range of information about the school, including school prospectuses, letters home and key school policies.
- Regular headteacher and year leader updates are emailed to all parents/carers for whom the school holds a valid email address and posted on the school website. A weekly Sixth Form bulletin is also issued on Fridays.
- The school will issue a range of 'letters home' during the year. These cover more specific issues relating to individual departments or year groups, proposed trips etc. These letters will be sent electronically and posted on the school website. Hard copy letters will not be routinely issued to parents and carers. The school undertakes to ensure that each letter contains a clear point of contact for further queries on the particular issue being communicated.
- Progress checks are issued three times each year for all students. This document contains key information on how individual students are progressing, and the attitude they are displaying towards their learning whilst in school.
- All parents and carers are given access to their child's information via EduLink, which is updated each day and holds the following information:
 - Personal contact information for the child
 - Medical and allergen information for the child
 - Emergency contact information
 - Behaviour and attendance information
 - A copy of the child's timetable
 - Details of external examination entries and results (Year 9 and above)
 - Progress check data

- Each year group will have an online parents evening in the autumn or spring term and a tutor information evening in the autumn term. These events are a key opportunity for parents and carers to come into school and learn about key events in their child's education that year and to discuss their child's progress directly with a member of the teaching staff. The events also provide an opportunity for parents to raise any other issues with a member of the Leadership Team. **We expect all parents and carers to attend these events.**

When events take place virtually, information regarding booking arrangements will be sent out at least two weeks before the event.

- Targeted open evenings will be run to support the options process in years 8 and 9, as well as open evenings to support transition for Year 6 and Year 11 students. **We expect all parents and carers to participate fully in relevant events.**
- The school subscribes to an automated texting service, which is used to send parents notification that their child has not been registered in school or that they need to attend an after school detention. **These are important messages and it is important that school holds an up to date mobile phone number for the primary point of parental contact at all times. Parents and carers are asked to review this information via edulink on a regular basis.**
- Details of home learning tasks can be found on Google Classroom and if relevant should be written in the Student Planner. These are both key methods of communication and parents are asked to check them both regularly. (Only Year 7 students have a planner as standard issue). The Student Planner may be used to communicate non-urgent messages to a child's tutor, or to Student Services.

Other Methods of Contacting the School

Should the communication channels above not provide you with the information you require, or you have a specific issue to discuss with a member of staff, please contact the school as follows:

Concerns over pastoral / curriculum issues	Relevant subject teacher or form tutor
Issues regarding a form tutor or subject teacher	Year Leader / Subject Leader
Concerns relating to a Year Leader / Subject Leader	Assistant Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
Matters concerns the administrative running of the school (including data protection issues)	Business Manager

Queries or issues can be raised by telephone (01895 234342), by email office@vynersschool.org.uk, by letter or in person (an appointment will be required).

All Year Leaders, Subject Leaders and form tutors can additionally be contacted via the 'contact us' page on the school website.

Feedback / Consultation

The school is, from time to time, required to consult parents and carers on specific matters relating to the operation of the school. Previous examples include our uniform policy, Behaviour Policy, the structure of the school day and our admissions policy.

These consultation exercises will be clearly communicated via both a letter home to all students and via prominent posting on the school website. **Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to these exercises before the stated deadline.**

The school will also run regular feedback surveys. Please do take the time to contribute to these; your views are important to us.

Response Times

During term time, the school undertakes to send a substantive reply to most queries within 5 working (i.e. school) days. In many cases, we will be able to respond to you much more quickly.

An initial acknowledgement will be sent within the first 2 working days reassuring you that your query has been received. If it is not possible to send a full reply within 5 working days (for instance, information needs to be sought from a third party in order to be able to fully answer your question), you will be informed of this.

In the interests of staff wellbeing, the school does not expect its staff to respond to emails or make phone calls home either **before 8am or after 5pm**. Staff are similarly not expected to respond to messages over the weekend.

During school holidays, staff will access their email much more infrequently. The school will endeavour to ensure that essential information, particularly concerning exam result arrangements, is clearly posted on the school website.

Expectations of Parents/Carers

It is very important that the school maintains up to date contact details for parents and carers (particularly an emergency mobile phone number and a valid email address). This enables us to contact you quickly if your child is unwell. It also enables the school to communicate effectively with you via electronic means. Parents are asked to review this information via edulink on a regular basis.

The school understands that parental concerns are important and that a failure to immediately speak with the relevant member of staff can cause anxiety and frustration. Many members of the teaching staff will however be teaching all day and offer additional support to students through running after school or lunchtime activities. All of these activities, by their nature, limit the ability of teaching staff to respond immediately to parents and carers.

Parents are asked not to contact members of staff via unofficial channels, including Social Media platforms. This respects the privacy of our staff outside school hours and also enables them to respond effectively to you, with all the necessary information to hand. The school does not respond to any comments that are posted via social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or Twitter.

When contacting the school about an issue, please give us as much information as possible. Information about the nature of your concern or what has happened, when it took place, who was involved and what you would like us to do to resolve the issue is all very helpful and will enable the school to respond to you more quickly.

Parents and carers are reminded that the school has a duty of confidentiality to all its students. Particularly where pastoral issues are concerned, a parent should not expect to receive detailed information about other students.

Parents and carers who wish to meet with a member of staff regarding an issue are asked to make an appointment to do so. Particularly for members of teaching staff, their teaching timetable prohibits them taking 'ad hoc' meetings. If you feel the issue is urgent, the school will endeavour to deal with the issue as quickly as possible. Parents should not, however, expect to be seen immediately if they turn up at school Reception without an appointment.

Parents and carers are also asked to maintain an appropriate standard of courtesy. The vast majority of parents/carers are supportive of the school, its teachers, other members of staff, its students and their parents and act in a reasonable way. Occasionally, however, a negative attitude is expressed in an aggressive, verbally abusive or physically abusive way towards members of the school community. This is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Vyners School requires its teachers and other members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations, attempting to defuse the situation wherever possible, and to seek the involvement of other members of staff as appropriate. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of harassment, violence, intimidation or abuse.

Examples of the types of behaviour which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated include:

- shouting, either in person or over the telephone;
- using intimidating language or behaviour;
- using threatening language or behaviour;
- using abusive language or behaviour;
- using insulting language or behaviour;
- using aggressive or offensive hand gestures;
- swearing;
- any other behaviour likely to cause anybody witnessing it (including the recipient) alarm, distress or to fear that violence may be used against them or others.

Staff are authorised to end a telephone conversation or meeting where they are being subjected to aggressive or abusive language or behaviour.

A separate policy is in place setting out the school's response to unacceptable behaviour on the school site. This may be accessed via the school website.

Parents/carers with Dual Roles

A number of parents / carers also hold positions as school Governors, or as members of staff.

Where this is the case, it is important that both the school and the parent/carer respect the boundaries of each role. The following protocols should generally be followed:

- Scheduled appointments should be made to discuss issues relating to the student. This gives both parties the opportunity to prepare properly for the discussion.
- Unless of a very general nature, discussions about individual students should be conducted in private, not in public areas such as corridors or the staff room.
- Unless relating to an emergency, parents are asked not to use paid school time to undertake parental responsibilities.

Formal Complaints Procedure

The school encourages all stakeholders to raise their concerns on an informal basis in the first instance as, in many cases, concerns can be quickly and satisfactorily resolved this way. Where stakeholders feel that this route is not addressing their concerns, they may have recourse to the school's formal complaints procedure, a copy of which is available from the school website.

Approval / Revision History

Revision date	By	Summary of Changes Made	Ratified by governors	Date of next Review
September 2021	Nicola Harvey	Mainly updates regarding current processes	October 2021	October 2023
November 2023	Karen Williams	Updates regarding processes.	March 2024	March 2026