



LYDIATE
LEARNING
TRUST

Communication Policy (LLT)



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TRUST

ENGAGE, ENABLE,
EMPOWER

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1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Lydiate Learning Trust is committed to the promotion of effective communication between Students, members of Staff, Parents/Carers, Stakeholders, Directors, Governors, and all members of the Lydiate Learning Trust community and beyond.

Our objectives are to:

- Have a clear and professional communication strategy in place which will help Lydiate Learning Trust to keep parents/carers well-informed about their child's educational progress and any other matters related to their child's overall well-being.
- Make our written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible. We seek to avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of discrimination.
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional using jargon-free, plain English that can be easily understood.
- Ensure there is a robust process in place for consultation between the Trust Board, Academies, Parents, Staff and Students on key areas.
- Ensure that the systems in place are fully aligned to the Trust Vision and Values.
- Recognise that monitoring and evaluation of communication issues through regular meetings and discussion with Students, Parents, Staff, Directors and Governors is an on-going consideration. In the context of a growing organisation it is particularly important to review systems and facilitate the best possible communication at all stages of the Trust's development.

Efficient and effective communication is essential at all levels including:

- Between Directors.
- Between the Board and Academy Governance Committees.
- Between Academies in the Trust.
- Between Academies and their whole academy community.
- Between Staff.
- Between Students.
- Between all Lydiate Learning Trust stakeholders.
- Beyond Lydiate Learning Trust.

2. ACADEMY REONSIBILITIES

- To publish key policies, documents and procedures on the Academy websites and in other areas that maximise their accessibility and usefulness to the entire community.
- To publish on the Academy websites key information about the composition and remit of the Trust Board and the Academy Governance Committees (AGC), including a list of Governors, their record of attendance at meetings during the previous 12 months, and a register of their business interests.
- To inform Parents/Carers of all academy events within appropriate timelines.
- To keep Parents/Carers informed of the progress of their child at regular intervals throughout the academy year.
- To consult with and work in partnership with Parents/Carers on the well-being and education of their children.

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- To seek the views of the Parents and Students on their education and learning environment and ensure that their ideas and feedback are always treated with respect and built into planning and development. (E.g. regular circulation of Parent and Student questionnaires).
- To seek creative ways of making key messages relevant to the communities served by each Academy.
- To remind staff of the Lydiate Learning Trust policies, Code of Conduct etc., and the relevance to the Academy.

Staff Responsibilities

- To ensure that the principles and procedures of this policy are followed.
- To communicate proactively with Parents/Carers about student progress and to support Parents/Carers to help their children's learning.

Parent/Carer's Responsibilities

- To read key communications circulated by the Academy (e.g. homework tasks, website information, newsletters)
- To respond/act on communications from the Academy (e.g. sign consent forms, attend meetings).
- To keep the Academy office up to date with any changes to contact details (address, phone numbers, email addresses).
- To inform the Academy of any medical conditions along with medical documentation.
- To inform the Academy of any child protection matters, legal issues or relevant duties with appropriate documentation.
- To raise any issues or concerns with the class teacher in the first instance.

3. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN ACADEMIES

31. Communication with Staff

- A timetable is made available to staff which outlines weekly activities across the Academy. In addition, daily updates are given through morning briefings, noticeboards, online alerts etc.
- The Staff Handbook contains details of all procedures and policies.
- Staff personal details will not be shared with other members of staff without their consent.
- The 'Lydiate Learning Trust Bulletin' is produced by the Executive Team on a termly basis and circulated to all staff. The aim is to keep all the Lydiate Learning Trust community fully informed of current events and developments.

3.2 Electronic Communication for Staff

- All members of staff have their own Lydiate Learning Trust/Academy email account and must ensure they use the official Lydiate Learning Trust/Academy signature strip on all internal and external emails.
- Staff must consider the best way to communicate according to each situation, recognising

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that email should not be used as a substitute for face- to- face communication.

- Staff must be mindful of the tone and propriety of their email communications and ensure that their written correspondence is always appropriate and professional. Email must not be used as a text or social service.
- As Lydiate Learning Trust encourages staff to have an appropriate work/life balance, staff are not expected to write and respond to emails outside of Academy hours. It is expected though that emails are responded to within two Academy working days. If the response is to Parents, this should be as soon as possible or within 24 hours.
- To ensure effective management of emails, please be mindful of who is “cc’d” into an email. It is helpful to use the cc function if the information will be directly useful to your colleague.
- It would be inappropriate to discuss issues of a sensitive nature by email. Although not exhaustive, sensitive issues may include addressing staff performance or student performance and behaviour. Issues of this nature should be conducted in a face-to- face manner, with minutes taken as necessary.
- Communicating with parents and staff members must be carried out via the academy email address and not via a personal email address.
- Engaging in personal correspondence with students is not allowed.
- Sending of chain emails is not allowed.
- Embedding of adverts is not allowed.
- Use of Microsoft Team’s for all staff to share the trust wide vision.
- Staff to utilise Microsoft teams as a platform to discuss working documents, sharing best practice and conversations linked to these documents.
- Use of teams to perform meetings at cross site level or to host training events.
- The use of other meeting platforms (as approved by the Trust) to be used where appropriate. Online meetings should only take place when appropriate meetings can’t take place traditionally or in agreement with the meeting host. Meetings will explicitly follow the correct procedure; confidentiality of information, secure access to the meetings.

3.3 Social Networking Sites/Blogs for Staff

- Staff will not communicate with students or parents via social networking sites/personal accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.
- Staff will not accept personal ‘friend’ requests from students or parents.
- Academy/class blogs may be set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning and will be carefully managed and monitored. Only official designated users may use social media on behalf of the academy.
- Staff should not use their personal devices to access social media at any time on academy premises.
- When using social media outside of the academy for personal use, all employees must remember that they are personally responsible for their actions. There is an expectation that all individuals act responsibly, are legally compliant and uphold Lydiate Learning Trust policies and standards of behaviour outside of the academy as well as in academy.
- Failure to comply with this policy, or any actions which are deemed to bring the Trust into disrepute, will be fully investigated and may result in Disciplinary action.

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3.4 Communication with Students/Accessing ‘the Student Voice’

- Student views are sought via lessons, discussion, student questionnaires.
- Each Academy has a developed Academy Council.

4. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DIRECTORS AND GOVERNORS

To ensure efficient and effective communication between Directors and Governors, there are key expectations of Board Directors and Governors on the Academy Governance Committees as follows:

- To regularly attend meetings.
- To prepare well by reading all communications and papers in advance, accessible via GovernorHub
- To ensure that any planned absences for any length of time are discussed and agreed with the Chair and the Senior Clerk.
- To respond in a timely manner to email correspondence from the Senior Clerk, fellow Directors or fellow Governors (within two working days).
- To regularly access relevant information on the designated IT systems e.g. GovernorHub.
- To immediately advise the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Trust Board Chair of any issue which might affect the interests of Lydiate Learning Trust.

4.1 Email Communication for Directors and Governors

The same expectations apply for use of email as those for staff (as detailed under 3.2)

4.2 Social Networking Sites/Blogs etc. for Directors and Governors

The same expectations apply for use of social media as those for staff (as detailed under 3.3).

4.3 Communication between Trust Board Directors

- A detailed set of expectations for the process and timescale for setting of agendas and minutes has been produced and is set out in the relevant Terms of Reference.
- The Senior Clerk and Chair will ensure that the Trust Board and Headteachers are kept informed of any new appointments.

5. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LLT BOARD AND SUB COMMITTEES INCLUDING THE AGCS.

5.1 Sub-committees of the Board have delegated responsibilities. The AGCs are the sub committees at Academy level. Effective communication between the Board and the AGCs is vital so that:

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- The Board has an accurate, up-to-date picture of education provision across the Trust and is able to take this into account in its strategic planning and decision-making.
- The views of the Academies, through their AGC, are reflected to the Board.
- Policies and decisions made by the Board are effectively implemented.

5.2 In order to facilitate communication, the following systems are in place:

- A standard item is included on each AGC agenda to receive feedback from the Board of Directors. This will be covered by the Headteacher and/or Chair.
- All AGCs have a direct link with the Board via the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Director of Academy Improvement, who on request, can attend the AGC to discuss any items - providing that reasonable notice and information is provided.
- All AGC minutes are available to Directors via GovernorHub.
- The Chair of an AGC can highlight any issues, queries or seek clarification from the Board via the Clerk.

6. Communication between LLT Academies

6.1 Close collaboration between Academies is an expectation of the Trust.

Academy Headteachers continue to work closely with the Executive Team (the CEO, Director of Academy Improvement, Director of Finance & Director of HR) to ensure that expertise is effectively shared across the Trust.

6.2 Academies are also encouraged to celebrate the successes of other Trust academies, publicising “good news” stories to aide cohesion.

Methods of communication include:

- Email
- Academy Newsletters
- Academy Websites
- Lydiate Learning Trust Newsletters and Bulletins
- The Lydiate Learning Trust Website
- Authorised Lydiate Learning Trust Social media e.g. Twitter

7. External Communication

7.1 Academies communicate with Parents/Carers through:

- Letters home
- Text messages
- Academy Websites
- Regular Academy newsletters
- Parent/Carer meetings
- Informal communications between teachers and parents/carers
- Use of online meeting platforms (Agreed by the Trust)

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7.2 Communication with the Media and Wider Public

- All publications and press releases which include pictures of students will be checked before release/ publication to ensure that they do not include any children where it has been requested that they are not photographed.
- All publications and prospectuses will be mindful of the Equal Opportunities Policy, reflecting and celebrating the diversity of our Lydiate Learning Trust community.
- Headteachers are authorised to provide press releases to the local press on 'good news' items relating to their Academy. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chair of the Academy Governance Committee (AGC) would expect to be informed of any press contact for good news events, in advance where possible.
- Any other contact with the Press (both local and national) concerning the Trust or an Academy must always be made via the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chair of LLT Board. No one else (including Headteachers and members of Staff) are authorised to speak to the press without first having agreed this with the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of LLT Board.

7.3 Communication of Recruitment Opportunities

- A proactive approach will be adopted to the recruitment of high quality teachers.
- There will be regular attendance at key recruitment fairs.
- Internal vacancies are advertised solely on the Lydiate Learning Trust website and the onus for checking this is on individual members of staff.

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