

# Hope Valley College

## School-Home Communication Guide

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**Hope Valley  
College**

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**Chorus** Education Trust

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## 1. Aims

Clear and relevant communication between school and home is key in helping students to achieve their best. We work hard to ensure that communications are:

- Clear: easily understood and provided in a form that is accessible.
- Relevant: we try only to send information that is useful, timely and applicable to the student or family receiving it.
- Respectful: we use, and expect only acceptable language, tone and behaviour in our communications.

This guide outlines the systems in place to enable effective communication from school to home, and from home to school. The following policies and procedures have been considered and incorporated in our approach to school-home communications: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Accessibility Plan, Attendance Policy, Data Protection Policy.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

<b>School leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that communications are clear, relevant and respectful.</li><li>• Monitor implementation of this guidance.</li><li>• Regularly review this guidance.</li></ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that communications are clear, relevant and respectful.</li><li>• Respond to communications in line with this guidance and the school's ICT acceptable use policy.</li><li>• Maintain and use contact data in compliance with GDPR and safeguarding requirements.</li></ul>
<b>Parents/carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that communications are clear, relevant and respectful.</li><li>• Ensure that student and parent/carer contact details held by the school are up to date.</li><li>• Check all communications from school.</li></ul>

## 3. Respectful communications

All communications should be carried out in a respectful manner, using acceptable language and behaviour. We appreciate that parents/carers care deeply about their child(ren) and therefore ask that you also appreciate that our staff are professionals, who try to do their best for the many students under their care.

If, at any point, a visitor's language, tone or behaviour is unacceptable (for example, by being rude or aggressive) the school staff can warn them about this. If such behaviour continues staff have the right to either schedule a short break or end the conversation or meeting. If this happens during a phone call, the member of staff has the right to end the call.

## 4. Communications from school to home

Methods that we use to communicate are:

<p><b>Urgent communications (individual student)</b></p>	<p>If a student is taken ill we prefer to make contact by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone</li> </ul> <p>If the student is absent from school and no reason has been provided, we prefer to make contact by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Telephone</li> </ul>
<p><b>Urgent communications (whole school)</b></p>	<p>If there is a need to contact you regarding a situation affecting a large group of students or the whole school (such as school closure due to extreme weather) we will make contact by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email: an email to the primary parent/carer (where we have an email address). Note that the delivery of emails can sometimes be delayed.</li> <li>• SMS: text messages will be sent.</li> <li>• Website: a message on the home screen.</li> <li>• Social media: notices will be added to the school's social media platforms: Facebook and Instagram.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Routine communications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email: an email to the primary parent/carer (where we have an email address). This includes a regular update from the headteacher.</li> <li>• Phone: we will phone you if there is an issue to discuss regarding your child.</li> <li>• Meetings: occasionally, there are times when it is helpful to meet staff to discuss an issue. If so, a mutually convenient date and time will be agreed.</li> <li>• Homework: individual student homework information is available on the Arbor Parent App/Portal</li> <li>• Student reports: reports that contain information about your child's Attitude to Learning (which drives their academic performance) are sent to parents/carers five times a year via the Arbor Parent App/Portal.</li> <li>• Subject evenings: parents and carers are invited to an annual subject evening for an opportunity to discuss academic progress with teachers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public sources of information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website: is updated with information relating to the school calendar, term dates, contact details etc.</li> <li>• Social media: the school social media channels are used to share general news about student achievements and life at school. Social media is not used for sending or receiving routine messages to/from parents/carers. Guidelines for use of social media are available in Appendix A.</li> </ul>

## 5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Our website is translatable into many different languages and parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages.
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls.

- Letters from school sent as Word or PDF documents to enable 'read aloud' technology to be used.
- Communications can be sent in hard copy for those without access to online technology.

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school on [enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org](mailto:enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org) or by calling 01433 620555.

## 6. Communications from home to school

In order to keep communications with school as efficient as possible, please use the following methods:

<b>To report absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 01433 620555 and choose the option to report a student absence, or</li> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:attendance@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">attendance@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year and class, bus and the names of any siblings at school.</li> </ul>
<b>General enquiries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>, or</li> <li>• Call 01433 620555 to speak to our reception staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Complaints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to the Chorus Trust Complaints Policy which can be found at <a href="http://www.chorustrust.org/policies">www.chorustrust.org/policies</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Student pastoral queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:pastoral@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">pastoral@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year and class.</li> </ul>
<b>Subject related queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year, class and subject to which the query relates.</li> </ul>
<b>Exam related queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:exams@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">exams@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>, including the student's name, year and class</li> </ul>
<b>Payment related queries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:finance@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">finance@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Pathways Post-16 provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email <a href="mailto:pathways@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">pathways@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a></li> </ul>
<b>Update parent/carer contact details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Arbor Parent App/Portal, or</li> <li>• Call 01433 620555, or</li> <li>• email <a href="mailto:attendance@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">attendance@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>,</li> </ul>

## 7. Timeframes for responses

Our staff spend the majority of their time teaching, planning lessons, assessing student work, undertaking lunch duties, running extracurricular clubs and activities and looking after the well-being of the young people in our care. Consequently, they are unable to respond immediately to queries. Our school aim is to respond as follows:

- An acknowledgement to indicate that an email has been received within two school days.
- An initial response within five school days. This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response.
- A fuller response where necessary within a suitable agreed timescale.

Staff are not expected to monitor or respond to emails out of their normal working hours. The enquiries email is monitored between 8:00am – 4:00pm, Monday to Thursday; 8:00am – 3:30pm, Fridays during term time.

## **Appendix A: Guidelines for social media interactions**

School social media accounts are used for the public sharing of news and information about the achievements and activities of students, and life in general at school. They are not used for sending or receiving messages to/from parents/carers.

### **Safeguarding students**

We will never identify a student, without the express permission of the student and their parent/carer. This is key to keeping our students safe. We expect parents and carers to assist in safeguarding our students this by:

- Not naming a student.
- Not tagging students or their parent/carer in relation to a school post.

We will take action, for instance by removing comments, if necessary to ensure the safety or reputation of students, staff and the school in general.

### **Communications via social media**

Communications channels outlined in the communications guide are designed to enable appropriate and timely communication between school and home. These do not include social media platforms, except in the instance of urgent whole school communications such as school closure and, on these occasions, social media is one of many forms of communication used to spread the urgent message quickly. There is no expectation for parents and carers to use any particular social media channel to receive messages from school.

Contact made with school should be via the usual routes, which are:

- Email: [enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org](mailto:enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org)
- Phone: 01433 620555

## Appendix B: Systems used for communication

Phone	Parents and carers should ensure that their phone numbers held by the school are up to date.	01433 620555
Email	Parents and carers should ensure that their email address held by the school are up to date.	<a href="mailto:enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org">enquiries@hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>
Arbor Parent App/Portal	Used to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessment and reporting</li><li>• Attendance</li><li>• Exam timetables</li><li>• Homework information</li><li>• Behaviour points</li><li>•</li></ul>	login.arbor.sc
Parent Pay	Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Payments to school including dinner money</li></ul>	<a href="https://app.parentpay.com/public/client/security/v2/#/login">app.parentpay.com/public/client/security/v2/#/login</a>
Parents Evening	Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bookings to see subject staff at subject evenings</li></ul>	<a href="https://hopevalley.schoolcloud.co.uk">hopevalley.schoolcloud.co.uk</a>
Website	Used to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General information</li><li>• School calendar</li><li>• Term dates</li><li>• School policies</li><li>• Links to online systems</li></ul>	<a href="https://www.hopevalley.chorustrust.org">www.hopevalley.chorustrust.org</a>