

Staff Communication Policy

Policy Code:	HR39
Policy Start Date:	December 2021
Policy Review Date:	December 2024

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR5 Acceptable Use Policy (ICT)
- HR6 Data Protection Policy
- HR12 Staff Disciplinary Policy
- HR22 Social Media (Staff) Policy
- HR33 Records Management Policy
- HR36 Complaints Policy
- HR37 Zero Tolerance Policy
- SW9 Parental Communication and Complaints Policy

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The policy outlines The Priory Federation of Academies (The Trust's) expectations with regards to all types of staff communication, both internal and external. Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It is through effective and interactive communication that information is transmitted, understanding is developed and shared, trust is built, confidentiality respected and action coordinated. Communication includes not only the message but also how that message is communicated. Good communication promotes partnership.
- 1.2 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire SCITT.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Human Resources.
- 2.2 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 2.3 All communications must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and UK-GDPR.

3 Aims

- 3.1 To ensure efficient and effective communication between all stakeholders.
- 3.2 To ensure communication:
 - Keeps all stakeholders well informed.
 - Is open, honest, ethical and professional.
 - Is actioned within a reasonable time, taking into account directed time/working hours.

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- Utilises the most effective and appropriate methods of communication for the context, message and audience.
 - Takes account of relevant Trust policies.
 - Is compatible with the Trust's values and ethos.

3.3 To ensure work and home boundaries are respected.

3.4 To promote a culture of open two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comments from all staff.

4 Internal Communication

4.1 The Trust will ensure information is made available to staff in a timely manner and via appropriate channels.

4.2 Staff have a responsibility to communicate regularly with each other, to ensure information is available and understood within the context of their working environment and classroom

4.3 Internal communications may take various forms, such as, but not limited to:

- briefings;
- meetings, online or face to face;
- emails;
- intranet communications;
- letters sent home to staff from the Academy/setting/Trust.

4.4 Formal meetings should be structured, with notes taken and, where applicable, members invited to contribute to the agenda.

4.5 Each Academy/setting will set its own protocol for how information is communicated to staff, e.g. what information should be sent via email, in a bid to reduce unnecessary communication.

5 External Communication

5.1 Staff should communicate, wherever possible, with parents/carers in person or by phone about pastoral matters (including concerns about physical or mental health) and behaviour issues. If emails are used it is advised that the content is checked by another member of staff to ensure there is no potential for misinterpretation. Records should be kept of all pastoral communication, in line with the relevant academy system/process.

5.2 If staff are contacted by parents/carers by email during the evening or at weekends, they are not expected to action a response until the next working day.

Ideally, contact should be made with parents/carers via the telephone so that a discussion can be had. However, in the event of an emergency, staff may be required to contact parents/carers at the weekend/out of hours.

5.3 The Trust may use the following methods to communicate with external stakeholders:

- Letters
- Telephone calls
- Email or text through the Academy communication system
- Parents' Evenings
- Module Grades (Progress Checks)
- Written Reports
- Meetings (both formal and informal)
- Meetings between parents/carers and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Trust/Academy website
- Social media sites/blogs
- Newsletters
- Noticeboard outside the Academy

6 Trust Expectations of Staff

6.1 The Trust does not expect staff to check their work emails during their personal time; any such action in this regard is wholly a matter of personal choice. Any emails received outside of directed time are not expected to be read, replied to or actioned until the next working day.

6.2 All communication should be in line with each Academy/setting's procedures.

6.3 All communication should be professional and individuals should always be addressed in line with the Trust's values.

6.4 To maintain and protect the reputation of the Trust, staff must direct all potentially sensitive media enquiries to the Trust Communications and Marketing Manager.

7 Zero Tolerance

7.1 The Trust will operate or practise zero tolerance towards any communication sent to/from members of staff which is deemed to be threatening, malicious, offensive, intimidatory, sexist or discriminatory. Please refer to HR37 Zero Tolerance Policy for further information.

8 Emergency Notifications

- 8.1 Any emergency notifications, e.g. Academy closure due to snow, will be communicated to staff as soon as is possible and will be updated on individual Academy websites.

9 Policy Change

- 9.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by the Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



The Priory Federation of Academies Trust

Communication Policy

This Policy has been approved by the Pay, Performance and HR Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.