

Leigh Academy Rainham

Home / Academy Contact Policy

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Sections

1. [Introductory statement](#)
 - 1.1 [Teacher Wellbeing](#)
 - 1.2 [Content of Communication](#)
 - 1.3 [Ways to communicate](#)
 - 1.4 [Who to Contact](#)
 - 1.5 [Visiting the Academy](#)
 - 1.6 [Home Visits](#)

1. Introductory statement

A highly effective education relies on establishing clear and consistent links between academy and home. By ensuring communication between both parties remains open, transparent and effective, we can ensure we are working collaboratively. We can therefore identify concerns, share celebrations or advise families of strategies or practices which have been effective at school to support our students and their learning.

The Academy's preferred method of communicating general information to parents and carers is electronically. General letters and news items are uploaded to our website and also sent directly to mobile phones and email accounts from Bromcom and announcements are issued through My Child At School App. Academy publications keep parents and carers up-to-date with news, events, reminders and diary dates. To receive these regular updates, follow us on twitter @leighrainham or 'like' us on Facebook @leighacademyrainham. Please ensure we are able to contact you in the event of an emergency. Let us know immediately of any changes to your home address, mobile and landline telephone numbers, email addresses, or places of employment.

It is important to recognise that while our students are maturing into young adults as they move up through the Academy, it is of course expected there may be times when staff will need to maintain more regular contact with families, beyond that of the systematic reporting home and general communication from the Principal.

At Leigh Academy Rainham, if an occasion occurs where a Form Tutor or Leaders in the Academy feel it is necessary to establish more regular contact by telephone with families regarding the welfare of their child, this should be for a fixed period of time. Using email directly between the teacher and parent for such examples of regular contact should, where possible, be avoided unless agreed with leaders this is the most suitable form of communication. It is also imperative that we ensure parental expectations are reasonable and not at the expense of the member of staff and their respective Work/Life balance. The Academy has no expectation of any members of staff responding to any parent emails or contact outside of the school day and never between the hours 18.00 - 07.30. Staff also have a window of 48 hours before being required to respond to communication. If staff are off sick, there is no expectation that they maintain contact with families.

1.1 Teacher Wellbeing

Teachers' wellbeing sits at the core of our values and we do not expect home - academy contact to impede or impact negatively upon this. If any teachers or staff feel that the home - academy contact is doing so it is their responsibility to inform a member of SLT who will support in resolving the matter.

1.2 Content of Communication

The content of any home school contact must at all times remain professional and GDPR compliant, whilst we may have families aware of peer's names or possibly how they may have behaved or presented in school, as described by their sons/daughters, and may then choose to bring these up in conversations, it is imperative that staff ***do not discuss at any time the specific approaches, needs or difficulties of any other individuals*** than that of the student whose family are being spoken to. Similarly any discussion over other staff must remain impartial and infrequent. If a family member wishes to discuss other individual employees this should be escalated to SLT.

1.3 Ways to communicate

Home to academy contact must only occur through the academy's agreed communication channels, for Leigh Academy Rainham this is via the College Mailboxes for students who attend the academy or MyChildAtSchool: if the communication is more general. All general queries not relating to a child at the academy can be sent to info@leighacademyrainham.org.uk

It is prohibited for staff to communicate with families via personal emails or devices including phone calls unless necessary. Parents are not permitted to contact teachers via Google Classroom using their child's account.

Above all else it is each teachers responsibility to ensure that communication remains open and transparent between home and the Academy, if staff feel that this is not occurring and that families are not engaging in this, this should be escalated to SLT, depending on the nature of the concern this may require following up with the DSL via the agreed safeguarding protocols.

1.4 Who to contact

Emergencies - Telephone Reception on 01634 412440 and select appropriate number for your child's College (i.e Kingsley on option 2, Angelou on option 3 or Turing on option 4)

Matters regarding your child - Email the relevant College Mailbox who will direct it to the appropriate member of staff, they will then either telephone or make an appointment

- Turing College – turingcollege@leighacademyrainham.org.uk
- Kingsley College – kingsleycollege@leighacademyrainham.org.uk
- Angelou College – angeloucollege@leighacademyrainham.org.uk
- Inclusion – inclusion@leighacademyrainham.org.uk
- Attendance - attendance@leighacademyrainham.org.uk

Appointment Requests - If you wish to speak to a member of staff an appointment needs to be made via the College Mailboxes. Parents and carers should not attend the site without making an appointment first.

Phone Calls to the Academy

Our admin staff are committed to ensuring the smooth running of school operations and supporting the needs of our students and parents. However, due to the increasing volume of

calls we receive daily as the academy grows, we find ourselves unable to manage the additional task of relaying messages to students throughout the day without compromising our primary responsibilities.

To maintain an efficient and effective environment, we kindly request the following with regards to contacting the academy:

- **Emergency Situations Only:** Please only contact your child's college team to relay urgent messages to students in cases of genuine emergencies. Our staff will prioritise and endeavour to ensure these critical messages are delivered promptly
- **Personal Arrangements:** For non-urgent matters, such as changes in after-school plans or reminders, please make these arrangements with your child before the start of the school day. For example if traffic is bad, ensure your child knows pre-arranged places to meet you. The non-smart phones that many students have, support families' to keep each other updated at the start and end of the day.
- **Alternative Communication:** Encourage your child to be responsible for their daily schedules and arrangements, ensuring they have all necessary information before leaving for school.

Phone Calls home

Unfortunately the admin staff do not have the capacity at the end of the day to make multiple calls for students should they change their mind about after school plans, or their club is cancelled. If students have prior arrangements for a later pick up, they will be directed to wait in the homework club until the time you have pre-arranged to collect them.

We would like to remind parents we are also unable to make calls throughout the day to top up students' ParentPay accounts for break time and lunchtime. We kindly ask that parents check their child's accounts every few days to ensure that they have enough credit to buy their food/drinks. The kitchen staff are unable to allow a child's account to run into a deficit so this is charged to the academy should we need to feed children with no money on their accounts with the expectation parents / carers will top up the account by the end of the day.

1.5 Visiting the Academy

To ensure a secure and orderly environment, we kindly request that parents and guardians only visit the school if they have made a prior appointment. This policy helps us manage the number of visitors on site at any given time and ensures that we can maintain appropriate safety measures. Please do not come to site without an appointment as staff will not be available to meet with you if this is unplanned and impacts on the operational running of the academy day.

If you need to schedule an appointment, please contact your child's college team via your college mailbox. Our staff will be happy to assist you in arranging a suitable time for your visit. We appreciate your cooperation in adhering to this policy and your understanding of its importance.

Meetings

Meetings will generally be held with a minimum of two members of staff on site at arranged times. Should parents wish to bring representatives we kindly request they inform the academy of their names and roles in advance.

All meetings held on site are school matters involving school staff. Recording meetings that take place in the academy is forbidden as per trust policy.

1.6 Home Visits

The academy will conduct home visits for attendance reasons and to support families where necessary. It is standard practice to conduct a home visit for families where there has been 3 or more days of absence and the academy is concerned about the welfare of a child and their reasons for not attending. For example if medical evidence has been provided and this is not a repeated pattern of absence a home visit may not be required after 3 days and a welfare phone call may be conducted instead.