

14 November 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

We have received some feedback from you that we could improve on our methods of communication. We recognise that this can be frustrating for parents/carers and we are working hard to improve it. I have outlined below the various ways in which you can communicate with us and us with you.

Online Communication with Staff

The vast majority of our staff are student facing throughout the academy day with the majority of our teachers in front of a class for 22 periods a week, the most convenient way to communicate is via email. You can email enquiries@freeston.outwood.com and mark it for the attention of the relevant staff member. If it is urgent we will try to respond to you as soon as possible. We aim to respond to all communication received in this format within 48 hours, but please bear in mind that this may vary if a staff member is absent for any reason or works part time.

Our advice for improving this flow of communication is as follows:

- If the issue is pastoral, please contact their form tutor in the first instance, this member of staff has daily communication with your child.
- If the issue is academic, please contact the class teacher.

In addition, each year group has a Learning Manager, these are key colleagues who can be contacted should you require further information.

Written Communication

We use texts as a quick way to share information with you. This can be reminders about key events happening in school, attendance matters and links to letters. Please note that all texts will go to first named contacts on our system. Copies of key letters can also be found on the website at the bottom of the home page and is titled 'Updates from the Academy'.

Groupcall's parental app, Xpressions.

Xpressions provides parents with a portal to receive messages, called Xpressions, from school. Xpressions messages are similar to WhatsApp or iMessage in that they are transmitted over the internet rather than by SMS. Parents/carers can download the app for free from their usual app store/provider (it is supported by iOS and android devices) to their phone or tablet. Further guidance on downloading and logging into the app can be found [here](#). Parents/carers on Xpressions receive all text messages via the Xpressions App. Parents can also communicate to the academy via this App and incoming messages are viewed on a regular basis.

SEND

Our SENDCo is Mrs Coultous. If you have a child with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) or other type of support plan please make your communication with us specific for our SENDCo. Many of you who will be closely with Mrs Coultous will have the specific number to text in the morning any urgent updates we need about your child to support them in the day.

Social Media

The school has a Twitter account with over 2000 followers. This is where current information is shared about what has happened in school on a daily basis and also showcases the exceptional work and achievements of our students. It is also used to communicate messages to parents/carers. The account name is @OutwoodFreeston

Outwood Grange Academies Trust, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 06995649.

Registered office address: Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF.

VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

A list of Directors' names is open to inspection at our registered office.

Telephone Contact: 01924 302560

When you call the school the voice recording takes you to the most frequent extension numbers e.g. attendance. If you know the appropriate extension number dialling this at this point will take you directly to the area of need. There is only one receptionist and if she is on the telephone or dealing face to face with a parent, you will be asked to leave a voicemail message. These messages are cleared on a regular basis during the day and communication is sent via email to the appropriate staff member to return your call when available.

Student Planner

We work hard to ensure that the Student Planner involves lots of information that is useful to not only students but also to their parents/carers. If you have not already done so then please have a look at the Planner.

Website <https://www.freeston.outwood.com/>

Our website holds a wealth of information and the most up to date information on all aspects of school life. If you want to know more this is the place to go. From [term dates](#) and [events](#) to [policies](#). All letters etc are added to the 'Updates from the Academy' section on the homepage of the website.

What we teach your child

There is a vast amount of information on our website <https://www.freeston.outwood.com/> You can find out more about what we teach in each year group in each subject on the subject overview pages <https://www.freeston.outwood.com/subject-overviews>. In addition, every month we add a document to the 'Updates from the Academy' section on the homepage of the website, a learning overview of what every year group will be learning that month for each subject. As an example [here is the overview for November](#).

Ongoing documents - added to the 'Updates from the Academy' section on the homepage of the website

- Each Friday a weekly 'Principal's Blog' containing what has happened in the academy that week, any information on what is coming up and updates we want you to know about.
- Monthly Literacy and Reading Newsletter
- Monthly Computer Science and E-Safety Newsletter
- Half termly Personal Development Newsletter - first one coming this half term

Guardian Summaries

Google Classroom guardian summaries allow parents and carers to opt-in to receive regular email updates about their child's work and classes. These emails, known as guardian email summaries, include information about missing work, upcoming work, and class activity including announcements and questions posted in the class stream. They are automatically generated and do not require any extra work on the behalf of the teacher. Full information on this can be found [here](#).

How your child is getting on

Praising Stars reports provide you with information on how your child is getting on in all of their subjects. The reports give you effort and attainment grade information along with any homework or attendance concerns and requests to see parents/carers at Parents' Evenings.

Careers Information

Our website has links to Progress Schools who provide independent advice and guidance for all our students. The direct link is here <https://www.freeston.outwood.com/careers-curriculum>

Parent Portal - coming soon

As a Trust there is currently a pilot in some of our academies who are launching our parent portal. This will enable you to see key information (including historical information) for your child including

all praise logged by teaching and support staff and all attendance information. It will also have links to useful websites that you can use to support your child. We will continue to develop the portal in consultation with parents/carers. Initial access and set up for the portal will be via your email address. More information to follow.

I hope you have found this information useful.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Allott', written on a light grey rectangular background.

Lisa Allott
Principal

For regular updates on Academy news and events, follow us on Twitter @OutwoodFreeston or view our website www.freeston.outwood.com