



THE DERBY
— HIGH SCHOOL —
Inspired to make a difference

Communications Policy

Version Control & Amendment History

Version/ Issue No.	Date	Author	Remarks / Reason for Change
1	September 2022	L Provoost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original document
2	November 2023	A Moore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front page/ school logo updated • Changed WeDuc to The Derby App • Changed The Assistant • Headteacher to SENDCo • Removed Staff list email available on website • Added Appendix A – Staff email protocols

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Statement of intent

This policy sets out the aims of the school regarding internal and external communication, and the responsibilities of the school, its staff members and parents/carers. The policy also outlines the school's marketing strategy and how this will be used to build positive relationships with parents/carers and the wider community.

Using the school website, The Derby App, The Derby Twitter, The Friends of The Derby Social Media Hub and Department Instagram and Twitter accounts, The Derby High School aims to promote effective communication between students, members of staff, parents/carers, stakeholders and all members of the school community through the following means.

- Having a clear and professional communication strategy in place to keep parents/carers well-informed about their child's educational progress and any other matters related to their child's overall wellbeing
- Having a clear and professional communication strategy in place to promote The Derby Diploma and Curriculum enrichment. All departments will create one post for The Derby App news feed every week. Posts will be monitored by Head of Faculty.
- Improving the quality of education by ensuring there is a robust process in place for consultation between the school, parents, staff members and pupils on key areas such as termly data drops, full reports, weekly reporting of key data, The Derby App messages, letters and phone calls home.
- Monitoring and evaluating communication issues through regular meetings where required with staff, Friends of The Derby, parents/carers and members of the school community

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Education Act 2002
- The Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Adverse Weather Policy
- Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Assistant Headteacher for Marketing and Communication is responsible for co-ordinating and managing:

- Overseeing the overall implementation of this policy.
- Informing parents/carers of all school events within appropriate timelines.
- Appointing a marketing officer with the appropriate skills and knowledge required to fulfil the role.
- Approving all marketing and communication-related proposals and materials.
- Setting appropriate timescales within the marketing strategy.
- Developing and managing networking and engagement programmes to enhance the school's relationship with parents/carers, other schools, LAs and the wider community.
- Helping to shape school events which exemplify and communicate the school's values, e.g. transition evenings (JS), Prize Giving (DW/SD), parents' evenings (SD), working with parents evenings (BN)
- Advising on event planning with the aim of improving audience experience in terms of content
- Working with the local media to promote and enhance the reputation of the school, in accordance with the Media Relations Policy.

The Deputy Headteacher - Curriculum & Standards is responsible for

- Communicating important information about the curriculum, clearly to parents/carers such as details about the GCSE Options Process.

The Assistant Headteacher - Assessment, Data & Achievement is responsible for:

- Regularly keeping parents/carers informed of their child's progress.
- Informing parents/carers about the types of data that the school holds on students, who controls the data, why that data is held and who it may be shared with. This information will be concise, transparent and easily accessible; written in a clear and plain language; and free of charge.

The School Business Manager is responsible for:

- Placing key policies, documents and procedures in areas that maximise their accessibility and usefulness to the entire school community, e.g. on the school website for parents and partners, on Every for staff.
- Ensuring that parents/carers understand their right to access information about their child that is held by the school.
- Ensuring that parents/carers also understand their rights to rectification, to erasure, to restrict processing, to data portability and to object to processing.
- Ensuring that consent obtained from parents/carers, and students where appropriate, regarding the processing of personal data is freely given, specific, informed, and an unambiguous indication of the individual's wishes.
- Ensuring that individuals are informed of their rights to withdraw consent and are provided with easy ways to do so.
- Ensuring that information regarding staff pay and conditions of service is made available to all who are employed at the school.
- Taking steps to ensure parents/carers who do not have access to the internet can still access the information that is included on the school website.
- Ensuring that the resources, systems and procedures are in place
- Advising on event planning with the aim of improving audience experience in terms of facilities and logistics
- Working with the DPO to ensure that marketing material complies with data protection law and that consent is properly requested and recorded including the email policy

Media Technician is responsible for

- Ensuring the communication of key messages and school values.
- Ensuring all platforms of communication are up-to-date with audience-appropriate material and are easily accessible by parents, the LA and the wider community.
- Identifying the promotional value of student achievements and school events and promoting them accordingly.
- Meeting the timescales set to complete marketing tasks.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Targeting relevant professionals who may issue children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, e.g. education psychologists.

All SLT are responsible for

- Identifying and targeting specific groups to provide information relevant to them, e.g. information relevant to the parents/carers of students with SEND, More Able, Literacy etc.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Ensuring the principles and procedures of this policy are followed.
- Communicating proactively with parents/carers about student progress and helping parents/carers to support their child's learning.
- Ensuring that their internal communication with other staff is strong, e.g. passing on relevant information to supply teachers and updating classroom planning files with specific pupil information.
- Being involved in the school's marketing communication as required.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Reading the key communications circulated by the school and responding or acting on these communications where required, e.g. by attending meetings.
- Using The Derby App or logging on to the school website for detailed information about the school calendar, term dates, exam details, monitoring and assessments, school achievements and other useful downloads.
- Informing the school of important information related to their child, such as:
 - Medical conditions or allergies, supported by medical documentation relating to these conditions.
 - Any SEND or other needs their child has.
 - Child protection matters, legal issues or relevant duties with appropriate documentation.
- Raising any issues or concerns they may have with the appropriate contact, e.g. contacting the class teacher with education-related issues.

3. Internal communication

Communication between members of staff

Staff will ensure their internal communication, i.e. within the school with other members of staff, is strong, effective, and abides by the procedures outlined in the Staff Handbook and Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff maintain a timetable outlining weekly activities and the DAILY FORM MESSAGE tab for daily messages. Written communications to specific staff members are delivered via **pigeonholes** or **by email**.

Communication between members of staff and students

Staff will not engage in personal correspondence with students. e.g Social Media, emails to personal email addresses and electronic messaging.

Staff will only use school email accounts to correspond with students regarding school related business.

4. External communication

Communication from the school to parents/carers

Parents/Carers will be contacted through the following methods:

- The Derby App – hosting links to SIMS and Satchel:One
- Letters home (emailed via The Derby App unless agreed otherwise)
- Text messages (Sent via The Derby App)
- Phone calls
- The school website
- In-person meetings

In line with the Social Media Policy, staff will not communicate or interact with parents/carers or pupils via social networking sites, except in the case of blogs or social media pages set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning and through the closed Facebook Group 'The Friends of The Derby'. Although Instagram and Faculty Twitter Pages will be used to promote faculties messaging facilities will not be used.

Parents/Carers will be given the opportunity to sign up to marketing communication via email and The Derby High App.

The school subscribes to an electronic communication system, The Derby App which is used to achieve effective and consistent communication with parents/carers. The school will ensure that:

Only the Senior Leadership Team, and other staff authorised by the Headteacher, such as the Admin Team, can access and use the messaging system.

- Use of data within the app is covered by the Privacy notices each year .
- If any changes are made to the service, or manner in which data is processed on the system, parents/carers are informed and consent is renewed.
- Any parents/carers who cannot be contacted via the messaging system are contacted via telephone or letter.

Our Transition evening for new parents/carers prior to their child's entry to the school will fully explain The Derby High School's methods of communication.

If a student is absent from school and the school has no indication of the reason for the absence, the school will contact the student's parent/carer via **text** on the first day of absence in order to find out the reason for the absence. If no contact can be made with any named parent/carer, the school has the right to contact the education welfare officer to ensure the pupil's wellbeing and safety.

Communication from parents/carers to the school

For general and urgent enquiries, parents/carers will be required to ring the school office, which is open from **Monday to Friday** between **8:00 am and 4:30pm**, on **0161 764 1819**. For non-urgent enquiries, parents/carers will be required to **email** the school using info@thederbyhighschool.co.uk. All emails to the school will specify the member of staff that the query is addressed to. All emails to the school will be treated as confidential, unless there is a specific reason not to do so.

Communication between teachers and parents/carers

Teachers regularly update parents/carers of students' progress, the curriculum content being covered, and how they can support students' development and progress through activities to be completed at home.

Students have a planner which can be used by parents/carers to record information that they wish to share regularly with the students' teacher. Planners will be used to record key education-related information for parents, e.g. important deadlines, attendance and behaviour data and as a regular channel for communication with parents if parents are unable to access Satchel:one

Teachers will be available to discuss pupils' progress and any concerns with parents before the start and end of each school day.

Telephone communication from parents/carers with school will be responded to within 48 hours.

5. Emergency communication

All parents/carers will ensure that the school has their latest contact details, including their address, telephone number and email address, so that they can be contacted in the event of an emergency. There must be at least two contact numbers for each student.

If a student is seriously ill or injured, the school will attempt to contact the student's emergency contacts via **telephone**. In the event of a larger serious incident requiring invacuation, lockdown, or evacuation, the school will follow its Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy – parents will routinely receive updates on how the school will communicate with them during an invacuation, lockdown or evacuation via the The Derby App.

Where an incident affects the whole school community, such as power failure or snow, the school will send all parents/carers a message via The Derby App and the school website <http://thederbyhighschool.co.uk> . **Message** with information on how the school will be operating, e.g. reduced hours or closure. If the school is closed for more than **one day** due to adverse weather or similar problem, an update will be posted on the school website at least **once** a day. Updates will be dated. The school will also ask the local radio station, 107.4 **Tower FM** to broadcast a closure announcement.

6. Email communication

Email and internet access will be used in line with the school's Data Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, and Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan.

All staff will have their own email account, which will be used to conduct all school-related communication – staff will not use their personal email addresses. Emails will not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication. Staff will consider the best way to communicate according to each individual situation.

The school will aim to respond to all email enquiries within **48 hours**. Part-time staff may take longer to reply due to the nature of their work schedule.

Chain emails will not be allowed. Staff will ensure that the sending of attachments is limited to only work-related emails. Under no circumstances will adverts for external events unrelated to school business be embedded into emails.

The following processes will be implemented to assist with the management of email communication:

Using a centralised email address

- Parents will be provided with one email address: **info@thederbyhighschool.co.uk** to use as a main point of contact for general home-school communication, e.g. informing the school that their child is ill.
- Office staff will track communication sent to this email address and ensure emails are dealt with promptly and consistently.
- Office staff will first seek to handle the enquiry themselves, e.g. if the email is in relation to dates of upcoming trips, uniform queries, sickness.
- If the message requires more specific support, it will be forwarded to appropriate member of staff.
- Parents/Carers will only use staff-specific email addresses if they need to contact a specific member of staff directly.

Implementing set times for responding to emails

Staff will not be expected to check or respond to emails outside of the school day although staff may decide to answer emails at a time and date that is convenient to them. The following footer will appear on staff emails:

THINK WELLBEING: *This email was sent at a time & date convenient to the sender; please do not feel under any pressure to respond if this is outside your usual working hours.*

- Staff are not able to check emails consistently throughout the day.

Providing support to staff

- Guidance has been provided to staff regarding email good practice: See Appendix A - Staff Email Protocols
- Staff will be provided with CPD Shorts and Digital Tip of the Week training in the email systems used by the school, so they are able to implement time saving functions such as Rules, Quick Parts, and view by conversation thread.
- Staff members are advised not to subscribe to any junk type email chains, in order to reduce emails received.

Meetings between members of staff

A programme of regular staff meetings will be set out in the school calendar at the beginning of each academic year. Additional meetings will be added to the calendar as required, with appropriate notice to prepare. Time will be set aside for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to the school's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans.

For all formal meetings, attendees will be invited to contribute to the agenda, minutes will be taken on the agreed meeting proforma [here](#); action points will be progressed, and feedback will be given to relevant staff. Minutes of meetings will be copied to staff members as appropriate, as well as the SLT Line manager, and a copy will be saved in the appropriate clearly marked folder on the **staff shared drive**.

Meetings between staff and parents/carers

When parents/carers wish to organise meetings with members of staff, they will first contact the school office before communicating with the appropriate member of staff directly. Parents/Carers will be required to organise meetings with members of staff with adequate preparation time, i.e. at least two working days before the meeting. Lessons and enrichment activities will not be interrupted to accommodate parents needing to speak to a teacher.

If parents/carers urgently need to meet with a member of staff, they will phone the school office as soon as possible – the office staff will aim to find a senior member of staff to see parents/carers before the end of the day. For non-urgent meetings between parents/carers and staff, the school will aim to meet parents/carers within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency in requests for meetings.

Recording meetings

If parents and/or other individuals wish to record a meeting, whether the meeting is virtual or in person, they will discuss their intentions with the school no less than 24 hours before the meeting commences. The school will decide if recording requests are appropriate, in consideration of the meeting's subject matter and the school's Confidentiality Policy.

The school will accept all recording requests in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if parents are hard of hearing or have a memory-related disability.

For meetings to be recorded, consent will need to be obtained from all participants. The final decision to permit any individual and/or parental recording of meetings will reside with the school.

If parents and/or other individuals fail to obtain the school's permission to record before the meeting begins, and insist on recording without permission, the school will be permitted to suspend the meeting.

Any complaints surrounding the school's rejection of a request to record a meeting, or the school's suspension of a meeting due to permission not being granted, will be managed in line with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

7. Data protection and consent

The school will abide by its Data Protection Policy and related documentation in all of its communication and when carrying out marketing activities.

Staff members' personal details will not be shared with other members of staff or external agencies without a lawful basis for data processing as outlined in the UK GDPR. Under no circumstances will staff members' personal details be shared with parents.

Consent

The school will ensure its consent mechanisms meet the standards of the UK GDPR in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy. The school will only accept consent where:

- It has been positively indicated – consent will not be inferred from silence, inactivity or pre-ticked boxes.
- It is given freely, specific, informed, and an unambiguous indication of the individual's wishes.

The DPO: will ensure a record of consent is kept, documenting how and when consent was given. The DPO will manage all requests to withdraw consent.

Where the school requests consent for marketing purposes, the request will clearly outline and explain that consent can be withdrawn by the individual at any time. The DPO will vet all consent requests relating to marketing before they are sent out to ensure they comply with the UK GDPR.

Individual's consent will always be sought for the following:

- Written marketing material, including emails, text messages, and letters home.
- Direct social media marketing material, e.g. tagging individuals in posts.
- The use of images and/or videos of pupils, e.g. in the school prospectus, website, and other promotional material.

The school reserves the right to use any data, e.g. photos, that was processed before consent was withdrawn, as consent was given at the point of processing; however, the school will take all reasonable measures to remove any data for which consent was provided before the consent was withdrawn, e.g. photos on social media.

Consent will be reviewed annually where necessary; the school will request that individuals refresh their consent in light of any changes to data processing.

Right to object

In accordance with the UK GDPR, all individuals have the right to object to receiving direct marketing correspondence. The school will make the individual's right to object clear when requesting consent.

Where an individual exercises their right to object, the school will stop processing personal data for direct marketing purposes as soon as the objection is received. The school will not

refuse an individual's objection regarding personal data that is being processed for direct marketing purposes.

Right to erasure

In accordance with the UK GDPR, all individuals have the right to request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing, e.g. where a parent's child has left the school.

In requests for consent, the marketing officer and DPO will ensure the reasons for processing are clear, e.g. by ensuring they are not obscured by lengthy procedures or small print. In its requests for consent, the school will make it clear all individuals have the right to erasure in the following circumstances:

- Where the personal data is no longer necessary in relation to the purpose for which it was originally collected or processed
- When the individual withdraws their consent
- When the individual objects to the processing and there is no overriding legitimate interest for continuing the processing
- The personal data was unlawfully processed
- The personal data is required to be erased in order to comply with a legal obligation
- The personal data is processed in relation to the offer of information society services to a child

Right of access and SARs

In accordance with an individual's right of access under the UK GDPR, personal information, confirmation of data processing, and other supplementary information will be shared with individuals who request access.

The procedure below will be followed for SARs:

- The requests will be made in writing to the governing board and will be responded to within one month of receipt.
- The period of compliance may be extended by a further two months where the requests are complex or numerous. If this is the case, individuals will be informed within one month of receipt of the request, with an explanation of why an extension is required.
- A student, or the parent/carer of a student, will have the right to access the information that the school holds about the pupil in question.
- Individuals have the right to access their personal data free of charge.
- Where requests are manifestly unfounded or excessive, a reasonable charge for the administrative costs of providing the information will be applied, or the request will be refused.
- If any request is refused, the individual will be informed of their right to complain to the supervisory authority and to a judicial remedy without delay within one month.

Under the UK GDPR, remote access to a secure self-service system will be given to provide individuals with direct access to their personal information.

Freedom of information requests

In line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, private data and public records can potentially be accessed through lodging a freedom of information (FOI) request. The procedure below will be followed in terms of FOI requests:

- The requests will be made in writing to the school, stating the name and address of the requester, and a description of the information requested.
- Successful FOI requests will be responded to within 20 working days from receipt of the request, unless the request does not comply with the procedure set out in the school's Freedom of Information Policy.
- The school holds the right to charge the requester a fee, if complying with the request would cost the school an excess of £450.
- Certain information will not be shared, such as that explained in Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

8. Marketing

Individuals will not receive any marketing materials until after the school has received their consent, in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Marketing correspondence sent by the school will solely pertain to school-run or school-assisted events and causes. The school will not pass any personal data on to its suppliers or third parties for marketing purposes.

The marketing officer is responsible for creating suitable marketing materials which fit the needs and aims of the school. Marketing materials will be targeted at parents and LAs, and be used to communicate the school's ethos, values, and vision, with a clear link to the local area and wider community.

All marketing materials will receive approval from the Headteacher (or delegated to the Assistant Headteacher responsible for marketing) prior to publication. The Governing Body will set a marketing budget at the beginning of each academic year that the marketing officer must work within.

For the purposes of this policy, "**direct marketing**" is defined as the communication of any advertising or marketing material which is directed to particular individuals. The school will only directly market to parents through written correspondence, e.g. emails and letters home, and only where explicit consent has been provided for the school to do so. Only the parents of current and prospective students will receive direct marketing.

Parents/Carers will automatically cease to receive marketing materials from the school six months after their youngest child has left the school.

The school prospectus

The prospectus will be used to communicate information regarding the following:

- The Headteacher's welcome
- The Derby Diploma Enrichment Programme
- School hours

- Term dates
- Ofsted reports
- Exam information

The school prospectus will be updated each Summer term. The content of the prospectus will complement the work of the school and contain information about the most recent activities and successes of the school, including progress, priorities and performance.

The school website and social media

In accordance with the School Website Policy, the school will ensure its website meets the requirements of the UK GDPR.

The marketing officer is responsible for creating and uploading the content of the school's website and any social media accounts. The marketing officer will routinely monitor and review the use of school social media accounts, developing the school's social media presence to achieve maximum optimisation.

All school news, press releases and announcements will be regularly uploaded to the school website: <http://thederbyhighschool.co.uk> , posted on social media: **@derbyhighbury**, and, where necessary, sent to local news outlets: Bury Times . The school's website and relevant social media accounts will also be used to connect with the wider community, for example through advertising enrichment activities: <http://thederbyhighschool.co.uk/enrichment/>

9. Monitoring and review

The efficiency of this policy will be continually monitored throughout the year by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Marketing and Communication, The SBM the Headteacher and governing board. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2024.



Appendix A

Staff Email Protocol

1- Where possible see a person in person rather than email
2- During the school day, staff should only check email when they are not teaching. Outside of the school day staff are free to check and read their email at any time, to suit their preferred working pattern
3- There is a requirement to check emails once a day
4- Staff are encouraged to turn off their emails when then are working on a computer when they need to be focussed on a piece of work
5- Staff should not have emails open during lessons
6- Avoid over cc – ing / If an email needs to be sent to multiple people be clear who you are directing the email to. Use clear subject lines with 'FAO - e.g. 'Lunch Duty FAO DW' and then cc others if needed
7- Avoid replying 'to all' if it is not needed – Be careful not to do this by mistake
8- Always bcc GDPR Comcopy comcopy@thederbyhighschool.co.uk for emails to parents
9- Emails must be professional in language, tone and content – emails can be subject to SAR (subject access requests)
10- Don't include an email trail unless it is needed
11- Avoid long emails – bullet points often help with communication
12- Through our 'Marketing and Communications Policy' parents/carers will be made aware that staff are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day
13- Staff and parents/carers will be made aware that part-time staff may take longer to reply due to the nature of their work schedule
14- Staff will be provided with any training available in the email systems, so they are able to implement any time saving functions available
15- Staff members will be advised not to subscribe to any junk type email chains, in order to reduce emails received
16- 'all staff emails' should be avoided unless there is an urgency related to the message (even then it must be noted that staff may not see the email immediately so another method of communication should be considered i.e. note brought to all lessons
17- Emails for whole school messages or emails for form messages to students should be a rarity – use the daily form messages document – link on your shortcuts