



# Aston Academy

## Specialising in Maths & Computing

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Dear Parents and Carers

We welcome communication with parents/carers and always aim to respond to queries quickly with a solution/resolution to any problems. We aim to ensure we are always polite and courteous, and give parents/carers the opportunity to voice their concerns.

However, we recognise that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives. Modern communication methods can mean more efficient sharing of information, though this needs to be structured to ensure that it is manageable for staff whose primary responsibility is to teach young people.

Teachers, Form Tutors and Heads of Faculty want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so. However, the majority of their time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. Support Staff responsibilities may stretch over several spheres. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time.

Senior Leaders also want to resolve any issues you may have communicated to the academy, however they also have a teaching commitment and are on duty (in various areas of the building) throughout the day. Therefore, please be mindful that Senior Leaders may not be available to speak over the phone during the day or meet with you without a pre-arranged meeting booked.

We will always listen to any concerns but please bear in mind that we may not always agree with your point of view and the school reserves the right to deal with issues in the way we see is appropriate. All members of staff deserve to be treated with respect in their workplace, and no parent/carer should use derogatory language/name calling/personal attack to express their frustration at a situation. If you feel that your concern is not being dealt with appropriately, please contact a more senior member of staff to discuss and resolve it. The school will direct a member of staff to cease contact with a parent/carer who is deemed to be abusive in language, tone or action.

We welcome contact from parent/carers using the following forms of communication:

### Telephone

Please use the main reception number to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Reception staff will relay messages to teachers or any relevant staff as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the receptionist who will ask a senior member of staff to call you back at their earliest opportunity.
- We will aim to respond to you within three working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons/meetings will not be interrupted for staff to take calls.



**All adults in school have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children**

## Email

- Please use the general school email [info@astonacademy.org](mailto:info@astonacademy.org) if you need to contact staff. Our admin team will be able to direct your query to the correct teacher or leader.
- Teachers are not in a position to check emails consistently throughout the day and the school does not expect work email to be checked during a teacher's personal time.
- We aim to respond to you as soon as possible and within three working days. Part-time staff may take longer to reply.

## Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them. In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:

- Form Tutor (for pastoral issues)
- Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Head of Faculty (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Learning Progress Manager
- Pastoral and Learning lead
- Assistant Vice Principal Link
- Vice Principal
- Principal

Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff.

We recognise that sometimes you receive news that may cause upset. It is not appropriate to come to school expecting to speak to a particular member of staff without an appointment. Appointments can be made via the school receptionist and a pre-arranged meeting will allow us to have the right information to hand and to meet with you at a time that both suits you and fits with that teacher's timetable and other fixed commitments.

If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.

For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

## Contacting you

If there is an issue regarding your child throughout the school day we will contact you by telephone using the first contact provided by you. In the event we cannot contact you using this number we will telephone contact 2/another parent/carer.

All texts, emails and letters go to both contacts with parental responsibility – this includes contacts who live in separate homes.

For general notices and detention letters we use School Comms. E-mails will be sent to the first contact provided by you. If you would like further contacts to be added, please request this.

We also remind you that you have access to the School Gateway app that will give you current information - student timetable, achievements and consequences.

Parents' evenings are booked via School Gateway.

If you need support with accessing these systems, please contact [info@astonacademy.org](mailto:info@astonacademy.org).

### **School social media feeds**

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information and key events at the school. This is for the benefit of parents and students.

Our whole-school X feed (formerly Twitter) is @AcademyAston, Facebook is @astonacademy.acet. Many of our school faculties also have their own Twitter and Instagram feeds.

If you have a question about an event or any other post on social media, please either email or call the school to be assured of a timely response.

Our social media feeds operate on a 'best efforts' basis by staff whose primary commitment is to the teaching and learning of students. Expectations around frequency and timeliness of updates need to be moderated accordingly, particularly after normal school hours or during holiday periods.

We understand that parents and carers particularly enjoy updates and photographs from school trips. The primary concern of staff needs to be the safety and learning of students on the trip and there may not be time to post about trips in detail. Parents/carers should also be aware that we are sometimes in locations where there is limited signal, so it may only be possible to update at the end of the day. We will endeavour to update parents on the return time for trips, though we will always encourage students to contact home themselves directly.

### **Appropriate use of social media**

Our social media sites contain terms and conditions relating to acceptable comments and posts. These terms and conditions are available on the main school Twitter and Facebook pages. We reserve the right to remove posts on these pages that breach the terms and conditions.

We are aware that some parents set up group chats for classes or year groups on WhatsApp, Facebook and other platforms. Whilst we recognise that these can be useful for some parents, these are not endorsed by the school and we will never post official messages on these forums. On occasion, information provided by parents on these forums can be inaccurate or not representative of the school's view. Please rely on official social media channels, the school website or email received directly from the school.

Our teachers and staff have a right to a personal life and to be protected from harassment online. We ask that parents avoid addressing staff members directly via social media and avoid posting inaccurate or defamatory statements about staff or the school on social media platforms.

*N.B. During school events, parents must only take pictures of their own child and ensure that there are no other children in the background. If pictures are shared via social media with other children in the background, we will unfortunately have to ban all photos being taken. Please take this issue very seriously and help keep our children safe.*

### **No response**

If you have not received a response from the school within three working days, please contact the school by emailing [info@astonacademy.org](mailto:info@astonacademy.org) or telephone the school and we will follow up your enquiry. Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.

Your sincerely



**Mrs Saeed**  
**Principal**