IWYS Alternative Provision Communications Policy

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Key Objectives:

All communications at IWYS Alternative Provision should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use jargon-free English and be easily understood by all
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context and audience
- Either be neutral or offer a balanced presentation of political views

Communication with parents and other important stakeholders

Effective communications enable us to share our provisions aims and values as well as keeping parents well informed about life at IWYS. This reinforces the vital role that parents play in supporting the provision and their child/ren.
Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents, it is essential that relationships are professional and parents are addressed in a formal manner in all written communication, whatever the form.

IWYS Alternative Provision aims to make our written communication as accessible and inclusive as Possible, we will ensure that all of our parents can access a form of communication, making alternative arrangements where necessary (e.g. EAL, SEN, IT access or literacy issues). We will seek parental feedback on the provision communication via our annual parent survey.

Communication Procedures

The IWYS can be contacted between 8.00am and 5.30pm on provision weekdays.

Postal Address	Telephone	Email:
IWYS Alternative Provision Fenton Town Hall 1 Gimson Street Fenton Stoke-on-Trent ST4 3FF	Charmaine Baines (Proprietor) 07431 214173 Joy Baines (Director) 07341 214170	charmaine@iwys.co.uk jordan.baines@iwys.co.uk

Message, Queries, Concerns	Person to Contact
If your child is absent from IWYS provision…	Please notify the provision office each day of absence by 9am either by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170 where you can leave a message or in person. Please note that this notification does not guarantee that absences will be authorised.
If you have a message about collection, concerns, home learning…	Please speak to IWYS on arrival, or contact IWYS by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170 Urgent messages may be left with all staff.

If you would like to talk about your child's learning progress…	Make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher eith by visiting IWYS or contacting by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant Provision Leader.
If you are concerned about social behaviours or bullying…	Make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher contact by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170. If, following your discussion you would like more information, make an appointment to meet with the relevant Provision Leader.
If you would like to discuss something related to your child's teacher…	Make an appointment to meet with the head of provision.
If you would like to discuss your child's special educational needs…	Make an appointment to meet with Proprietor Charmaine Bains or send an email to charmaine@iwys.co.uk
If you have a pay query …	Enquiries can be made by visiting IWYS or by contacting by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170
If you wanted to check if the provision is open…	Please check the provision website or Facebook page. You can also contact by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170

If having followed the above the steps above, your question or concern is not resolved, please make an appointment with the provision to meet with the Head of Provision or Business Manager.

Communication maybe via the following forms:

Formal letters

Staff will endeavour to reply to parents' letters as quickly as possible. Letters will be acknowledged in 3 working days from receipt and a reply sent within 10 working days. Letters must be approved by the Head of Provison before posting. Copies of correspondence with parents will be placed on the pupil's file.

E-Mail

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information. However it does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required. All e-mail should be treated as letters and should be checked carefully for technical errors and tone. Staff should acknowledge e-mail within 3 working days and send a full reply within 10 working days, unless the sender has been given a legitimate reason for the delay, such as consultation or investigation. **Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils, parents or conduct any provision business using personal email addresses.**

Telephone calls

Staff should take notes about the content of telephone calls, as they would with meetings with parents. Notes from telephone calls, including main points of discussion and action required/taken should be logged and filed in their pupil's file.

If a child is absent from the provision and we have no indication of the reason, staff will contact a parent on the same day, to find out the reason for the absence.

Meeting with parents

We encourage parents to contact the provision if issues arise regarding their child's progress or wellbeing. For everyday issues or persistent or serious issues, parents should contact the Head pf provision. Any parent wishing to meet with a member of staff should contact by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170 in advance and request a meeting with that member of staff. This will then be arranged at a time convenient to both parties. The subject for that meeting should be shared in advance to help staff to be fully prepared to ensure the meeting is productive.

Parents should not come to the provision to talk to a member of staff without an appointment. Staff members may be unavailable to meet should this happen.

Parents (like all visitors) should contact by telephone on 07341 214173 or 07341 214170 prior to meeting with a member of staff. If the meeting is due to take place outside office hours, separate arrangements can be made.
If a meeting with a parent is taking place outside normal provision hours, the member of staff should try, where possible, to ensure that another colleague is nearby. It is perfectly acceptable to call a meeting to a close in order to allow time for further investigation.

When a pupil is accompanying a parent for a meeting, it is perfectly acceptable to ask a pupil to remain out of the meeting for part of it, particularly when a parent is criticising a teacher or any aspect of the provision. It is damaging to the relationship with the pupil for them to witness this, but parents may need to air particular feelings, and this is a useful mechanism for this. The teacher should not feel threatened at any time and is encouraged to stop a meeting should this be the case.

Planned Meetings

At the beginning of the provision year, meetings are arranged to share the curriculum, routines and additional information. Should a class teacher change during the year these meetings will be revisited where possible.

Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents of planning, content and arrangements.

Possible contentious meetings

A member of staff may ask for another member of staff to accompany them and should always do so when the meeting may be contentious in any way or if their input will add value to the meeting. When possible, a Key Stage Leader (then SLT) will attend this meeting. The key discussion points, actions and decisions should be recorded.

Staff should call a meeting to a close in the event of the parent becoming angry or abusive. The member of staff should report such an incident to a member of the leadership team and seek further advice. The Head of provision should either accompany the member of staff to a further meeting with the parent or hold it without the original member of staff present.

Social Networking Sites/Blogs etc (See also E-Safety Policy)

Staff will not communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites nor accept them as their "friends". The exception is networks or blogs set up specifically for the purpose of teaching and learning.

Written reports

Once a year, a full written report is sent to parents on their child's progress in each subject. The report identifies areas of strength and areas for further development.
Pupils are also given the opportunity to comment on their own progress and parents are invited to make a comment.
In addition, parents can request to meet with teachers to discuss the child's progress.
When pupils have special educational needs, or if they are making less than expected progress or experiencing behavioural or disciplinary difficulties, we may arrange to meet with parents more regularly.

IWYS Alternative Provision Website

The provision website provides information about the provision and an opportunity to promote the provision to a wider audience and provide guidance on admissions for prospective parents and pupils. It also has a regularly updated area for information for current parents. In addition, it has up-to-date policies available for parents to view. Information guides are also accessible through the website.

Public Access Documents

Curriculum information, policies and copies of recent letters will be available on the provision website. Key dates for the year (where possible) are sent out in September.

Communication with other provisions and outside agencies

Before joining new pupils are encouraged to visit in the provision prior to starting. Following parental permission, we will contact the previous provision to help gather key information to aid this process. We will receive the individual pupil file from the previous provision once that child is on roll.

Visits from External Agencies

As part of our curriculum and extra-curricular provision, it may be that we invite guest speakers, experts and representatives from a range of organisations and institutions to the provision to speak to and engage with our pupils. Prior to these visits, we will agree the terms and content of their input into the provision and ensure that it is in accordance with our policies.

Safeguarding including child protection (See also Safeguarding Policy)

We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our provision should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify, and help abused children. Because of this when any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Leader, who may share this information with the Social Services.

We are supported by and regularly communicate with various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on ways to meet pupils' needs, to ensure that all pupils can participate fully in provision life. Support comes from such services as Educational Welfare, Educational Psychologists, Social Care etc.

Confidentiality

We hold information on pupils in our provision and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Details will be been sent to parents about the types of data we hold, why we hold that data, and who we may pass it on to. This is a requirement under the Data Protection Act 1998. Parents have a right to view the information we hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. (Please see our data protection policy)

Communication with colleagues at IWYS Alternative Provision

E-mail (See also E-Safety Policy and Agreement)
The provision gives all staff their own email account to use for all provision business. Email can be an efficient way of communicating with colleagues and passing on information. However, it should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face contact and staff must consider whether it is the best way to communicate in each situation and understand that there is permanent record of any communication.
Teachers should ensure that they:

- Do not engage in private /personal correspondence with a pupil. This includes texting and social networking.
- Under no circumstances should they contact pupils or parents, or conduct any provision business, using personal email accounts or text messaging.
- No chain letters are sent and no advertisements are embedded in any communication.
- Any political views are neutral or balanced.

Staff Briefings and Meetings

Staff briefings take place each morning and afternoon. Any concerns regadiing a student are shared with the relevant professional's team, where any issues are raised and events from the day.
All meetings will be reviewed to ensure that they have had the desired impact.

Notice Boards

Staff notice boards are located in the staff room. These are maintained and updated by office and leadership team. Care should be taken that any display which has as its focus a political issue, presents a balanced view or an overview that communicates about the diversity of opinion on this matter or indicates where alternative perspectives may be found.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- E-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement for staff and pupils
- Safeguarding and Safe Recruitment Policy
- Privacy notice Policies
- Data Protection Policy