



Policy: Communications Policy

Author: A Norrington

Governor Committee: N/A

Approved by: Headteacher

Date Approved: September 2025

Review Date: Spring 2026



Red Kite Alliance

Positive Communications Charter

As a group of over 50 schools across the region, we are committed to listening and engaging positively with our wider community for the benefit of the young people in our care.

As a Red Kite Alliance school, we have adopted the following principles when responding to any issues raised by parents and carers or other members of the wider community:

All dialogue, written or verbal, must be polite and professional.

We recognise that some issues are emotive, but we reserve the right to end any conversation, meeting or phone call if the language, tone or manner used becomes inappropriate (threatening, abusive or rude).

We will acknowledge all complaints within three working days (during term time only).

This may initially be a simple acknowledgement or a plan to discuss further at a scheduled appointment.

Please be aware that the school will allocate the most appropriate, available member of staff to respond to your enquiry.

This may not be the specific person you have asked for.

Meetings with staff will only take place when an appointment has been scheduled.

All our staff are engaged in duties throughout the school day and are not available on demand.

We will respond to all concerns raised within the framework of our complaints policy.

The policy outlines the various steps that complaints go through and is available on the school website.

Some decisions are made at a school level, and we will always act in the best interests of the child.

Within the AGS Complaints Policy, we have a decision-making protocol which details those issues that usually require minimal discussion as they are decisions that all schools are reasonably and lawfully allowed to make without stakeholder approval.

When a complaint has been through all our levels of response, that signals the end of the process as far as the school is concerned.

We ask that our community respect this.

Agreed by Red Kite Alliance Headteachers and Principals, June 2025

1. Introduction

At Allerton Grange School, we are committed to nurturing respectful, productive relationships between school staff, parents, carers, and visitors. Our aim is to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment that supports every student's academic, personal, and social development.

We value open and honest communication and encourage constructive feedback. In all interactions—whether face-to-face, by phone, or online—we expect mutual respect and courtesy. Our staff are fully focused on supporting students' progress and wellbeing, and clear, appropriate communication is essential in enabling this.

While we welcome diverse viewpoints and routinely consult with families and stakeholders, decisions taken by the school will always reflect what we believe to be in the best interests of our students and the wider school community. These decisions, particularly around areas such as curriculum, conduct, uniform, or whole-school priorities, rest with the Headteacher and leadership team and do not require parental approval.

Where stakeholder advice or feedback is received, the school reserves the right not to act on it if it conflicts with legal frameworks or Department for Education (DfE) guidance or is not judged to serve our students' needs. We will not engage in protracted or unreasonable discussions on matters where the school's position is final.

Please refer to our 'Framework for Informed Decision-Making' (see Complaints Policy Appendix One) for further clarification.

2. Standards for Communication: Expectations for Parents, Carers and Visitors

To maintain positive and productive relationships, we ask that all parents, carers and visitors:

1. Treat staff, students, and other members of the school community with kindness and respect.
2. Model calm, responsible behaviour in communications, including on digital and social platforms.
3. Use the appropriate channels to raise questions or concerns (contact details available on our website).
4. Communicate with staff in a polite and respectful tone.
5. Refrain from using language or behaviour that may be interpreted as aggressive, intimidating, or excessively demanding.
6. Support the school in addressing behavioural issues and understand that the Behaviour Policy (PPD) applies to all students (reasonable adjustments will be made, where appropriate, for students with disabilities in line with the Equality Act (2010)). **The school does not negotiate disciplinary measures.**
7. Request meetings in advance and avoid attending the school without an appointment. **AGS will not accommodate unplanned meetings.**
8. Accept that the school will direct concerns to the most appropriate member of staff; this is not negotiable.

9. Represent the school positively in public forums and avoid disparaging commentary online.
10. Respect staff workloads and avoid over-contacting or placing unrealistic demands on staff.
11. Allow up to two working days for staff to acknowledge receipt of emails or calls.

3. Unacceptable Behaviour

All members of our community have a right to learn or work free from intimidation, abuse or aggression. We will not tolerate:

- Shouting, swearing, or using threatening language
- Physical intimidation or aggressive gestures
- Repeated or excessive complaints once issues have been addressed
- Acts or comments that are discriminatory or prejudiced
- Bullying, harassment (including online), or threatening behaviour
- Vandalism or damage to school property
- Breaching school security or site access procedures

Where necessary, the school will take appropriate action to restrict communication or request police involvement to safeguard staff and students. Staff will record and report all incidents of unacceptable behaviour to SLT. Individuals displaying such conduct may be asked to leave school premises, be escorted off site, formally banned, or reported to the authorities.

4. Excessive Contact and Communication Limits

Given the size and scale of Allerton Grange School, staff will always prioritise face to face support for our students over dealing with parental concerns. Accordingly:

- Excessive or repeated contact, especially when an issue has already been addressed may prevent staff from teaching and/or supporting students. To support staff and students, further communication may be limited or cease once a concern has been addressed.
- Staff cannot be contacted or interrupted during lesson times.
- All communications should be directed via the school office or email.
- Emergency matters will be dealt with appropriately and separately.
- If the tone or content of any communication is abusive or inappropriate, the school may cease further contact.

5. Communications Plans

In line with DfE guidance, where communication becomes overly complex, persistent, or repetitive, we may implement a formal communications plan. This will set clear expectations for both parties, including how and when communication will occur, to help manage concerns effectively.

6. Political Neutrality

Allerton Grange supports thoughtful debate and critical thinking. However, as required by the Education Act (1996), the promotion of political ideologies or symbols is not permitted. Lessons, the school environment and school events must remain non-partisan and inclusive of all views.

7. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by key statutory legislation, which includes, but is not limited to:

- The Education Act 2011
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018 (incorporating the General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR)
- The Human Rights Act 1998

7.1 Malicious Communications Act 1988

It is a criminal offence under this law to send communications—whether written, verbal, or digital—that are threatening, intentionally misleading, grossly offensive, or indecent, where the intent is to cause distress or anxiety. Offenders may face a fine or up to six months' imprisonment.

7.2 Protection from Harassment Act 1997

This legislation makes it unlawful to engage in a repeated course of conduct that may be interpreted as harassment. It also covers efforts to pressure someone into acting against their will. Online abuse or sustained negative contact (including trolling or cyberbullying) may also fall under this law, which carries penalties of up to five years' imprisonment in severe cases.

7.3 Defamation Act 2013

This Act provides legal recourse against individuals who publish false statements—spoken or written—that seriously damage the reputation of the school or its employees. This includes defamatory content shared via social media or public forums.

7.4 Equality Act 2010

The law prohibits discrimination, harassment, or victimisation based on protected characteristics such as age, gender, race, disability, religion, and others. Any form of conduct that breaches these protections may result in legal action.

7.5 Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR)

Allerton Grange School is required to uphold the confidentiality and integrity of personal data relating to students, families, and staff. This includes lawful collection, storage, and handling of information. Breaches may lead to serious legal consequences.

7.6 Human Rights Act 1998

This law protects essential rights such as freedom of expression, the right to privacy, and protection from discrimination. These rights are upheld within the context of ensuring the safety, learning, and wellbeing of students and staff.

The school guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), such as the publication *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

8. Related Policies

This Communications Policy is consistent with and supported by several other key policies, including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- [Allerton Grange Home School Agreement](#)

9. Responsible Use of Social Media

We expect all stakeholders to engage with social media in a responsible and respectful manner. Posting harmful or defamatory content, engaging in online harassment, or spreading misinformation about the school or its staff may result in legal action or communication restrictions. Staff must not be contacted via any form of social media.

Allerton Grange will respond to incidents of misconduct proportionately and may implement the following actions based on the severity of the situation:

- **Abusive Phone Calls:** Calls that involve hostility or threats will be ended immediately.
- **Inappropriate Emails or Messages:** Staff are not obliged to respond to communications that are aggressive, offensive, or unreasonably demanding.
- **Site Access Restrictions:** Under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996, individuals causing disruption on school premises may be removed or banned.
- **Police Involvement:** Serious incidents, including threats or physical aggression, will be reported to the police to ensure safety.

10. Support During Meetings

Parents and carers may bring a support person to school meetings if agreed in advance. This individual may offer emotional support but must not speak on behalf of the parent/carer. If the support person disrupts the meeting, they may be asked to leave, and the meeting may be rescheduled or ended. AGS staff do not consent to being recorded during meetings or calls and may end the conversation if they become aware of recording.

11. Handling Complaints

A complaint made about a staff member does not automatically mean they will be excluded from future contact, unless such contact would compromise the complaint process. Complaints are managed in accordance with our published Complaints Policy.