Edwinstree Middle School

A Voluntary Controlled Church of England School

All mankind is made in the image of God Genesis 1:26 27

Policy on Communicating with Parents & Carers
Based on the Hertfordshire SEND 'ACT' Approach

www.edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

Telephone: 01763-271446

Adopted Sept 2026

Reviewed Sept 2027

1. Introduction and Core Philosophy

At Edwinstree Middle School, we recognise that a strong, collaborative partnership between home and school is essential for every child's success, happiness, and holistic development. In alignment with Hertfordshire County Council's SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) communication strategy, our communication framework is anchored firmly in the **ACT** approach: **Accurate, Compassionate, and Timely**. This policy ensures that all interactions with parents, carers, and families are professional, transparent, and focused on the best outcomes for our students.

2. The ACT Communication Pillars

2.1 Accurate (Clear, Fact-Based, and Jargon-Free)

- **Plain Language Focus:** Staff will communicate using accessible language. We commit to avoiding or explaining complex educational terminology, pedagogical jargon, and local authority acronyms.
- **Verified Facts:** Information concerning pupil progress, statutory SEND provisions, or general school events will be thoroughly checked for veracity before distribution.
- **Anticipating Needs:** Communications regarding key transitions, exams, or major school events will contain all logistical variables upfront (timings, uniform requirements, equipment) to alleviate parental anxiety.

2.2 Compassionate (Empathic, Respectful, and Inclusive)

- **Active Listening:** We respect and value parental insights, acknowledging that families hold deep, historical knowledge of their children's unique strengths and vulnerabilities.
- **Kind Tone:** All written correspondence and spoken exchanges must remain professional, respectful, empathetic, and strictly non-judgmental.
- **Accessible Formats:** We actively adapt our methods to fit family needs, offering hard copies, translation help, or assisted phone calls where digital methods present a barrier.

2.3 Timely (Prompt, Proactive, and Predictable)

- **Standard Response Windows:** Staff aim to acknowledge routine emails or phone inquiries within 48 to 72 hours (2 to 3 school working days) during term time.
- **Advance Notice:** The school will provide clear, advance notice for all scheduled physical or virtual meetings, annual reviews, and calendar changes.
- **Proactive Indicators:** Teachers will reach out early if a pupil displays unexpected variations in academic achievement, emotional well-being, or behavior, avoiding surprise escalation.

3. Communication Channels and Protocols

To maintain an orderly and highly efficient flow of information, parents and carers are encouraged to use the designated contact pathways outlined below:

Nature of Inquiry	Primary Point of Contact	Expected Outcome / Timeline
General / Routine Progress	Form Tutor or Subject Teacher via school office email	Acknowledged within 2-3 school working days.
SEND Provision / Learning Plans	SENDCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) sencoteam@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk	Scheduled review meeting or specialized update.
Attendance	attendance@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk	Immediate escalation to DSL or Senior Leadership.
Basic enquiry/information	admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk	
Wellbeing/Welfare	Graduated response small request to tutor and or HOY via admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk Significant concern: wellbeinghub@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk	
Pupip premium	s.marler@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk (only works Monday to Wed) if other days use the admin address.	
Safeguarding	DSL m.rowlands@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk j.gant@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk	

4. Mutual Expectations and Conduct

A successful partnership requires mutual respect. While Edwinstree Middle School staff will always adhere to the ACT principles, we expect parents and carers to engage with school staff in a courteous, calm, and collaborative manner. Threats, abusive language, or aggressive behavior toward any member of the school community will not be tolerated and may result in restricted communication access.

Policy Origin: Edwinstree School Governance Template
Reference Framework: Hertfordshire Local Offer SEND Communications Approach
Review Cycle: Triennial