



Communicating with Parents & Families

How and when will we communicate with you? What you can expect.

Here at Castle Wood Academy we recognise that effective communication between parents and school is essential to making sure we get the best outcomes for our children.

During Covid and lockdown we introduced extra ways to communicate but now we are streamlining our communication channels to make it easier to keep up with what your child is learning and contact us when you need to.

Arbor and Email

Arbor is our school app. It is essential that you download this app to your phone or device as messages and reminders will be sent through this app about all sorts of things to do with school. Logging into the Arbor app enables you to do all sorts of things such as check your child's attendance data, update your child's emergency contact details, make payments and sign them up to clubs and events.



Arbor messages will often be short reminders about a variety of topics and might be sent out daily. These will be pushed to your phone or device, just make sure you have your device set up to accept notifications from Arbor! Letters and other more detailed information will usually be sent out via email. We will try to keep letters home to a minimum - usually we will only try and send out a maximum of one letter each day. We advise all parents to check their emails regularly and make sure notifications are enabled on their phones so that they don't miss anything!

Occasionally, it may be necessary to send out paper letters (e.g. where we need a hard copy of a reply/permission slip). These letters will be sent home in book bags and a reminder message will be sent to you via the Arbor app, so you are aware that a hard copy letter is coming home that day.

The Arbor app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store.

When parents come to us saying they can't get Arbor messages, most of the time it is because the emails are arriving into their junk email box. Please make sure you check your junk/spam email boxes. Some email providers have very closed filtering systems, so keep an eye on that - we don't want you to miss out on anything!

Termly / weekly Parent Updates

At the start of each term teachers will send out an update to all parents via email. This will contain a link to a short video explaining what your child will be learning about that term in a range of subject areas. It will tell you what days your child will need to come in PE kit or bring a swimming kit. It will also tell you what the class teacher would like you to do with your child at home to support their learning, and list any activities, websites or apps you could direct your child towards to support the learning going on in class.

These will be sent via email and a reminder message via Arbor will also be sent to let you know to look out for it.

Teachers may also send out weekly updates or reminders explaining what work children can do at home to support their learning in school. These weekly reminders may be sent out via Showbie, our learning app.

Parents Evenings and Reports

During an academic year parents will receive three reports (most primary schools usually only offer two per year) and will have the chance to attend two parents' evenings.

October	Parents Evening 10-minute appointments with your child's class teacher to discuss their social progress and attainment. It will cover how they have settled in and the assessments the teacher has done at the start of the year to 'baseline' your child.
January	Autumn Term Report A snapshot to show how your child is attaining at this point in the year. Are they on track to achieve as well as they can?
February	Parents Evening 10-minute appointments with your child's class teacher to discuss their mid-year report, academic and social progress and attainment. (These will be held in January for Year 6 children).
April	Spring Term Report A snapshot to show how your child is attaining at this point in the year. Are they on track to achieve as well as they can?
July	End of Year Report More detailed report with comments and levels of attainment in a variety of subject areas
ANY TIME	If there is anything you are unsure about or would like more information about, please make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher by ringing the office on 01427811516. Alternatively speak directly with your child's teacher at drop off or pick up.

Facebook Page

Our school Facebook Page can be found here.

<https://www.facebook.com/CastleWoodAcademy/>

This page enables us to share important information with our whole school community, as well as keeping up to date with what our children have been getting up to!



Try not ask questions in the comments or via Messenger however! Although we check this regularly, it's not always done daily. So if you have a question about something to do with school the best way to get an answer quickly is to ring or email the School office (see below).

Twitter

Our school twitter feed is [@CastleWood](#)

This is an informal way of sharing learning from across the school. Please be aware, some teachers will post more often and some less. In general, expect to get 1-3 posts a week from each teacher to share what the children are doing in class (although some may do more).

YouTube Channel

Check out Tall Oaks Academy [Trust Youtube Channel](#)

Here we will publish videos covering a wide range of topics including school protocols and procedures, class assemblies at least twice a year for each class, explainer videos sharing what children will be learning once every term and many other topics. These videos will usually be linked to via our Facebook page.



School Website

Our website contains information which doesn't change very often. Here you can find information about term dates, uniform, school policy and links and videos to support parents on a range of subjects including how we teach English and Maths and how to keep your children safe online.

Parent Information Meetings

There are many meetings for parents to attend throughout the year where we share information with you face to face. Some of these are listed below:

Topic	When does it usually happen?
SATS preparation	October and April
Transition, to support moving to the next year group	During Summer Term
Tapestry	September / October
How to support your child learning Phonics	September / October
Phonics Screening test Preparation	May
Parents Evenings	October and either January or February

Assessments

Teachers are always busy, constantly assessing your child throughout the year. Teacher assessments are ongoing and might take the form of a test, but more often will be the teacher using their professional judgement and experience to assess if your child is attaining above, below or where they should be for that point in the year. You'll notice the word test is being used. Don't worry, we work really hard to make sure children feel like these are just a normal part of their learning and not anything to worry about.

Some of our forms of assessment include:

- EYFS Read Write Inc Assessments
- EYFS - Tapestry, which is used for continuous assessment through the year
- Practice SATs style reading tests (called 'Wordsmith') at the end of each term or unit of work
- Practice SATs style maths tests (called 'White Rose') at the end of each term or unit of work
- 'Read Write Inc' Phonics assessment sheets completed at least every 6 weeks, after which children may move groups
- Practice Phonics Screening tests
- Writing tasks
- Science Experiments
- Spelling Assessments

Complaints, worries or concerns

Despite our best efforts, we won't always get everything right. Occasionally we will make a mistake or something will go wrong. Please let us know at the earliest opportunity. We will always do our best to correct a mistake or address your concerns.

Most of the time, the best person to speak to will be your child's class teacher. If they cannot help, please speak to one of our Assistant Heads. If they cannot resolve things to your satisfaction then please arrange an appointment to speak to the Head of School.

If this does not resolve your issue then please refer to the Tall Oaks Academy Trust complaints procedure which can be found here <https://www.talloaksacademy.co.uk/policies/>

Anything else?

We are always happy to talk to you about anything regarding your child's education. If you have a question or query please don't hesitate to get in touch using one of the means below. If a teacher or member of staff cannot speak to you straight away they will always get back to you as soon as they can.

Telephone: 01427811516

Email: correspondence@talloaksacademy.co.uk

Post: Castle Wood Academy, The Avenue, Gainsborough. DN21 1EG.