



# Parental Handbook

September 2017



## Communication

The primary contact for every child is their Learning Manager. Please be aware that often when contacting the Academy most staff will be teaching or on duty between the hours of 8.25am and 2.30pm and whilst staff will endeavour to answer queries from parents/carers as quickly as possible, at times it is not practical to do so until the end of the school day or even the following day.

As parents/carers, it can often be challenging to know who the most appropriate person to contact is. To assist, we have put together what we hope will be a useful guide.

General questions should be directed to the **Main Reception, 01302 868414**. The receptionist will be able to assist you in directing your questions to the relevant person. Main reception opens at 8.00am and closes at 4.00pm, when closed an answering machine is available for you to leave a message.

Information regarding attendance including reporting a student absence should be directed to the **Attendance Officer 01302 868414 ext 285**.

Information concerning your child's general well-being should, in the first instance, be directed to your child's Learning Manager who will pass it on to the relevant personnel as necessary. Please refer to the contact details on the following page.

If you are telephoning the Academy to inform us that your child has forgotten their lunch/PE kit or if you need to get an urgent message to them, please contact the **Main Reception 01302 868414**. Please remember the academy is a busy place and contacting reception should not be used as a means to pass on non-urgent messages.

If you are enquiring about an educational visit that has been planned or you wish to speak to your child's teacher about their academic progress, please contact the Main Reception who will redirect your call as necessary.

### Learning Manager Contact Details

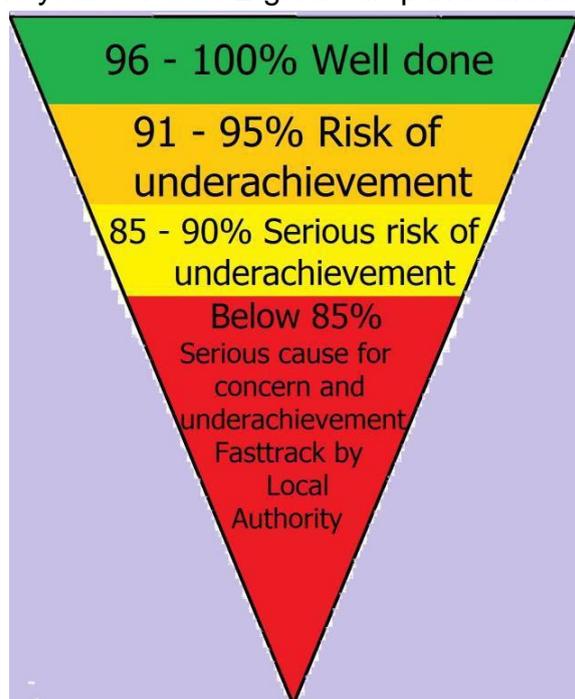
Year	Name	Email
7	Mrs Parker	<a href="mailto:parkers@theallsaints.net">parkers@theallsaints.net</a>
8	Miss Huckerby	<a href="mailto:huckerbys@theallsaints.net">huckerbys@theallsaints.net</a>
9	Mr Tomlinson	<a href="mailto:tomlinsont@theallsaints.net">tomlinsont@theallsaints.net</a>
10	Miss Burke	<a href="mailto:burkec@theallsaints.net">burkec@theallsaints.net</a>
11	Miss Redden	<a href="mailto:reddens@theallsaints.net">reddens@theallsaints.net</a>
Sixth Form	Mrs Simpson	kennedyj@theallsaints.net

### Attendance Information

At Rossington All Saints Academy excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student. Our Academy attendance target of 97% is the minimum that we expect for all students.

- To achieve this attendance level, a student should have no more than 8 **days'** absence in an entire academic year.
- If a student's attendance falls to 90% this is the equivalent of missing **half a day every week;**
- 85% is equivalent to a student missing around **6 weeks** in an academic year.

Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and research suggests that just **17 days'** absence in any one year = 1 GCSE grade drop in achievement.



## **How Parents/Carers can help**

We would appreciate the full support of parents/carers in ensuring that your child attends wherever possible. This means only keeping your child off school when it is unavoidable, this helps them develop good habits for the world of work.

### **For example:**

**Illness** – only keep your child at home for genuine illnesses, not minor ailments. If you're not sure, send them to school with a note and the Academy can contact you if there's a problem.

**Medical/dental appointments** – make routine appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, please notify us in advance and ensure that your child attends school both before and after the appointment as appropriate, signing in and out at student reception.

**Family Holidays** – please arrange holidays during the school holidays, not during term time. The Academy will not authorise any holidays during time term unless there are exceptional circumstances.

*\*If you feel there are exceptional circumstances please write to the Principal providing full details.*

**Absence for other reasons** - any other request for absence will be dealt with individually (for example, compassionate reasons). Please contact Mrs Anderson, attendance officer, to discuss your request in advance of any absence.

### **How does the Academy help?**

We monitor students' attendance and punctuality very closely and will follow up unexplained absence with parents/carers, by telephone or by letter. Where a student's attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact you to discuss ways in which the Academy can support you and your child.

### **Reporting Absence**

If your child is too ill to attend the Academy, you should contact the Academy as soon as possible on the day of absence by telephone. We ask that you contact us each day your child is absent, unless you have already given us an indication of how long the absence will last. On your child's return, please fill in an absence note in the back of the Student Planner which your child should take to their Form Tutor.

### **Punctuality**

Please ensure your child arrives at the Academy for 8.20am so that they are in lesson for 8.25am. Any student who arrives to lesson after 8.25am will be deemed to be late and must sign in at attendance and will be given a detention unless there is a genuine reason for their lateness supported by a note in their planner.

## **Leave of Absence (for holidays)**

Taking time off for holidays interferes with students' learning and progress. In addition, students' exam results may be affected; they may miss important exams or controlled assessments. No leave of absence for holidays will be granted during term time. Absence taken without authorisation will lead to your child having unauthorised absences and may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority. Penalty Notices are issued under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2006 and are £60 per parent per child if paid within 28 days.

***Please support the Academy***

## **Students' Uniform**

The academy uniform strongly encourages each student to take a personal pride in their appearance and will, as part of PSHE discuss the importance of personal appearance with them. The academy uniform has been designed to be smart, practical and comfortable. Staff are expected to check uniform as students enter and leave classes and equally, as they move around the academy. Make-up (including nail varnish) is not to be worn.

Jewellery is not permitted.

## **Personal Property**

Students are responsible for their own personal property, including bags and coats. It is recommended that all uniform items have name tags sewn into them. Students should not leave their belongings in classrooms, we recommend that students purchase a locker to store their items in. Lost property may have been handed into Student Support Mentors or to reception. The academy does not accept responsibility for items that are lost.

## **Uniform Issues**

Students will not be allowed into the academy if they are not in full Academy uniform. Students will either be sent home to come back in the correct uniform, or be admitted into the Consequence Room or be sent home to return to school with a parent or carer. When this is the case, absences will be classed as unauthorised and, therefore, subject to the processes to ensure good attendance and punctuality.

We do, however, recognise that there may be emergency situations when there are difficulties with uniform. If a problem is notified to the Academy in advance, a stock of clean uniform will be available for students to wear, this will include shoes.

Academy ties and badges can be purchased from school reception. School Uniform can be purchased locally through many outlets.

## **Visiting the Academy**

Safeguarding students is a priority for Rossington All Saints Academy

All visitors must report to Reception immediately they enter the site.



## **PARKING**

For the safety of all students we would ask that you drop your child off outside the school grounds and wherever possible do not bring vehicles onto the site.

## FAQ

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>
My child is ill and will not be attending school	Contact the Attendance Officer (details on contacts page) and explain the reason why your child will be absent from school that day.
I need to take my child out of school for. .	Contact the Attendance Officer or Reception (and explain the reason why your child will be absent from school that day.
I want to take my child out of school for a holiday	Please note: holidays in term time are not authorised.
I am concerned that my child is being bullied	Contact your child's Learning Manager and explain your concerns to them.
My child is feeling unwell but I have still sent them into school	Write a note in your child's planner explaining this. If your child deteriorates throughout the day, the academy will contact you if we feel your child needs to be at home or in the event of an emergency. Please ensure we have the correct details to contact someone in case of an emergency.
My child has had an item confiscated	The Academy does not allow smart items (technology, music equipment), jewellery or make-up. Items will be confiscated and stored in at the academy reception Principal's Office. These can be collected at the end of the school day.

### **Maintaining a Good Working Relationship- Complaints Procedure**

The Academy will aim to provide as many opportunities to keep you informed and involved in your child's progress as it possibly can. Co-operation between parents/carers, staff and governors leads to a shared sense of purpose and good atmosphere in the Academy.

However, we recognise that there are times when things may go wrong, when concerns and differences of opinion can develop. These can usually be resolved by speaking to the right person.

### **Q1. What should I do if I have a concern/complaint about the Academy?**

The first step to resolving any concern or complaint is to discuss the issue with the Academy. It is important to be clear about the issue that you want to discuss before approaching the Academy.

Although you may want a decision or situation to change, it is best for all parties if the discussions can end on a positive note with no bad feelings. Talking with Academy staff can help you to understand how they see the situation and give you the chance to say what it looks like to you.

While some schools can see parents who just “pop in”, this is not generally possible. If you have a concern, make an appointment so you have enough time to talk things through.

### **Q2. Who should I contact?**

This will depend on the situation. Often the Learning Manager will be able to deal with the matter. More serious issues will require a senior member of staff or the Principal. There should always be a discussion in the hope of solving difficulties informally.

### **Q3. What if I am still unhappy?**

Ask for an appointment with a Vice Principal or Principal.

It may help to give the Academy some days/times when you are available to help find the earliest possible appointment for both parties.

Before attending the meeting, it would be useful to put down your concerns in writing as both you and the Academy can spend the meeting time looking for a solution to the problem.

### **Q4. What should I expect to happen as a result of the meeting?**

After the meeting the Vice Principal/Principal may need to gather further information to inform his decisions and help achieve a resolution. If this is the case, he will write to you outlining how the information gathering will progress and give details of any actions to be taken.

### **5. What if I feel the Principal hasn't answered my question or investigated my concern?**

If you are still unhappy, you may, if you wish, ask the Chair of Governors to consider your concern/complaint. This is a formal process.

You will need to write to the Chair of Governors, stating that you wish to make a formal complaint. Remember to make it clear what it is that you are complaining about and what you would like the Governors to do.

### **Q6. What will happen next?**

Normally, a small panel of Governors who have not been involved with your concern/complaint before, will meet to consider your concern/complaint. You will also be invited to meet the panel to present your case in person.

The panel will then review and/or investigate the Principal's handling of/response to your concern/ complaint and decide if it was appropriate and fair.

The panel will write to you to explain its decision.

### **Q7. What do I do if I am still unhappy?**

If you are still unhappy you may ask the Academies Division of the Department for Education, (DfE) whether your complaint is one that can be investigated by them. To do this you need to write to them at Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington, DL3 9BG within 10 school days of receipt of the panel's letter.

If the DfE investigates your complaint, its role is only to look at the way it has been handled i.e. whether the complaints procedure has been followed correctly. It cannot investigate the original complaint.

If you are still unhappy you may contact The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) or the Local Government Ombudsman.

**Remember** the whole process exists so that everyone's views can be heard. The aim is that the complaint should be dealt with properly and fairly.

Communications with the Academy are welcome.

Our goal is to support students in achieving their full potential because research shows that lifelong learners are more likely to be happier, healthier, have better jobs, contribute more to society and live longer and have more fulfilled lives.

### **Supporting Your Child**

Your support is essential in helping your child to realise their full potential. Please inform us of any issues which you feel may impact upon their learning or general well-being.

#### **Tips for a positive start to the school day:**

- The beginning of the day can be a rush. Your child will need to be organised so that they are ready to learn. Encourage your child to pack their school bag and lay out their uniform before going to bed each evening.
- Try to make sure your child eats breakfast - this provides essential energy and will help him or her perform better at school. Breakfast is available for students in the restaurant from 8.00am.
- Allow plenty of time for your child to get to school - build extra time into your morning routine so that if there are transport problems he or she won't be late for registration.
- Each evening check for letters home or consent forms to sign as this will help avoid early morning panic and items being forgotten. Letters are copied onto the academy website under 'Parent Page'.

## **General advice**

- Encourage them to attend regularly. Make doctor/dentist appointments outside school hours or in school holidays. Insist your child aims for 100% attendance.
- Contact their student support mentor if you have any concerns.
- Insist that your child is punctual and arrives at school by 8.20am.
- Check that they have the right equipment for the day. If they forget anything, equipment can be dropped off at main reception.
- Take an interest in their work by asking to see their books and signing their planner to indicate you have seen them.
- Read and sign their Student Planner each week. Check it is being used effectively.
- Insist they work hard, listen and follow instructions.
- Support them by attending their parent evening.

## **Equipment Check list:**

- Planner
- Pens
- Pencils
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Calculator
- Reading book
- PE kits (on the appropriate day)



## **The Classroom Expectations are:**

- Arrive to lessons on time and with the correct equipment
- Follow instructions the first time
- Listen to the person who should be talking
- Keep hands, feet and unkind words to yourself
- Put your hand up if you want attention

## **Code of Conduct**

We will provide your child with a high quality education and facilities that are safe and secure. We will treat them with courtesy and respect at all times.

We expect that whenever your child is in the Academy, they behave sensibly and appropriately and always show courtesy and consideration to all members of staff and

students. Remember no-one has the right to interrupt the learning of others.

**In our classrooms we want your child to:**

- arrive at lessons and registration on time
- bring all necessary equipment in suitable bags  
eg. pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, text books, calculator, PE kit and planner
- listen to the person who should be talking
- always follow the teacher's instructions
- keep books, desks and walls free of graffiti
- work sensibly and do not disturb their classmates
- adhere to Classroom Expectations
- try to see other people's point of view
- know that eating and drinking is not allowed

**Tips for Supporting Homework**

- Look for opportunities to talk to your child about schoolwork. Try to find topics you're both interested in so it's more of a conversation than an interrogation. Ask your child if there's anything you can do to help with homework.
- Your child may be unwilling to show you work if they are not happy with it. They need sensitive encouragement. Too much criticism can make it difficult for them to show you work again.
- Discuss the organisation of the work.
- Do find a quiet place at home to use as a homework area. It needs a flat surface, a good light source and the right equipment e.g. pens, pencils, ruler, scissors, glue.
- Do be aware of modern teaching methods, e.g. in long division. Don't teach your child methods you used at school. It could confuse them!
- Do turn off the TV - but you could have music on if they find it helpful.
- Don't give your child the answer in order to get a task finished. Instead, explain how to look up information or find a word in a dictionary.

**Exam and Revision Guidance**

**How to Help with Revision and Exams**

- Start revision in a positive manner. Help your child to write in the dates of their exams. Revision timetables can be found at the back of the student planner.

- Check your child's revision focus is on the subjects that is his/her weakest. Many students will start with their best subjects and leave the weak ones until the end.
- Use post-its. Try different coloured ones as reminders about vocabulary, formulae, quotes etc. Display them on mirrors, doors or around computer screens.
- If your child is stuck or seems bored, encourage him/her to use a different method of study i.e. orally or in pictures/diagrams rather than writing more notes. Using different methods uses different parts of the brain.
- Remind your child to seek help/clarification from his/her teachers at school; we provide lots of information and guidance. If your child prefers not to seek advice in the revision sessions or catch up after school, ask them to see their teacher on a one to one to get the help they need. You can also contact the teacher or Head of Department for support.
- Get your child to break revision into small chunks. It is better to do 20 minutes of focused revision than plan 5 hours and feel overwhelmed or confused with information.
- Healthy food, snacks and regular exercise will help with the revision process.
- Revision means re-looking at work; it is important that your child has all the work they need in a format they can read and understand. To move knowledge into the long term memory, your child needs to re-look at it at least three times and in a variety of different ways.
- Encourage your child to negotiate the time they spend with their friends or at work. This down time from revision will also help them process the information they are taking in. Essentially, both revision and social times need to be in moderation.
- Encourage your child to get a good night's sleep before an exam.

### **After the exams**

After the exams, both you and your child may feel a sense of relief, but there may also be signs of stress and anxiety if things haven't gone well. Feelings may 'catch up' with your child after the effort of studying hard, and you may need to 'let them be' for a while.