

Local Procedure Title	Contact, correspondence, communication and social media
Site	Coxlease School
ACS Policy number and title	ECS 38 - Contact, correspondence, communication and social media
Local Procedure template reference	ECS LP 38
Local Procedure date	June 2021
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Local Procedure Author(s)	CP
Local Procedure Ratification	Checked and Approved by: SLT

<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>In order to effectivity implement this policy, each Education and Children's Service facility will have local procedures in place where necessary, which explain how this policy is applied and put into practice at site level.</p> <p>This policy should be used in conjunction with the related policies listed on the preceding page where applicable.</p>
<p>2. Aims</p> <p>Children and young people are enabled to maintain meaningful contact with the people significant to them.</p> <p>Children and young people are enabled to learn keep themselves safe thought suitable and appropriate contact.</p>
<p>3. Scope</p> <p>This policy related to all forms of contact including contact visits, telephone calls, letters, and electronic communication including, emails, social media platforms, and live face to face electronic media platforms.</p> <p>Contact arrangements will always be subject to any legal conditions imposed in any individual case, and site managers must always ensure that any such restrictions or conditions are understood and upheld by colleagues.</p>
<p>4. Responsibilities</p> <p>Site managers are responsible for ensuring that each individual child and young person's contact arrangements, including any restrictions or conditions, are clearly documented and are known and understood by both colleagues and the child/ young person themselves.</p> <p>Strategy 1: School Climate Foster and sustain a positive, welcoming school climate in which all parent/carer perspectives are encouraged, valued and heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular school contact - Welcoming environment <p>Strategy 2: Eliminating Barriers</p>

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Identify and remove barriers to parent/carer engagement that may prevent some parents/carers from fully participating in their children's learning and to reflect the diversity of our pupils and communities.

- Flexible with regards meetings
- Phone calls to follow up letters (Literacy concerns)
- Dedicated staff to contact families

Strategy 3: Tools and Supports for Parents

Helping parents/carers support pupil learning at home and at school.

- Phone calls
- Home visits
- Academic reports throughout the academic year
- Open afternoon/evenings
- Reward celebrations
- Newsletters

Strategy 4: Parent meetings

Review and expand communication to share information and strategies to support learning at home and parent engagement in schools.

- Parent/Carer feedback and analysis

5. Keeping Children and Young People Safe

Site manager to be aware of any contact restrictions with parents/ family members each child or young person has, and should inform all staff of this, the child and young person should be aware of this also. To ensure the child is being collected and dropped off at school safely.

Many children and young people have mobile phones therefore they have their own means of contact. All staff need to ensure they are teaching and supporting children and young people to use their devices safely, keeping themselves safe, without putting themselves at risk.

Colleagues are expected to report immediately, in accordance with safeguarding guidance, any concern they have in relation to children, young people and their communications and contacts.

6. Contact Visits

Educational staff may not be aware of when contact visits will be taking place, however, child or young person may be feeling excited or nervous about this visit so may discuss with staff at school, in this case staff should communicate this with colleagues.

Colleagues who have any concern that a plan is not being followed must report this immediately, and where they feel immediate action is necessary to safeguard the child/ young person, or themselves, should seek the immediate advice of their line manager, the child/ young person's placing authority or in emergency situations, the police.

7. Correspondence

Letters: Children and young people have the right to send and receive mail in private, except where there are legally specified conditions or restrictions.

Electronic correspondence (emails, text, instant messaging): children and young people have the right to send and receive electronic mail and messages in private, except where there are legal specified conditions or restrictions.

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Site/service managers may impose 'local rules' in relation to the times of day that such messaging is appropriate, much as 'reasonable parents' might.

Any such 'local rules' must be made clear to children and young people in the 'children & young people's guide' to the provision.

8. Social Media

Prior to children and young person using social media platforms staff should ensure that that risk assessment has been undertaken in order to understand the child or young person's level of understanding of risk, and ability to keep themselves safe.

Educational staff can minimise the risk by teaching the child or young person E safety.

Where risk to the child or young person is deemed high, staff need to be aware of this and monitor the child or young person whilst on social media or to not allow the child or young person on the social media.

Where Children and young people are communicating using their own personal devices colleagues are expected to ensure the awareness of the child.

Some children and young people may have an agreed plan to make contact face to face conferencing (e.g Skype, FaceTime, or other video conferencing apps)

9. Record Keeping

Clear records of contact, and any agreed supervised communications should be maintained in individual records, including dates, times and person's presents/ participating.

10. Monitoring

Site managers will include the monitoring of arrangements for contact and communication within routine site monitoring as outlined in the Governance policy ECS 16.

Site managers will monitor any incidents associated with the use of social media, critically analysing and sharing such learning points as they feel relevant to prevent future recurrence.

11. References

Care Standards Act 2000,
Children Act 2004,
Equality Act 2010,
Education and Inspections Act 2006
Children's Homes Regulations 2015,
Children's Homes (Wales) Regulations 2002
DfE (2015) Residential Special Schools: National Minimum Standards
Scottish Government (2018) Health and Social Care Standards: My support, my life
Welsh Assembly (2002) National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes
The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
DfE (Current version) Keeping Children Safe in Education
Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017:
Welsh Statutory Instrument No. 1264 (W.295)

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Contents Checklist (Local Sites may add additional items – this is a core list)			

Local Procedure Review History:

Date Reviewed	Reviewer	Summary of revisions
10/01/2024	Lisle Smith	reviewed

Appendix A – First Aiders and Drivers

Appendix B – Contact Details

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