

Policy	Communications with Parents & Carers Policy GEN21
Manager responsible	Director of Communications, Information & Technology/ Company Secretary
Review delegated to:	na
Date first implemented	June 2025
Date last reviewed	Amend 1.8.25
Date of next review	June 2026
Date of governor approval	na
Associated documents	Complaints & Concerns Policy & Procedure Communications Complaints Procedure Anti-bullying & Harassment (staff) Policy Third party harassment risk assessment
References	
Initial reviewing body	Director of Communications, Information & Technology
Final approval body	Senior Leadership Team
Published on website	Yes

Purpose	The policy covers how Derwen College will communicate with parents/ carers of its students.
Scope	The policy covers all communication that Derwen College has with parents and carers/ families of its current, past and potential future students.
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	<p><i>"[Derwen] College is committed to promoting equality, good relations and to challenging discrimination. This is reflected in all College policies, procedures, processes and practices."</i> <i>Derwen College Equal Opportunities Policy</i></p> <p>Derwen College's ethos is to embrace diversity, to offer equality of opportunity, and to treat every individual fairly and with respect. Equality, diversity and inclusivity are embedded throughout the organisation. This policy should be applied in accordance with this ethos.</p> <p>If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print, please contact the Human Resources Department who will provide help with alternative formats.</p>

In advance of each academic year, Derwen College updates its annual schedule of communications with parents/ carers. This sets out all the ways in which the College will communicate formally with parents/ carers. The current version is at **Appendix 1**.

The following statement explains Derwen College's approach to more informal communication.

Excerpt from the annual Parents/Carers Communications Schedule

As a Further Education College all our students are on a journey to adulthood, an essential part of their learning is to develop increased independence and self-reliance and our approach to college communication with parents/carers reflects this. Once on programme, our students have a wide range of support available to them about every aspect of college life including help to contact home if they need this.

The College provides termly updates to all parents/carers, in line with this schedule, in this way you will be kept well-informed about your young person's progress.

We don't routinely plan, or anticipate the need for, additional contact over and above this schedule, however, we do appreciate that parents/carers may wish to get in touch regarding a specific issue from time to time. In these circumstances we ask that parents/carers are considerate of college staff time and availability, given that, as you would expect, the focus of our staff rotas and timetables is on working directly with students.

We trust that, as parents/carers, you understand and will support us in this approach.

Permissions

Excerpt from parent/carer handbook:

Mental Capacity Act 2005 and transition to adulthood

While staff at College always aim to work in partnership with parents and key people in the student's life, families should be aware that once a student has reached the age of 18, specific pieces of legislation become applicable. In line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, it is always assumed that a student has capacity unless it is proven otherwise. We cannot share personal information with a parent without the student's permission (General Data Protection Regulations) and this includes both education and healthcare information.

Derwen College staff are experienced in supporting students and their families through this transition and will always be happy to offer advice and information.

Handovers, and other informal contacts

There will be informal contacts made between staff and parents/carers throughout each student's time at Derwen, for example handover when a residential student is being dropped off at the beginning of a new term/ half term. These handovers are very useful for both parties, to ensure that the party assuming responsibility for the student has all the necessary information. It is helpful to back up a verbal handover with an email if possible.

What Derwen College expects of its staff

Derwen College staff are asked to always treat parents/carers and others with respect and courtesy.

What Derwen College asks of parents/carers

Parents and carers are asked to treat Derwen College staff with reciprocal respect and courtesy at all times.

Zero tolerance of inappropriate communication or conduct

If any staff member feels that they are being treated inappropriately by a parent/carer or other third party, senior management have authorised them to end the contact, and to promptly inform their line manager of the situation.

If parents/carers are dissatisfied

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with an aspect of College provision, or the response that they have received. they should ask for it to be passed to a member of staff on the next level of seniority. The Complaints Policy and Procedure document is available on the Derwen College website should parents/carers need to refer to it. This lays out how to raise a complaint and how the College deals with them.

See appendix 1, overleaf.

Appendix 1

College Communications with Parents/Carers

 2025–26



For parents and carers to contact the College

Initial and day-to-day contact		
For curriculum and academic matters	Personal Tutor	These individuals are assigned early in the academic year, and will contact the parents/carers of the students they have been linked with.
For care and support matters	Key Worker	
Alternatively		
The senior person in charge of the relevant curriculum pathway	Pathway Lead / Co-ordinator	
The senior person in the student's residence	Lead Practitioner	
The senior person in charge of the satellite/provision where based	Head of Satellite Provision / Satellite Lead	

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We trust that, as parents/carers, you understand and will support us in this approach.

How to give feedback and comment to the College	
The College welcomes feedback and comment from parents and carers at any time as part of its continuous improvement.	
Parent/Carer general survey	Annually, summer term
Feedback to College	Send any feedback to haveyoursay@derwen.ac.uk

August 2025 edition

Planned schedule of contact

New-Student Virtual Meeting with Student Council Reps	
When	30 June 2025, 5.30–6.30pm 14 July 2025, 5.30–6.30pm
Who the meeting is for	New students starting in September 2025
Format	Virtual meeting
Hosted by	Learner Voice Lead and the Student Council
Content	A very informal meeting with a chance to ask any questions about college life.

Message to all Families from Key Senior Management	
When	20 August 2025 – release date
Who the meeting is for	All students starting or returning in September 2025, and their families
Format	Online video (available to watch at any time)
Hosted by	Principal & CEO; Director of Learning & Curriculum Development; Director of Care and Independence; Head of Student Services; and Head of Care
Content	Video presentation – welcome from the Principal & CEO and key information about the College for students and for their parents/carers.



All Students and Families with Key Curriculum and Care Staff		
When	Supported Internship students (all campuses)	July / August 2025 1:1 virtual meetings with Supported Internship Co-ordinator
	Gobowen campus – residential students	26 August 2025, 6–7pm
	Gobowen campus – Corner House (day students)	26 August 2025, 6–7pm
	Telford campus	27 August 2025, 5–6pm
	Walford campus	27 August 2025, 6–7pm
	Ludlow campus	27 August 2025, 6–7pm
Who the meeting is for	All students (new and returning) and their families.	
Format	Virtual meetings. Separate arrangements, as listed above.	
Hosted by	Each meeting will be hosted by the relevant Curriculum and Care team members, or by the Head of Satellite Provision or Lead.	
Content	Informal discussion and any Questions & Answers. Opportunity for students and their families, to meet virtually with staff members, and to ask any questions.	

Parent / Carer Forum Meetings		
When (Invitations to virtual meetings will be emailed to parents / carers as relevant, closer to the meeting date)	Gobowen campus, day and residential	14 October 2025, 6–7pm 3 February 2026, 6–7pm 11 May 2026, 6–7pm
	Telford campus	13 October 2025, 5–6pm 2 February 2026, 5–6pm 11 May 2026, 5–6pm
	Walford campus	15 October 2025, 6–7pm 4 February 2026, 6–7pm 12 May 2026, 6–7pm
	Ludlow campus	15 October 2025, 6–7pm 4 February 2026, 6–7pm 12 May 2026, 6–7pm
	Supported Internship students	2 December 2025, 6–7pm 24 March 2026, 6–7pm Summer term – no forum
Who the meeting is for	Families of all students (day and residential)	
Format	Virtual meetings	
Hosted by	Senior members of staff	
Content	There will usually be a theme and/or a presentation/talk on one or more topics, followed by Questions & Answers session for families.	

Annual Review	
When	Once a year, usually in autumn or spring term.
Who the meeting is for	The funding Local Authority requires this, and drives the process. The College is responsible for the administration. The student attends the meeting, along with any support workers. Parents/carers are invited to the meeting (students aged 18+ will be asked for their agreement). Key college staff will attend.
Format	Virtual and/or in-person. There is specific paperwork issued beforehand, including progress reports. Parents/carers will be contacted and asked to submit their views in advance. Paperwork, including meeting notes, is collated, and then issued post-meeting.
Hosted by	Chair (a key staff member known to the student, often the Pathway Lead or Satellite Manager)
Content	To discuss the student's progress to date, review their Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)/Individual Development Plan(IDP), talk about the student's aspirations, and possible next steps after completion of their current Derwen College programme.

Student Progress Reports	
When	Issued four times a year: once in advance of the Annual Review (see above), and once a term, at the end of December, April and July (for students aged 18+, this is subject to their consent).
Content	Records student Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or Individual Development Plan (IDP) outcomes and Programme targets. Progress is logged and there is a termly report.

OTHER	
Parent/Carer newsletter	Four per year – October, December, April and July. One for main site, one for each of the satellites.
New-student parent/carers survey	Annually, autumn term, to seek feedback about families' experiences of the admissions process.
Social media posts	Instagram; Facebook; – we recommend that parents/carers follow the relevant accounts to see the activities students are doing.
Ad hoc	Email correspondence as required
Website	Term dates, policies, Parent/Carer Handbooks, etc. available for reference/download