



The Diocese of Chelmsford

Vine Schools Trust

Internal Communications Procedure

This policy is a mandatory policy for all Vine Academies and must be implemented with no amendments.

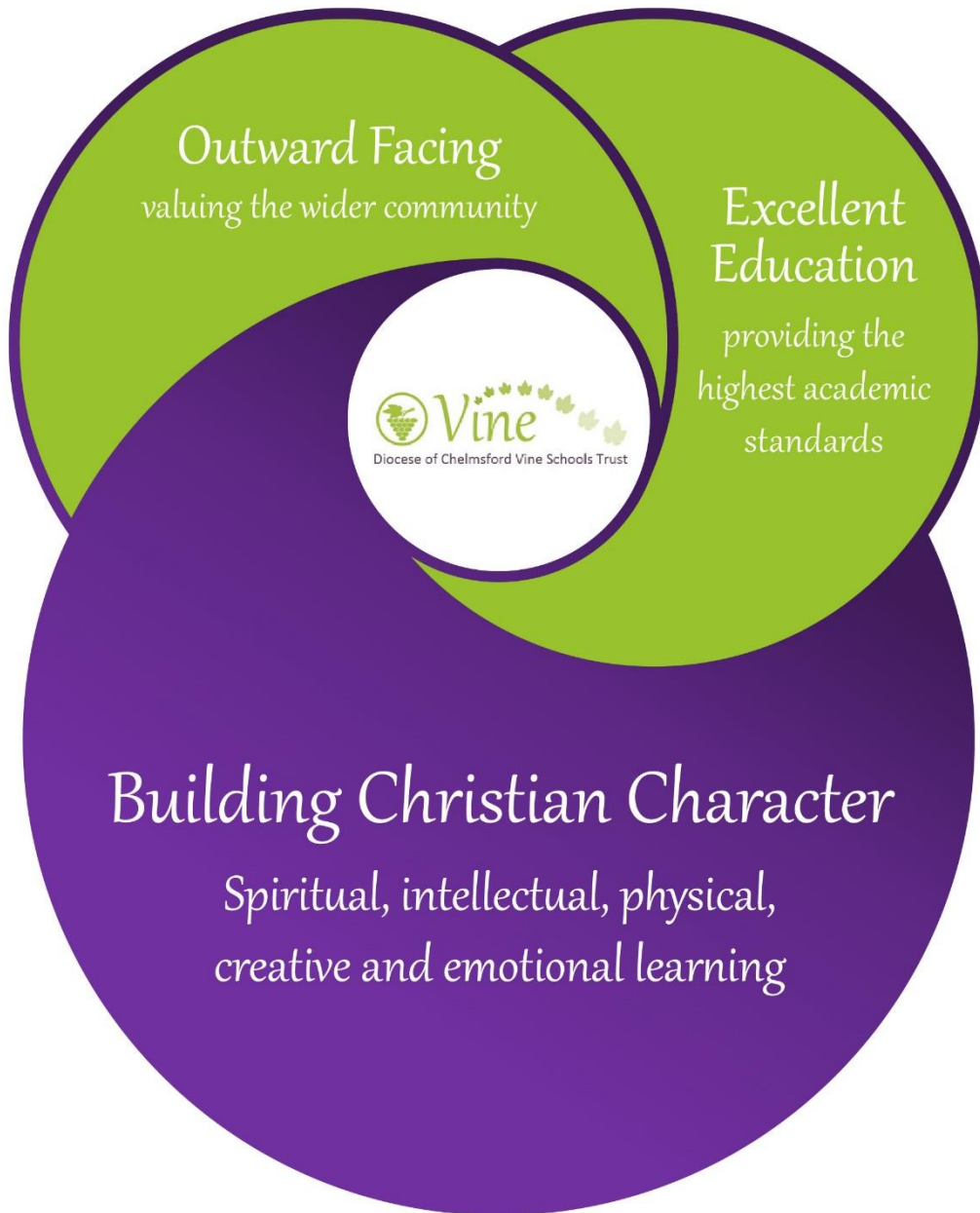
The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust	
Approved by:	The Vine Schools Trust

Signature:	Chairman
Date:	21 st September 2018

[Name of Academy]	
Approved by:	Local Governing Body/Local Board
Signed (Chair of Local Governing Body/Local Board)	
Date:	

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Our Vision and Values



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Internal communication is vitally important to the vision and values of The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust. This internal communications procedure sets out how we are committed to ensuring that communications are consistent with the Vine MAT vision.

2. Overview

- 2.1 Internal communications in the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust is an ongoing activity involving schools staff, central staff, local governors and directors.
- 2.2 This procedure outlines the Vine Trusts expectations and principles for effective internal communications.

3. Expectations

- 3.1 All employees, local governors and directors have a responsibility to participate in internal communications, as follows:
- 3.2 Leadership/Management
 - 3.2.1 Set the tone for effective internal communications by being visible, accessible, open, clear, and candid with staff.
 - 3.2.2 Ensure their team understands how plans and priorities affect their work.
 - 3.2.3 Champion open and collaborative communications.
 - 3.2.4 Model effective communication habits and participate in the communication process.
 - 3.2.5 Communicate Vine and school information, priorities, plans and progress to all appropriate people. Help those involved to understand how the messages relate to them.
 - 3.2.6 Correct misinformation and address serious concerns.
- 3.3 School and Central Team Staff
 - 3.3.1 Fully participate in the communication process – listen, read, provide input and feedback and ask questions.
 - 3.3.2 Seek out/request information that will help in their jobs.
 - 3.3.3 Assess and develop their communication skills and participate in training.

4. Principles

- 4.1 Results-oriented integrated internal communication improves individual employee performance, employee retention, and the overall performance of an organisation. The following principles contribute considerably to the success and effectiveness of internal communications:
 - 4.1.1 Senior leaders must model excellence in internal communications.
 - 4.1.2 Communication needs to be timely. Information should arrive at a time when it is needed, is relevant and is able to be interpreted in the correct context.
 - 4.1.3 Communicate policy and strategic messages with/between school leaders (headteachers)/Central Team (CEO) before others who require the information.
 - 4.1.4 Communication is two-way. Staff have the right, and are expected to give and receive feedback and contribute their ideas.
 - 4.1.5 Messages must be communicated in clear, plain language that is easy to understand and not open to misinterpretation. Written messages should be concise, using short sentences and avoiding jargon.
 - 4.1.6 Communication must be open with the reasons for decisions made available. When information cannot be communicated the reasons for non-disclosure should be articulated.
 - 4.1.7 Communications style and messages should reflect a consistent Vine style.

- 4.1.8 Targeted communication must enable the right messages reach the right audiences in the right manner at the right time.
- 4.1.9 Communication must be accessible. Information should be communicated using the most appropriate medium for the targeted audience.

5. Procedure

- 5.1 Face to Face
 - 5.1.1 Face to face communication is always preferable for internal communication.
 - 5.1.2 Communication should be timely, focusing on the issues.
 - 5.1.3 An appropriate agreed record of the communication must be kept.
- 5.2 Written
 - 5.2.1 Official letter headings must be used.
 - 5.2.2 Written communication must be cordial and care should be taken to ensure that text is composed using an appropriate tone or attitude.
 - 5.2.3 Appropriate copies of written communication must be kept.
- 5.3 Electronic (Email)
 - 5.3.1 Must be sent to/from an official Vine/Vine Academy email account.
 - 5.3.2 If a reply is required this should be sent as soon as possible but must be within three working days unless the email requires a response within a different timescale.
 - 5.3.3 Unless the email specifically requires a response to multiple recipients any reply must be to the person sending the email only. Care should be taken not to click 'reply all' where this is not required.
 - 5.3.4 Emails should be related to the official business of the Vine.
 - 5.3.5 The subject line of the email should be brief, but must convey the topic of the message.
 - 5.3.6 Emails are meant to be brief and informative.
 - 5.3.7 Emails should be cordial and care should be taken to ensure that text is composed using an appropriate tone or attitude.
 - 5.3.8 Email must not be used to send sensitive communication unless additional security measures are taken.
 - 5.3.9 Every effort must be taken to only send and respond to email communication within normal working hours. However, we recognise that on occasions urgent communication needs to be sent outside of these times. If non-urgent email communication is sent outside of working hours then 'NON-URGENT' must be written in the subject box so the recipient knows that the email should not be read until the working day begins.
- 5.4 Electronic (SMS etc)
 - 5.4.1 Should only be used when other communication is not possible/appropriate.
 - 5.4.2 Must be cordial and care should be taken to ensure that text is composed using an appropriate tone or attitude.
 - 5.4.3 Must not be used to communicate sensitive information.
- 5.5 Internal Intranet (Vine Cloud)
 - 5.5.1 Newsfeed, Message Board, Chat room