

1 April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Over the last year we have become increasingly reliant upon communicating with you electronically, via text or email, replacing the traditional paper based communication. We intend to continue this and are looking to improve our systems and the way that we communicate with you still further.

There are a number of advantages of communicating with you electronically:

- It tends to be quicker and more efficient, reaching more parents/carers as we are effectively cutting out the person in the middle of the chain - your son/daughter!
- It is better for the environment as it will reduce the amount of paper that we use.
- It saves us money.
- We can send multiple documents / images in one message.

We currently use text messages, sent via Groupcall, as the primary way of communicating with you electronically and send thousands of texts each year, at some considerable cost. However, we will soon be moving to an app based system from the same company, called Xpressions. Xpressions messages are similar to WhatsApp or iMessage in that they are transmitted over the internet rather than by SMS; therefore there is no cost to the academy to send these messages.

The Groupcall Xpressions app is already being used very successfully in a number of our academies.

Parents/carers can download the app for free from their usual app store/provider (it is supported by iOS and android devices) to their phone or tablet.

The app uses the information that we already have on our system, specifically an email address and mobile phone number. If either of these are missing or incorrect, then the app will not work. We will be contacting those parents/carers where this information is missing. **If you know that the mobile number or email address that we have on our system has changed or is incorrect, please update this via the Google form, using the link below.**

<https://forms.gle/S8MaHv3PW7SuAyS77>

(Please note that we are also in the process of introducing a virtual Parents' Evening system called School Cloud which also requires your email address for you to be able to access this and make appointments).

It is also imperative that you inform us if either your email address or mobile number changes at any point in the future.

Please be assured that:

- Xpressions uses banking-level encryption meaning a child's sensitive information will never be seen by the wrong person
- Your email address and mobile number will be saved on your child's school record and used purely as a means of contacting you.

Parents/Carers who do not wish to use the app can still receive text messages from us but without some of the additional features of the app.

You may wish to find out more about Groupcall Xpressions from their website:

<https://www.groupcall.com/product/messenger/groupcall-parent-app>

Next steps:

- Update your mobile number and/or email address if necessary, using the Google form link above
- If you have updated your details, wait until we let you know that they have been updated on our system before downloading the app
- Download the 'Groupcall Xpressions' app and register (just search for 'Groupcall Xpressions' in the App store or Google Play)
- Look forward to receiving messages via the app!

Thank you for your support with this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully



Paul Haynes  
Principal