

Head of School

Friday 6th September 2024

UPDATE

Dear parents/carers and students,

Welcome to the new academic year. I hope you had a restful and enjoyable holiday and are ready for an exciting year ahead. It is great to see so many enthusiastic, smart and happy students at our academy. As we start this new academic year, I should like to extend my best wishes to staff, parents/carers, governors and, most importantly, our students for a successful year ahead.

Welcome to our Year 7 parents - your child has made an absolutely fantastic start to school this week. You will receive a newsletter at the end of every week via ParentMail. This correspondence is very important as it shares our successes for the week and any important messages which I need to share with the school community.

Our students have returned with tremendous enthusiasm, and it has been wonderful to see them looking so smart in their uniforms. The positive energy throughout the school is incredible, and it is clear that both students and staff are pleased to have returned to school, and ready for this new academic year.

A special welcome goes to our new students, particularly those in Year 7, who have already made a positive impression on their very first day. On Wednesday 4th September 2024 our new Year 7 cohort started their educational journey at Giles Academy with a welcome assembly and tutor time to ensure they are comfortable and happy in their new school. The students immersed themselves in a range of academic lessons and had a thoroughly enjoyable day.



It was also great to welcome our Year 8 and 9 cohorts back to school on Thursday 5th September 2024. The staggered return over the two days aided the transition of the entire student body returning following the summer break. Assemblies were conducted with all two respective Year groups and it was also pleasing to see how excited our students were to return back to school. It has genuinely been an incredibly positive start to this academic year and I am looking forward to working with staff and students to continue building upon the successes of last academic year.

There have been a multitude of site developments over the summer holiday period as we continue to invest in fantastic resources to support our school community. Improved pastoral spaces, new flooring, the completion of a new boiler system are just some of the fantastic new site developments. We will continue to invest in our school as our students deserve the best facilities!

Next Thursday, we will be holding our third South Lincolnshire Academies Trust Upper School Awards Evening at Springfield Events & Conference Centre in Spalding. This will be a fantastic evening which will see our Trust celebrate the excellent Year 11 and 13 results that have been received this summer across our Trust schools. As mentioned in our Term 6 communication, we are building upon this amazing Trust event, by celebrating our House Celebration Evening in the same format. This will be held in September 2025, alongside our Upper School Awards ceremony.

There will be many positive news stories and activities happening at the school throughout the academic year that we like to share on our social media platforms. I do encourage you to follow Giles Academy on our official platforms:

- www.instagram.com/GilesAcademySLAT
- www.facebook.com/GilesAcademy
- www.twitter.com/GilesSLAT

There is also a wealth of important information on our school website – www.gilesacademy.co.uk including term dates, uniform expectations and safeguarding information. Please take your time to view our website where you can find important parent/carer news.

As we start the new academic year, I would like to share our Trust 'Working Together: Communication Policy for Parents & Carers', which reflects recent DfE and Local Authority guidance for schools. This is included at the end of this Update and as a separate attachment on ParentMail. The purpose of this policy is as a reminder to parents/carers and visitors to our School of their expected conduct, in order that we can continue to flourish, make progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. We are fortunate to work with parents/carers that are supportive and polite, with our parents/carers recognising that educating children is a process that is strengthened by a positive partnership between parents, staff and the school community. However, it is also important that any contact between parents/carers and the School must be appropriate, proportionate and respectful, in terms of the professional knowledge, experience and skill of the staff and of the entitlement of staff to an appropriate work/life balance.

At the end of this Update are the Term Dates for this academic year. For parents/carers of Year 7 students, we would like to make you aware of one change to the Term Dates postcard you received in the Transition Pack. There has been one amendment from the previously published term dates as Tuesday 22nd April 2025 (the day after Easter Monday), which will be a staff training day, rather than a student school day - this is because of an amendment via the Local Authority. Please note students will not be expected to attend school on Tuesday 22nd April 2025, as previously published.

We would also like to remind parents/carers, that students are not allowed to take holidays during term time as this can impact on their learning. The term dates are provided with advance notice to allow you to plan ahead. We have also published the term dates for the 2025/26 academic year, which you can find on the following link - www.gilesacademy.co.uk/term-dates

Please can I remind parents/carers that if you need your child to leave site for an appointment, we need to have confirmation from you. We cannot accept handwritten notes for safety reasons. Please email studentabsence@gilesacademy.co.uk or ring 01205 870693 with full details of the student name, reason for leaving school and who will be collecting them (only contacts recorded on our system).

I would like to remind all students and parents that we have a designated email address at school for safeguarding matters when students need help or support outside the hours of school - worried@gilesacademy.co.uk. Any student can access this email address if they are worried about a situation and need some guidance or support prior to the next day at school from the Safeguarding team. This is an out of hours email address where someone from the designated team will respond as soon as possible. There is also a 'Feeling Anxious or Worried' tab on our website homepage with details of additional support.

As we embark on this new academic year, I want to assure you that our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment remains steadfast. We believe that a successful and happy school depends on all of us working together, and we value the important contribution that parents/carers make to their children's achievements.

Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to keeping you up to date with our successes as a school community throughout the year.

Kindest regards,



Miss Katie Belcher

Head of School, Giles Academy

Upcoming key dates



Prospective students in **years 4 to 6** and their parents/carers are invited to our

Open Evening

Thursday 3rd October 2024
5.30pm to 8.00pm

SAVE THE DATE



Aspire • Challenge • Achieve

For the latest news

You can follow Giles Academy on our official social media platforms as follows:

- www.instagram.com/GilesAcademySLAT
- www.facebook.com/GilesAcademy
- www.twitter.com/GilesSLAT

Working Together

Communication Policy for Parents & Carers

Rationale

The South Lincolnshire Academies Trust is fortunate to work with parents/carers that are supportive and polite. Most of our parents/carers recognise that educating children is a process that is strengthened by a positive partnership between parents, staff and the school community. This positive partnership and strong working relationship equips children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons, we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our School.

Parental engagement with their child/children's learning is important in supporting attainment and progress and parents/carers have a legitimate right to understand what their child is learning at school and what progress they are making.

However, it is also important that any contact between parents/carers and the Trust/School must be appropriate, proportionate and respectful, in terms of the professional knowledge, experience and skill of the staff and of the entitlement of staff to an appropriate work/life balance.

Policy purpose

The purpose of this policy is as a reminder to parents/carers and visitors to our School of their expected conduct, in order that we can continue to flourish, make progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

The policy sets out:

- The general principles underpinning the conduct of members of the Trust/School community;
- How it is expected that communication between parents/carers and the Trust/School will take place;
- What behaviours towards the Trust/School and members of our school community are deemed unacceptable and open to challenge by the Trust/School;
- The additional steps the Trust/School can take in respect of unacceptable behaviour by a parent/carer/visitor.



Aspire • Challenge • Achieve

General principles

The Trust Staff and Governors will always endeavour to be accommodating and prompt in their communication/s with parents/carers. All communication/s to the Trust/School should be acknowledged within 48 hours and given a timeframe for the matter to be dealt with.

If parents/carers do not receive an acknowledgment within 48 hours, they should contact the Trust/School again to check that the communication has been received.

NB: Please note that a 48-hour acknowledgment does not apply when the Trust schools are not in session, for example, during holiday periods or weekends.

If parents/carers wish to correspond by email, they should use the School's central email address at:

- Bourne Academy: office@bourneacademy.org
- Spalding Academy: enquiries@spaldingacademy.org.uk
- Giles Academy: enquiries@gilesacademy.co.uk
- Cowley Academy: enquiries@cowleyacademy.org.uk

This email address is monitored during the school day, with emails forwarded to the appropriate member of staff.

Please note that parents/carers should only use the personal direct email address for staff if the member of staff has provided them with this directly.

All communication should respect the caring ethos and values of our Trust and reflect the rationale detailed at the start of this policy.

Please remember:

- To ensure that all communications, be they written or verbal, are calm and polite and that parents/carers remain mindful of the right of the recipient to be treated with respect;
- The School Reception opens at 8am and closes at 4.15pm;
- Please note that mornings and the end of the school day in particular, are very busy;
- All our staff are contracted to different working ours, so this may impact on when a response may be sent, including that staff may not answer parent/carer emails after 4 pm;
- Members of staff are very busy during the school day, i.e. with pastoral staff having many pre-booked meetings and with teachers who teach for the majority of the day. Therefore, when parents/carers would like to speak with a member of staff, we ask that they make an appointment to do so at a time when staff can give both sufficient time and their full attention;
- It is important to note that it will not be possible to see parents/carers who arrive at school without an appointment, due to the prior commitments of staff;
- If the matter that you need to contact the Trust/School about is still not resolved, parents/carers should follow the procedure in the School's Complaints Policy (available on the website).

The need to maintain positive communication

As stated above, the School enjoys very positive and productive relationships and communications with the majority of our parents/carers.

Please remember:

- Timeframes for a matter to be dealt with appropriately will be decided by the recipient of the communication or by the Trust/School's Complaints Policy. Parents/carers should not demand an immediate response or a response within their own timeframe;

- Lengthy, frequent, demanding, or disrespectful communications to staff will seriously undermine their ability to carry out their core duty of educating the children;
- When communicating with Staff/Governors, language should remain respectful and calm. It is not acceptable to use language that calls into question colleagues' professional ability; represents any form of personal attack or seeks to direct how they carry out their professional role;
- It is entirely inappropriate to use raised voice, invade personal space, and use language that is disrespectful, rude, offensive, aggressive or threatening. Parents and carers will be given a warning about the use of their language, if there is a continuation the member of staff may terminate any communication and refer the matter onto the Senior Leadership Team or Chief Executive Officer;
- It is unacceptable to record conversations/meetings with Staff/Governors without making them aware of the recording and seeking their express permission to capture what could be personal information and breach their human right to privacy, which extends to their workplace;
- Please note that for staff safety, in the majority of meeting rooms we have CCTV recording, but with no audio;
- We politely ask parents/carers not to resort to any form of communication over Trust/School related matters, including of its staff or Governing Body or any other matters that relate directly to the Trust/School, via a medium other than the School's Complaints Policy, including social media platforms. We do however, strongly encourage parents to communicate with us, if there are any issues, so we can resolve any matter/s together.

Inappropriate use of social media sites

The Trust/School seeks to teach students the importance of appropriate and responsible use of social media and it is therefore vital that everyone in the school community, including parents/carers lead by example.

The Trust consider the use of social media platforms and websites to complain/make personal comments about the School or members of staff/Governors as unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour and not in the best interests of the students nor the School. Instead, concerns and queries parents/carers may have should be made through an appropriate channel such as the School's Complaints Policy so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any student or parent/carer of a child/children being educated in any of the Trust schools is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site.

All social network sites have clear rules about the content, which can be posted, on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The Trust/School expects that the parent/carer or student will remove such comments immediately.

In serious cases the Trust/School will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social media platforms.

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent/carer to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entries. We will deal with any such matter as a serious incident of school bullying. However, please be reassured that thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

Please note that the inappropriate use of a communications network can give rise to offences under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 or the Communications Act 2003 and if persistent, could be deemed to constitute the offence of harassment.

Attending the school premises

All of the Trust schools are a place of learning, with an important duty to safeguard and protect the health and safety and well-being of the students and staff we serve.

Schools are private premises and not public spaces. Parents/carers have an implied right to enter the School as a parent/carer of a child/children currently attending the School but it is open to the School to remove that right of entry at any time it deems this to be a necessary course of action.

Please remember:

- Parents/carers should behave appropriately when on the School premises. We politely ask and remind parents/carers to not shout, swear or cause any form of disruption that interferes or threatens to interfere with the core operation of the School.
- Threats of violence, use of violence towards people or property on the School's premises is a criminal offence, and will likely result in the matter being reported to the police;
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or reprimand them because of their actions towards your own child is inappropriate. Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences;
- We cannot give out any other student's address due to GDPR regulations.

Additional steps by the school

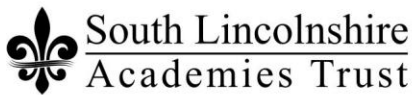
The following is not an exhaustive list:

- A member of staff/Governor will challenge unacceptable behaviour calmly and by asking the person/people concerned to stop; to respect personal space; stop shouting or using inappropriate behaviour or may end a telephone call/meeting or direct the person to leave the premises.
- The Trust/School may communicate with a parent/carer to challenge unacceptable behaviour and set out conditions to establish a way forward, this may include a Communication Strategy (e.g only communication through email or letter).
- The School will comply with, and fully implement, the Department for Education Controlling Access to School Premises, should it deem it appropriate to do so.
- If the School decides the matter requires a more formal approach we may instruct our legal advisers to communicate with the parent/carer, warning them about their behaviour and/or putting in place Communication Strategy to restrict their means of corresponding with the Trust/School and/or banning them from School premises if felt to be appropriate.
- In serious instances where the peace is breached or the law broken, the School will report the matter to the police.

We trust that parents and carers will assist our School with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support of the School.



Term Dates 2024/25



Term Dates 2024/25

SEPTEMBER 2024							OCTOBER 2024							NOVEMBER 2024							DECEMBER 2024							
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	
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30																					30	31						

JANUARY 2025							FEBRUARY 2025							MARCH 2025							APRIL 2025								
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su		
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27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	24	25	26	27	28	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					

MAY 2025							JUNE 2025							JULY 2025							AUGUST 2025							
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	
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26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					

■ School Holiday
 ■ Bank / Public Holiday
 ■ Staff Training Day
 ■ Years 7, 10 & 11 return
 ■ All year groups return

1ST TERM 2024	2ND TERM 2024
Wednesday 4th September - Friday 18th October 2024 • Years 7, 10 & 11 return on Wednesday 4th September 2024 • All year groups return on Thursday 5th September 2024 HOLIDAY Monday 21st October - Friday 25th October 2024	Monday 28th October - Thursday 19th December 2024 HOLIDAY Friday 20th December 2024 - Friday 3rd January 2025
3RD TERM 2025	4TH TERM 2025
Monday 6th January - Friday 14th February 2025 HOLIDAY Monday 17th February - Friday 21st February 2025	Monday 24th February - Friday 4th April 2025 HOLIDAY Monday 7th April - Tuesday 22nd April 2025
5TH TERM 2025	6TH TERM 2025
Wednesday 23rd April - Friday 23rd May 2025 HOLIDAY Monday 5th May 2025 (May Day) Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May 2025	Monday 2nd June - Friday 18th July 2025

STAFF TRAINING DAYS when your child will not have to attend school are allocated as follows:
 Monday 2nd September 2024
 Tuesday 3rd September 2024
 Tuesday 22nd April 2025