



# Oxford Spires Academy

Parental Communication Guide 2022-2023

[www.oxfordspiresacademy.org](http://www.oxfordspiresacademy.org)



Please ensure your contact details are up to date.  
This is essential.



Communicating with parents is an important part of what we do, making sure you get the correct information about school news, activities and things that really matter is something we care about. We use ParentMail, a service used by over 6000 schools, nurseries and children's clubs to communicate to parents. ParentMail will be

beneficial to you because you can:

- Use a free mobile app on Android and iOS to pick up school messages instantly
- Have an account simply for school messages (away from your busy email inbox!)
- Connect to other schools, nurseries or clubs that use ParentMail.
- Highlight important messages or archive old messages to make life easier.
- Messages can be sent directly to mums, dads and carers – even grandparents!

Parents of new students will receive a registration email from Oxford Spires Academy.

Parents can request a registration email by contacting [spoyser@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:spoyser@spires.anthemtrust.uk)

Once registered, if you have an Android or Apple smartphone, we would highly recommend you download the ParentMail App for the best user experience. To do this, simply follow the corresponding link from your mobile device.

iOS (Apple)

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/parentmail-pmx/id937274547?mt=8>

Android

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.parentmail.parentmail&hl=en\\_GB](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.parentmail.parentmail&hl=en_GB)

If you need any additional information or assistance, please visit the help site:

[www.parentmail.co.uk/help/parenthelp/](http://www.parentmail.co.uk/help/parenthelp/)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Why is it important that I register on ParentMail?***

There are lots of benefits to registering with ParentMail:

- Access ParentMail with your own login and have access to your own personal feed – away from a busy, email inbox.
- Have all your school communications delivered to one place, so you can find them quickly and easily.
- Update your own contact information within your account without having to go to the school office to update your details.
- Download the free ParentMail App, which means you can pick up all your important school messages on the go. If your school is using Payments, Forms, Meetings and Events, Parents Evening Manager or Online Absence Reporting you will have full access to these applications from within one place as well.

### ***When I registered I entered the wrong email address - how do I change this?***

Simply log into your ParentMail account with the wrong email address, click on your name in the toolbar at the top of the page, then click Personal Details. Here you can change any of your contact details.

### ***How do I connect to more than one child at my school?***

Your school will have connected your account to both or all of your children when they set up your ParentMail account, so all you need to do is register and you will be connected to all your children at the same school.

If you have children at other schools using ParentMail, you will receive an email from them asking you to “Manage your connections” where you will simply need to connect to the new school. Again, if you have multiple children at this school you will only need to connect once.

### ***I have two children at different schools, do I need to register twice?***

As long as each school holds the same email address for you and both are using the latest version of ParentMail (PMX) you can receive all communications to the same account. Once a school adds you to their account, you will receive an invitation to connect – simply login and approve the connection to begin receiving messages from this school.

### ***How do I change my notification settings?***

You can change your notification settings so that you receive a notification instantly, or to receive a summary of your notifications. You can vary these settings for account notifications, email, SMS and form notifications, event reminders and more. To do this, select your name on the toolbar and select ‘Notification Settings’. This will open a list of all the variables that you will receive a notification for, select whether you would like to receive an instant email or a summary email for each, and click save. These changes will be made instantly.



## A Parent Guide to ParentPay

ParentPay

In an attempt to remove all cash and cheques from school we are asking all parents to only use our e-payment method to pay for dinner money, trips, music lessons etc . This can be done online using a very secure website called ParentPay or in cash at local stores where you see the PayPoint logo.

### ***Already have a ParentPay account?***

If you already have a ParentPay account, either with our school or another ParentPay school, you can simply login to that account and add your other children via the Add a child tab on your home page.

### ***New to ParentPay?***

You have a secure online account, activated using a unique activation username and password; you will be prompted to change these and to keep them safe and secure as your Username and Password for future logins.

If you have two or more children at a ParentPay school, you only need to activate one account to create your 'main account' and then add your other children via the Add a child tab on your home page. Please visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) and activate your account via the Account login area on the home page of the site.

ParentPay holds an electronic record of your payments to view at a later date. Once you have activated your account you can make online payments straight away.

You should receive communication with account activation details directly from Oxford Spires Academy. If you haven't received any, contact [ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk) to request ParentPay login details.

Once you have your account details you can log in online at [parentpay.com](http://parentpay.com). Look for the 'Login' button at the top right.

If you would like to use ParentPay on your smartphone, just bookmark the login page to your home screen for easy access.

ParentPay has been designed from the ground up to work great on tablets and phones as well as desktop computers, so there's no need to use up precious memory downloading extra apps.

Don't worry about compatibility either. The vast majority of Android, iOS and Windows Phone devices will be able to run ParentPay.

## ***How do I pay on ParentPay?***

You will need an active ParentPay account, if you are unsure of your details please contact ICT on 01865 428200 or [ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk)

1. Browse to [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)
2. Under Account Login, enter your ParentPay username and password
3. Select “view all items”
4. Select the blue “view” button next to the trip that you wish to pay for
5. Ensure the payment amount is correct, and select the “Add to basket” button
6. Select “view basket and pay”
7. Select your payment method (credit / debit card)
8. Follow the instructions to enter your card details and make the payment.

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

- ***I have forgotten my username and have registered an email address with ParentPay***  
<https://www.parentpay.com/public/client/security/#/login/forgotten-password>  
and follow the on screen instructions.

You will then be emailed a link to reset your password (if this link is not clicked within 7 days it will expire and you will need to use the forgotten password link again).

- ***Can't remember your username or haven't registered an email address with ParentPay?***  
If you cannot remember your **username** (usually your email address), please contact the school directly who will be able to verify the email address linked to your account. You can then use the forgotten password feature on the login page to reset your password.
- ***How can I see my current parent account balance?***  
Once you have set up *Parent Account* or if you have credit on your account due to a refund, you will see your current Parent Account balance at the top right hand corner of your home page.

Cant find what you are looking for? Further help and advice can be found at <https://www.parentpay.com/parent-account-faqs/>

## A Parent Guide to Microsoft



All students and staff have free use of the full Office 365 suite of applications. Logging in to office.com will give students access to the following applications, some of which can also be downloaded to a device:



**Outlook:** (Web version & app) We use Outlook for sending and receiving emails. Students can also use the calendar and todo list to keep organised. All emails sent via outlook are monitored for cyber safety reasons. Student email addresses take the format: <computer login username>@spires.anthemtrust.uk (Eg. [22AStudent@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:22AStudent@spires.anthemtrust.uk))



**Teams:** (Web version & app) Students will be in a different team for each class, tutor group and House. They will also have access to a training team which contains video tutorials showing them how to use the office 365 suite. In each Team they will have access to:

- Files that teachers wish to share with them
- A “Class Notebook” where they can receive, complete and receive feedback on their work.
- A list of assignments that teachers have set with links to the resources they need.
- Access to quizzes that teachers may set to assess how well students have understood the key knowledge.



**OneNote:** (Web version & app) In Teams, the “Class Notebook” uses OneNote. You can download the OneNote app to have access to more features and make work easily accessible on your device.



**SharePoint:** (Web version & app) The SharePoint app gives students easy access to the files teachers share with them in the “Student Portal”



**OneDrive:** (Web version & app) All documents students save in their OneDrive (at school this is found by clicking on Documents / This PC and then “Onedrive(O)”) At home the files can be accessed either in a browser or through the OneDrive app.



**Todo:** (Web version & app) This is a handy app that allows students to create their own todo lists. The list is also accessible in Outlook's todo section.



**Stream:** (Web version only) Teachers may upload videos to Stream. There isn't a downloadable app for Stream yet but these videos can be viewed in a browser once the student has logged on to the office.com account.



**Word, Excel and PowerPoint** (Web versions & apps) can all be downloaded or used online to complete work.

The full Office Suite can be downloaded for

free for up to 5 personal devices.

We use Teams for homework and for additional independent learning. We will also use it to give access to some enrichment activities and for assemblies. It will be our main method for receiving and giving feedback on work. We expect students to take the opportunity to continue to develop in Teams partly in case they need to have any periods of isolation and also because it is an industry standard platform that students need to be proficient in whatever their future career choice.

To support students, they have access to:

**Help Files** which have been put on the Student Portal home page which will show students how to log into Go4Schools, etc. When students have logged into office they can read those files by [clicking here](#).

**Training teams** have been set up for all year groups. They can be found by logging into Office.com, clicking the purple "Team" icon and then clicking "Teams" on the left application bar and on the team called "Year <your year group>"

All the instructions are on the Team and students can go back and watch the videos any time they need help.

**Lesson demo and homework Instructions.** Teachers will explain what students need to do in class and remind students how to use the remote systems. It will take several attempts before students become familiar with the system so we will continue to do this until they are confident.

## How can parents support?

Where possible, please support your child by allocating a good working space at a time when they can focus on their work.

Please check that your child has completed the tasks in the year group teams. This will alert us to anyone with technology difficulties and we will then be in touch to help resolve them.

While it is great if you can support with the office apps, please do not feel you need to know all the answers. The training videos we have provided should answer any questions students might have. If there is something that is not covered in the videos please email a request to [mdixon@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:mdixon@spires.anthemtrust.uk) and I will produce a tutorial to help.

Please encourage your child to be resilient. Sometimes the technology lets us down, maybe with a slow connection or if the office website is going slow. Often we make simple errors like missing a letter in a password. While all this is frustrating it is part of normal ICT life. Please encourage students to just carefully check what they are doing, double check the instructions and help resources, email any problems to the teacher or the support team ([ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk)) and most importantly not to worry. Experience shows that once students have spent more time with new systems they quickly become more confident using them.

## Further assistance

If students need help logging in they can ask any teacher who can reset their password.

If students have any technical problems please email [ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:ictsupport@spires.anthemtrust.uk) and let them know what the problem is. In the email please include what device is being used and whether the app or the web version is being used.

If student log ins don't seem to work properly at home, try clearing the browser cache or using an "Incognito" window. You will be able to find instructions for the device by googling "delete cache" and the name of the browser. (EG "Delete cache chrome")

If you have any other issues please email [mdixon@spires.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:mdixon@spires.anthemtrust.uk) for support.



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