



External communication increases awareness and understanding of issues relevant to C.I.T, its staff and parent/carers.

Internal communication supports good knowledge, management and operations within the Academies.

Purpose

C.I.T strives to provide accurate and timely information, communicated in a professional manner. This policy provides guidelines for all external communications from C.I.T using various mediums including:

- Printed materials such as newsletters, articles, and brochures.
- Electronic materials such as email, postings to web sites or social media sites.
- Media relations such as requests for interviews, press releases, and media enquiries.

C.I.T recognises that employees may sometimes comment on school matters outside of their official role as an employee. Therefore, this policy also provides guidelines for employees when communicating as a private citizen on matters pertaining to C.I.T.

General Guidelines for All Communications (Official and Personal)

All C.I.T employees have a responsibility to help communicate accurate and timely information to the public in a professional manner. Any employee who identifies a mistake in reporting should bring the error to the Head of Communications & Fundraising or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Regardless of whether the communication is in the employee's official role or in a personal capacity. Employees must also follow all C.I.T policies that may apply. Relevant policies include:

- **Technology and Computer Use.** For example, employees may use C.I.T technology for personal reasons on a limited basis provided it does not interfere with normal work. C.I.T. reserves the right to inspect any electronic data made by a C.I.T owned computer or related system.
- **Respectful Workplace.** For example, employees cannot publish information that is confidential, discriminatory, harassing, threatening, or sexually explicit.
- **Political Activity.** For example, employees cannot use C.I.T resources or participate in personal political activity while on C.I.T time. No employee may act in a manner

that suggests that C.I.T either supports a particular candidate or political issue, or endorses the personal political opinions of the employee.

Additional Guidelines for Official C.I.T Communications

Handling General Requests:

All staff are responsible for communicating basic and routine information to the public in relation to their specific job duties. Requests for private data or information outside of the scope of an individual's job duties should be routed to the appropriate department.

Handling Media Requests:

With the exception of routine events and basic information that is readily available to the public, all requests for interviews or information from the media are to be routed through the Head of Communications & Fundraising. Media requests include anything intended to be published or viewable to others in some form such as television, radio, newspapers, newsletters, and web sites. When responding to media requests, employees should follow these steps:

- If the request is for routine or public information (such as a meeting time or agenda) provide the information and notify the Head of Communications & Fundraising of the request.
- If the request is regarding information about C.I.T personnel, potential litigation, controversial issues, an opinion on a C.I.T matter or if you are unsure if it is a "routine" question, forward the request to the Head of Communications & Fundraising in the first instance.
- An appropriate response would be, "I'm sorry, I don't have the full information regarding that issue. Let me take some basic information and submit your request to the appropriate person who will get back to you as soon as he/she can".
- Ask the media representative's name, questions, deadline, and contact information.

Additional Guidelines for Personal Communications

It is important for employees to remember that the personal communications of employees may reflect on C.I.T especially if employees are commenting on C.I.T business. The following guidelines apply to personal communications including various forms such as social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, etc), letters to the editor of newspapers, and personal endorsements.

- Remember that what you write is public, and will be so for a long time. It may also be spread to large audiences. Use common sense when using email or social media sites. It is a good idea to refrain from sending or posting information that you would not want your boss or other employees to read, or that you would be embarrassed to see in the newspaper.
- C.I.T. expects its employees to be truthful, courteous and respectful towards other

members of staff and Parents/Carers.

- If you publish something related to C.I.T or its schools identify yourself and use a disclaimer such as, "I am an employee of C.I.T however, these are my own opinions and do not represent those of C.I.T"
- Personal social media account names or email names should not be tied to C.I.T.

Freedom of Information

If a member of staff has an external request for information they should inform suzanne.fenn@citacademies.co.uk before responding. Once the member of staff has responded and supplied the relevant information requested, they should also send a copy to Suzanne Fenn.

This procedure is to prevent duplication of information and multiple responses to requests taking place.

Staff can refer to the C.I.T Freedom of Information Policy using this link:

<https://citacademies.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Freedom-of-information.pdf>

Questions

Questions related to this policy should be directed to the Head of Communications & Fundraising.

Published: July 2017

Review Date: February 2019

