



# **Walthamstow School For Girls**

*“Neglect not the gift that is in thee”*

## **Policy Document**

# **Home-School Communication Policy**

<b>Author(s):</b>	<b>Helen Marriott</b>
<b>Ratification Date:</b>	<b>March 2024</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>March 2027</b>
<b>Reference:</b>	<b>HSC_POLICY_V2.0</b>

# CONTENTS

# PAGE

1	Introduction and aims	3
2	Roles and Responsibilities	3
3	How we communicate with parents and carers	4
4	How parents and carers can communicate with school	7
5	Inclusion	8
6	Monitoring and Review	8
7	Links with other policies	9

## **I. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS**

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education, enabling us to 'bring out the gift' in each student
- Helps the school to improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

**In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.**

## **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.1 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Regularly reviewing this policy

### **2.2 Staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet Acceptable Use policy
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours from 8.45am to 3.30pm or their working hours (if they work part-time), ideally within two working days of receipt of a phone call or email. Sometimes it will be necessary to send a 'holding' email in order to acknowledge receipt and advise of next actions, for example because this falls within a holiday period or weekend, or in the case of complex investigations.

Emails sent at weekends or during holidays will be addressed within two working days. In case of an emergency, school reception staff will advise who is on duty to deal with the matter.

In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are not expected to do so.

### **2.3 Parents**

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times

- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive, egregious or threatening will be treated in line with our Parent and Carer Code of Conduct.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours between 8.45am and 3.30pm, or during school holidays.

Parents should also refer to the following policies which outline the school's expectations in terms of communication from parents and carers:

[Parent and Carer Code of Conduct](#)

[ICT and Online Acceptable Use Policy](#)

### **3. HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school. Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

#### **3.1 E-mail**

We use e-mail to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

#### **3.2 Text messages**

We will text parents about:

- Reminders about upcoming important events
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

#### **3.3 School calendar**

A school calendar for the year is always available on our website and is included in the Greensheet at the start of the year.

The Greensheet also includes details of both past and forthcoming events. Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

#### **3.4 Phone calls**

The school encourages staff to call parents to discuss pupils' performance (both positive and negative). Parents may receive phone calls from form tutors, providing a general overview of their child's achievement or wellbeing or from

subject teachers to discuss progress, achievement or behaviour. Please note that all phone calls are recorded for school training and monitoring purposes.

### **3.5 Letters**

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Letters from the Headteacher about how the school is responding to local and national events
- Consent forms

### **3.6 School planners**

The school planner can be used as a handy method of communication between home and school. Parents may use it to write notes to form tutors, for example about missing equipment or uniform; teachers may use it to record, for example, detentions or missing homework. This form of communication is dependent on the student showing both parent and staff member the note.

### **3.7 Reports**

Parents receive progress reports from the school about their child's learning twice or three times per year, comprising:

- Expected achievement by the end of the year (target)
- Current achievement
- Attitude to learning
- Home learning
- Attendance
- Behaviour: green points and behaviour points

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

### **3.8 Meetings**

We hold one parent/teacher consultation evening per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of learning, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern. Senior staff are also available during the evening and will speak to a selection of parents, either about students who have achieved well, either academically or in relation to the school's vision and values, or those who present a concern or require further support.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

### **3.9 School website**

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures

- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

### **3.10 School Newsletter: The Greensheet**

The Greensheet is our fortnightly school newsletter which is used to update parents/ carers and members of the community about recent or forthcoming events. It includes the Headteacher's message, photographs, staff or student articles and notices.

### **3.11 Home-school communications app**

We use the Edulink app to communicate with parents about the following:

- Attendance
- Behaviour/ reward points
- Homework
- Reporting

## **4. HOW PARENTS AND CARERS CAN COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL**

Parents should use the list in Appendix I to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

### **4.1 E-mail**

Parents should always e-mail the school, or the appropriate member of staff, via our info@ email address, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all e-mails within two working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within five working days where possible.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

### **4.2 Phone calls**

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within two working days.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

### **4.3 Meetings**

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate member of staff via the info@ email address or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within five working days of the request with the most appropriate member of staff wherever possible.

## **5. INCLUSION**

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Our website is translatable if viewed in supported browsers, e.g. Google Chrome.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every four years.

The policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

## **7. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use
- Parent/ Carer Code Of Conduct
- Staff Code Of Conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school Agreement
- Staff Wellbeing