



Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form

Communication Policy

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1. Introduction and Aims

Good communication is clear, professional, timely and appropriate, with a clear purpose as to the reason for corresponding. We believe that open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on students' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education.
- Helps the school 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.
- Fostering a relationship of mutual respect and understanding leading to a positive experience for all.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents/carers are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents/carers in line with this policy.
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parent/carers get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)
- Staff will aim to acknowledge receipt of communication within 72 hours, or 48 hours for Leadership Team members, during core school hours - 8am-4:30pm. Please note, staff members who work part-time may take longer to respond. In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff are not expected to respond outside of these hours.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is always respectful.
- 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.
- Communicate with the School through the channels outlined in this policy.

3. How the School Communicates with Parent/Carers

In our school, we strive to maintain clear and effective communications with all parents, carers and with the wider community.



Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values by keeping parent/carers and the community well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parent/carers and members of the community play in supporting the school.

Parent/Carers should monitor all the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Email

We use email to keep parent/carers informed about the following things:

- Headteacher's weekly update to parent/carers
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Text messages

We will text parent/carers about:

- Attendance alerts
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to inclement weather)

School calendar

- Our www.stokenewingtonschool.co.uk includes a full school calendar for the academic year.

Phone calls

- Staff may call parents/carers to communicate positive and negative student behaviour.
- If parents/carers would like to speak to a teacher over the phone, they should use email in the first instance to arrange a convenient time for both parties.

Letters

We are a paperless school but will occasionally send letters home for the following:

- Permission slips for trips and visits
- Photography/video consent forms for external agency visits
- Well done postcards (given to student in school)

Contact books

Student's contact book is an essential part of school life and must be brought to school every day. It is used primarily as a communication tool within school. Students must also have their lesson timetable written into their contact book so they know what lessons they have each day.

Reports

Parents/carers receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- Progress reports – one per term
- Progress Review Day - one per academic year
- Parents/carers' Evening - one per academic year

Meetings



We hold one parents/carers' evening per academic year. During these meetings, parents/carers can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

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

Parent/Carers 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.

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
- Parent/Carers should check the website before contacting the school.

Class Charts - Home-school communications application

We use Class Charts as our home-school communication app. We ask that all parents/carers download it if possible. [You can view a guide to using Class Charts here.](#)

Parent/Carers can use Class Charts to keep track of their child's achievements and access behaviour reports.

4. How Parent/Carers Communicate with The School

Parent/Carers can use our [staff page](#) to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue. However, this page only contains our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department, so parents/carers can also email admin@sns.hackney.sch.uk and ask to be put in contact with the correct staff member.

Contact books

Contact books are an essential part of school life and must be brought to school every day. It is used primarily as a communication tool within school. Students must also have their lesson timetable written into their contact book so they know what lessons they have each day. There is a section in the contact book for parents/carers to write notes to teachers.

Email

Parent/Carers should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team aim to acknowledge all emails within 48 hours (within their working hours), with a time by which the answer will be returned in full (up to five working days).

Other staff members aim to acknowledge all emails within 72 hours (within their working hours), with a time by which the answer will be returned in full (up to five working days).



If the email is in relation to a safeguarding matter, communication will be prioritised within 24 hours, working in collaboration with external agencies, such as the Police and Children's Social Care.

Please note, some staff work part-time so their response time may be longer.

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

Phone calls

If parent/carers need to speak to a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should contact the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 72 hours (within their working hours).

Meetings

If parent/carers would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address or call the school to book an appointment.

Staff will try to schedule all meetings within 5 work days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day, if parent/carers need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning.
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

Parent Forums

Each Head of Year holds termly parent/carer forums, which is an opportunity for the Head of Year to update parent/carers for relevant information for the year group.

5. Parent/Carer Conduct when Communicating with Staff

We view parent/carers as co-partners in supporting students through their educational journey. These partnerships are based on respect and our school values.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening to our staff will not be tolerated. The school expects parents/carers who wish to raise problems with the school to:

- Treat all school staff with courtesy and respect.
- Respect the needs and well-being of pupils and staff in the school.
- Avoid any use, or threatened use, of violence to people or property.
- Avoid any aggression or verbal abuse.
- Recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond.
- Recognise that resolving a specific problem can sometimes take some time.
- Follow the School's Complaints Procedure if making a complaint.
- Parent/carers should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.00am-4.30pm) or during school holidays.

6. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

Parent/Carers 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.