

Communication with parents/carers policy

POLICY F OLDER: OPTIONS AUTISM & LD – SYON MANOR COLLEGE

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1. Introduction and Aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the college 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
- Helps the college improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and college, which helps the college 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 college communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of college staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.

2. Roles and responsibilities

1. Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

The Headteacher/Deputy 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. Staff

2.1 All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the college'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 college hours (Monday – Wednesday 8:30am – 4:30pm, Thursday – Friday 8:30 – 4:00pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping to 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. If staff choose to work outside their working hours, they are expected to set time delays on emails to ensure that parents and other colleagues do not receive emails outside of a 'normal' working day/week.

Teachers are not required to communicate with parents daily. However, at least once a week, a mentor or a designated staff member from the mentor group must contact parents or caregivers. This communication should be logged in the Reward & Conduct Manager on ISAMS.

2.2 Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the college is always respectful
- Ensuring they are available to answer a phone call, or reply in a timely manner, during the college day, in case of emergencies.

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

Parents should not **expect** staff to respond to their communication outside of core college hours (Monday – Wednesday 8:30am – 4:30pm, Thursday – Friday 8:30 – 4:00pm) or during college holidays and should be mindful that teachers are in class teaching and may take extra-curricular clubs or attend meetings. Class Teachers may not respond during the same college teaching day therefore, **important communications that are time sensitive** e.g., a family emergency, informing college about attendance or a change in pick up arrangements, **should be directed to the college office by phone call.**

Parents should be informed that staff across all three college campuses follow a four-day week. Due to the varying schedules of staff members, responses to parent queries may **take up to 72 hours** Monday through Thursday. If a query is sent on a Friday and the relevant staff member is not scheduled to work that day, parents can expect a response by Wednesday.

2. 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 college.

3.1 Emails

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming college events
- Scheduled college closures (for example, for staff training days)
- College surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Short notice changes to the college day
- Emergency college closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Share students' achievements and feedback
- Inform parents and students about classroom behaviour expectations, acknowledge positive behaviour, and address any behavioural concerns or issues promptly
- To inform and explain homework, projects, and assignments, including due dates
- To notify parents about student absences, lateness, or attendance-related issues, especially if they affect academic performance

3.2 Reports.

At the end of every Academic Year parents receive an end of year report covering students' achievement, and a summative assessment of their attainment at the end of the academic year, and their attendance report for the year.

3.3 Parent Consultations and Meetings

We hold three progress meetings evenings over the academic year. One in the Autumn term, one in the Spring and one in the summer term. During these meetings, parents 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 college may also contact parents to arrange meetings between progress meetings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

3.4 An Annual Review Meeting.

The Annual Review Meeting refers to a formal, scheduled meeting held once a year to evaluate a student's progress, support, and needs, especially for students with additional or special educational needs (SEN). The main purpose of the meeting is to assess the student's progress against their educational goals, review current support arrangements, and identify any new needs that may have arisen over the past year.

3.5 Other ways of communications.

At Syon Manor College we use also a variety of different ways of communicating with parents. These include daily opportunities for face-to-face contact, email updates, college website, parent consultations, informal parent/teacher meetings, phone calls, open evenings, progress meeting and the college website.

Parent Portal which is build in ISAMS also should be used to communicate with parent.

Please note that staff are advised not to become 'friends' with parents on sites like Facebook and other social media, as this can blur the professional boundaries.

4. How can parents and carers communicate with the college?

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the college, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. There is no expectation for teachers to have regular day to day communications with parents by email. This is not appropriate, and parents are asked to book an appointment to discuss any issues in advance. If parents email late in the evening, teachers may not see this communication until the end of the following day. If a query or concern is **urgent** *, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the college office or copy the office into the email (0208 588 9610 on Monday – Wednesday 8:30am – 4:30pm, Thursday – Friday 8:30 -4:00pm)

4.2 Phone calls

If parents wish to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the member of staff they wish to speak with to arrange a convenient time for a phone call.

If the issue is **urgent***, parents should call the college office who will be able to relay your message to the appropriate member of staff. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff as soon as possible.

***Urgent** issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- A change in pick up arrangements (not reminders)

5. Links with other policies

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Complaints

6. Complaints

If a staff or parent would like to file a formal complaint, they need to follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found on our website