

NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT



Home-School Communication Policy

LAST REVIEWED/ UPDATED	May 2022 (by) Headteacher	June 2024
POLICY TYPE	Voluntary	
REVIEW DATE	Every two years – June 2026	

RESPONSIBLE	
Leadership Team	Pastoral Deputy Head
Approval	Approved by Miss Jo Capon, Headteacher

APPROVED/DATE	Minuted as approved by the Full Governing Body on the 10 th June 2024
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Courage Commitment Compassion

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1. 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
- › 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 in a timely manner

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 (8.40am - 4.00pm) or their working hours (if they work part-time). 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 by emailing office@newlandsgirls.co.uk or by calling the school on 01628 625068
- › Responding 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 or threatening will not be responded to.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.

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 Arbor, email, weekly newsletter (*Newlands News*) and Social Media (Facebook)

We keep parents informed about the following things:

- › Upcoming school events
- › Celebration of pupil achievements
- › Parental advice and guidance
- › Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- › School surveys or consultations
- › Class activities or teacher requests

3.2 Parent Direct Communication via Arbor

We will contact parents via email and the Arbor App about:

- › Student absence
- › Student conduct

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the term, which is regularly updated.

Where possible, we try to give parents adequate notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, school trips, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Phone calls

Staff may call parents to discuss concerns or update parents on any significant events during the school day. Please ensure that you have supplied the school with **up to date contact information** in case of an emergency. We need **two contacts** to be provided.

3.5 Letters

We email the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips, visits and examinations
- Consent forms
- Immunisations
- Student conduct

3.6 Homework Planners

This is an important document in Years 7-11. Homework will be written in the planners, as well as any communication form staff which is important. It needs to be signed on a weekly basis.

3.7 Reports

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

- Progress reports which details achievement in each part of the curriculum and includes reference to effort and homework

We also arrange an annual meeting where parents can speak to their child's teachers about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.8 Meetings

We hold an annual parents' evening per year group. 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 areas of concern.

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
- Enrichment activities (including clubs)

Parents are advised to check the website before contacting the school.

3.10 Home-school communications App

Arbor is a new App, introduced in April 2024. Please ensure you have downloaded this App.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in Appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and use the main school email address.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school (office@newlandsgirls.co.uk), and direct the message to the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 4 working days.

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 3 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to ensure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 days of your request.

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

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Any issue that might affect a pupil that day

We will attempt to call any parent back on the same day if the issue is urgent. Staff may be unable to call back until the end of the day due to teaching commitments.

5. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

6. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home School Agreement

Appendix 1: School Contact List

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- › Email office@newlandsgirls.co.uk
- › Put the enquiry/topic and the name and year of your child in the subject line
- › We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO WILL THE REQUEST GO TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Subject Head of Department
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Head of Year
Payments, including sQuid	Finance Office
School trips	Trip Leader
Uniform/lost and found	Form Tutor
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call or email: attendance@newlandsgirls.co.uk If you want to request approval for term-time absence, please complete the form on the website and submit to the Headteacher, via the Attendance email.
Bullying and behaviour	Form Tutor/Head of Year
School events/the school calendar	Heli Braver - Head's PA
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENDCo
Before and after-school clubs	Form Tutor
Hiring the school premises	School Bursar/Site Controller
NPA	Assistant Headteacher linked to NPA/Chair of NPA
Governing board	Chair of Governors
Catering/meals	School Bursar/Innovate Catering

A list of staff names can be found on the website under About Us/Staff.

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our Complaints Policy.