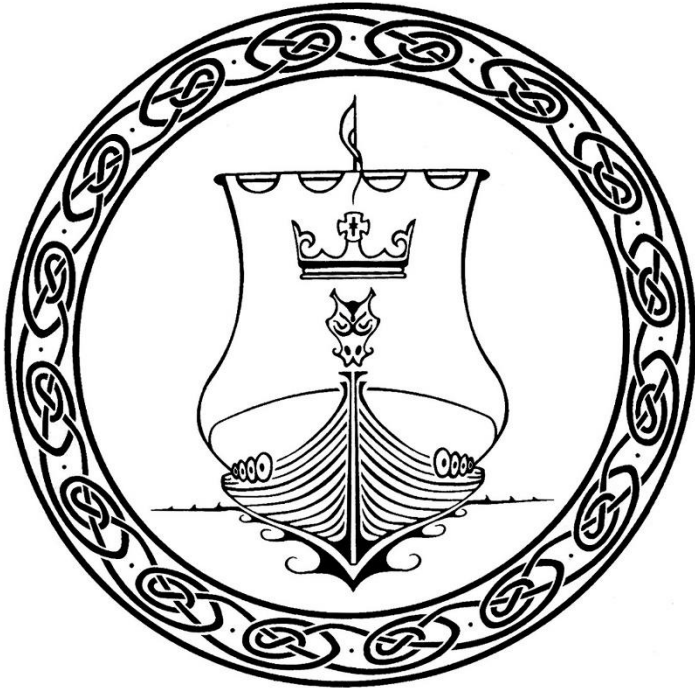




Queen Elizabeth II High School
Communication Policy



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Preamble

To support Queen Elizabeth II High School as a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our students, with their parents and carers, other schools, the community and with outside agencies.

We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community and our stake-holders are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Confidentiality is very important and, under GDPR, personal data should only be shared when necessary, used for the agreed purpose and only kept for the required amount of time in secure conditions.

Definition of communication

Good communication is much more than the exchange of information. It involves the management of relationships and the need to involve people. Communication is as much about attitude and behaviour as it is about message. It is a two-way process.

Scope

Every member of staff has a responsibility to support effective communication and needs to recognise that the quality of their communication reflects on the school's reputation. This policy is important for all staff employed at the school, including those employed through shared services.

Aims

Effective communication enables us to share our aims and values and to work effectively together in the interests of our students.

In our school we aim to have clear and effective communication with all parents/carers and with the wider community. We wish to recognise and celebrate the contributions made to our society by all the cultural groups represented in our school.

All communications at Queen Elizabeth II High School should:

- keep staff, students, parents/carers, governors, and other stakeholders well informed within Data Protection legislation, respecting confidentiality and maintaining professionalism;
- be open, honest, ethical and professional, avoid bias, stereotyping or any form of racial or other discrimination;
- use jargon free, plain English and be inclusive and easily understood by all;
- be actioned within a reasonable time;
- use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience;
- take account of relevant school and Government policies in particular Equal Opportunities, Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Fairness at Work Policy, Freedom of Information and Data Protection, the School's Privacy notice.



Part 1 Internal Methods of Communication

1.1 Staff information

The Staff Handbook can be accessed via Sharepoint and contains essential information, such as daily routines and emergency procedures. School policies are kept on the website. DESC policies can be found on Microsoft Teams (Teams). Teams is used for internal documents such as the school annual calendar, notes from staff team meetings, health and safety documents etc. Members of staff are required to read and follow all policies and procedures.

1.2 Meetings

There is an annual planned programme of meetings to facilitate involvement of staff in school review and improvement. These meetings have been planned in accordance with the Working Time Agreement for teachers and therefore attendance at them is a requirement. Meetings should be used for discussion of policies and developments in learning and teaching. They should not be used for administrative purposes when other means would be more efficient. It is important that time is allocated for structured opportunities for staff to engage in team working and to contribute to the team's reflection on priorities, activities and future plans. **Leave of absence from such meetings should be applied for in the usual way in advance using the leave of absence form.**

All formal calendared meetings should be structured with an agenda in advance. Members should be invited to contribute to the agenda. Brief notes should be published afterwards on a secure, shared site e.g. Teams.

For all other meetings, brief notes should be taken, action points progressed and feedback given to staff involved.

1.3 Notice Boards

Staff Notice Boards are located in the Staff Room. Staff duty rotas are posted here. These are also available in the QE2 All Staff Teams folder.

1.4 Staff Briefings

Staff briefings take place on a weekly basis, currently on a Monday morning from 8.35-8.45am. Where staff are unable to attend e.g. duties, they are to read the briefing notes and follow up with queries where clarification required. These are used to communicate sensitive information which may not be appropriate to email. Members of staff who wish to share information at briefing should inform the Executive Assistant to the Headteacher 24 hours before the briefing, so time can be allocated.

Tutor briefings take place weekly from 8.30-8.45. A termly key stage meeting is also calendared for longer discussions.

These meetings are calendared in accordance with the Working Time Agreement, therefore if a member of staff is unable to attend the briefing, they must request permission to be absent from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. It is the staff member's responsibility to find out the information they have missed from the relevant senior leader.

In exceptional circumstances, an urgent briefing may be called to impart significant information for all staff. Where there is an urgent email that must be read, one long bell will alert staff to this.



1.5 Microsoft Teams (Teams)

This platform is safe and secure and should be used in preference to Google docs for the sharing of confidential internal documents, such as: minutes, assessment information etc.

1.6 Email

The Acceptable Use Policy and Data Protection legislation include use of email and other electronic communications. **Emails and Teams content is subject to data protection and FOI requests and the language used should always be professional. Appropriate levels of confidentiality must be observed in sharing confidential information.**

Information and notification of initiatives are communicated through Teams All Staff page. Email/Teams updates are quick, effective ways of communicating information; however, it does not replace face to face meetings where some discussion is required.

Staff should check their email/Teams at least twice a day but should not use email/Teams when they are teaching. They should ensure that email notifications are closed when teaching, so alerts do not appear on whiteboards in front of students. Emergency notifications are made using Arbor or the Teams QEII Missing Students channel.

Emails should be deleted as soon as possible, and email should not be used to store documents. Any information which needs to be saved should be saved in an appropriate secure site.

Teams is the preferred method for internal communication instead of email. The same data protection applies.

1.7 Written Communications and Letters

These are placed in pigeon holes, in the staff room, which staff should check on a daily basis.

1.8 Telephone Calls

Where possible, members of staff should use the internal government network when contacting other colleagues.

1.9 Social Gatherings

The school looks favourably on opportunities to develop professional working relationships and encourages informal gatherings within and outside the organisation to build on relationships, develop strong teams and encourage communication.

Part 2 External Methods of Communication

2.1 Communication with Parents/Carers

Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents/carers work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve. Whilst staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents/carers, they will also ensure that the relationships are professional. Staff should take care to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, particularly where personal



friendships with parents/carers exist. In such cases, staff must clearly distinguish between private and professional conversations and must not discuss school matters outside of a professional context. Care must be taken not to breach data protection regulations

If a child is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, a member of the Admin Team will contact a parent/carer to find out the reason for the absence. Tutors will follow up absence concerns.

2.1.1 School Prospectus and General Information

The school prospectus contains a range of information to give parents/carers a full picture of provision at our school. This is updated every 2 to 3 years. Other information is on the website.

2.1.2 The School Website

The school website provides information about the school, including key school policies, and an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience. Curriculum maps, options information, examinations information and other documents are updated on an annual basis and published on the website. It also has areas for information for parents/carers and students. An increasing amount of information is being placed on the website and members of staff are encouraged to use it and contribute to its development. With FOI, the more information we share openly, the fewer requests we should have to manage.

2.1.3 Newsletter

The school's newsletter is published on a termly basis on the school website and an email alert sent to parents/carers. The newsletter will promote school successes and will incorporate news relevant to the school. Members of staff are encouraged to contribute appropriate items to the newsletter which should be emailed to the responsible admin team member.

We send other letters of a general nature when necessary and store copies on the school's website.

2.1.4 Social Networking Sites/Facebook

The Acceptable Use Policy and Government Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy must be followed. Members of staff must ensure that any activity on social networks is such that the individual's, the school's and DESC's reputation is not at risk. Misuse of social media can be considered gross misconduct.

Social media should not be used to communicate with individual students or parents/carers directly. The school Facebook page is used to celebrate events and achievements and publish notices. It is monitored daily. Any information for students and parents/carers **must** go through the official school Facebook site or website.

If a department requires its own site for specific educational reasons, this must be approved by the Headteacher and there must be a designated person responsible for monitoring the site and ensuring there are no breaches of policy. The Admin Team keeps a record of students for whom approval is given for photographs etc. to be shared.

Teams can be used to support teaching and learning. Class lists/groups etc. should be updated at least annually to remove any obsolete groups and student details.

Date of Next Review: March 2028 CCK



2.1.5 Planners

Students in all years have a student planner with key information, such as: uniform, the code of conduct and times of the school day. Parents/carers can use it to record a wide range of information that they wish to share regularly with the teacher or tutor. Students use the planner to record homework assignments. The planner is signed weekly by the parent/carer and the tutor.

2.1.6 Letters

Staff will endeavour to reply to parent/carer letters as quickly as possible. Letters to parents/carers must be sent through "QE2Typing". Copies of all correspondence with parents/carers will be placed on student files.

Any letter of complaint should be referred to the Headteacher, as per the DESC Complaints Policy which can be found on the school's website.

2.1.7 Email

Parents/carers are increasingly using email as a method of communicating with staff. All emails should be sent to: qe2enquiries@sch.im

Staff should not communicate directly with parents/carers via their school, personal email or Teams. Staff will respond through qe2enquiries@sch.im. This is for data protection reasons.

A copy of any email sent to a parent/carer or received by staff from a parent/carer will be logged on the student's Arbor file by the Admin Team.

2.1.8 Telephone calls

Staff will endeavour to respond to parent/carer phone messages as soon as they are able to, within 48 hours is deemed reasonable. **Any call to a parent/carer should be logged on Arbor with the date, names of those involved and a brief note of the main issues and agreed outcomes.**

Office staff should not put calls straight through to extension numbers but should first ask if the person is available to answer the call. Teachers should not take calls when they are teaching.

2.1.9 Written Reports

Once a year, a full written report is provided with tutor comments to share the student's progress with parents/carers on progress in each subject. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development.

Each student also has two progress reports per year which gives grades for attitude to learning and progress.

2.1.10 Meetings

We arrange various meetings for parents/carers throughout the year. Records should be kept of meetings regarding specific issues for individual children and attached to the file on Arbor. Similarly, significant conversations with students should be recorded as interventions on Arbor so that tutors and Directors of Key Stage are aware of any issues/incidents.



Meetings are held prior to any residential trip to inform parents/carers of planning, content and arrangements.

A transition meeting for new parents/carers is organised in October. Additional meetings include the 14 – 19 Information Evening, held annually.

Parents/carers are invited to meet teaching staff of their child once during the year for consultation at Parents' Evening. This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes, and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement. In some years, there is also a parent/tutor meeting for the parent to meet with the form tutor. These meetings are useful for two-way communication between parents/carers and the school.

We encourage parents/carers to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being. **Parents/carers should always make an appointment in advance** for a meeting before attending the school site, as staff will be engaged in teaching and other activities and cannot be available at no notice.

When children have additional educational needs, or if they are making less than the expected progress, we find it helpful to meet with parents/carers more regularly.

2.1.11 Surveys and questionnaires

Feedback from parents/carers and students will be obtained regularly through questionnaires and surveys. Microsoft Forms is the preferred tool for this. Parent information evenings provide good opportunities for obtaining feedback. The Student Council is consulted on various school policies e.g. behaviour and anti-bullying.

2.2 Communication with other schools and outside agencies

We hold personal information on students in our school, and from time to time we are required to share this information for educational purposes or to ensure a child's safety.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will be followed, and the school will ensure that personal data is lawfully collected and used, kept secure, only shared when necessary and not kept for longer than needed. **Staff should not share personal information about students with other parties unless they are sure that this data sharing is within the law and government policy and it has the Headteacher's approval.**

Students who attend post-16 classes as part of collaboration are regarded as part of our establishment and communication about their learning and attendance should be shared with the relevant school and the student's parents/carers.

Each year, parents/carers are asked to sign a data collection sheet which details why information is collected and how information may be shared.

Liaison with partner primary schools is very important to ensure continuity of learning and a smooth transition to secondary school. Prior to students joining Year 7, they are visited in their primary schools to help and support their transition to Queen Elizabeth II High School.

We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on better ways to meet needs, so that children may participate more fully. Support comes from medical services (such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy), educational psychologists, health professionals and specialists. It also comes from Police, Children & Families and Child Protection Units.



We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment. We are the people most in contact with our students, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help children at risk of harm. When any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to a Designated Safeguarding Lead and logged on the school's secure Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS). Depending on the circumstances, Designated Safeguarding Leads may share this information with Children & Families and/or the Police. Child protection and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Any confidential information relating to Child Protection will be kept in a secure cabinet in the Designated Safeguarding Lead's office. Members of staff must make sure that any such documents, whether electronic or hard copies, are kept secure and either deleted/shredded or filed in the designated cabinet.

Updated March 2026
C Clarke