



## **Communication with Parents/Carers and Student Policy**

### Rationale:

Redden Court School recognises the importance of clear and effective communications with all stakeholders (students and parents/carers, governors, outside agencies, national bodies, etc), and is committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school. The key stakeholders for a school are parents/carers and students and this policy addresses the main ways in which the school ensures effective two-way communication between home and school.

Communications can take a variety of forms: verbal (through meetings or by telephone) and/or written (through letters, notes in planners, parentpay or email).

Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers may be teaching full time and running clubs or otherwise working with students at lunchtime or after school. Parents/Carers may be exasperated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been no available opportunity for the member of staff to reach a telephone to return a call.

For this reason the school has been particularly proactive in encouraging use of modern communications methods, with the [info@reddencourtcloud.co.uk](mailto:info@reddencourtcloud.co.uk) contact being publicised regularly in newsletters and all parents/carers being encouraged to give an email address for prompt and effective communication. Surveys indicate that the majority of parents/carers are satisfied or very satisfied with the two-way communications they have with school. However, this does not mean that the school cannot improve and this policy aims to clarify the parameters within which we operate to ensure that communication is carried out with all stakeholders and interested parties effectively and clearly. Parents/Carers also have a Go4Schools login to view progress information specific to their child.

### Aims of the policy:

1. To improve the quality of provision given to students at Redden Court School by ensuring that effective communication and consultation takes place between the school, parents/carers, students and other stakeholders.
2. To improve the quality of service by ensuring robust processes for consultation between the school, parents/carers and students on key service areas.



## Communication:

Communication between the school and parents/carers operates in the following ways:-

1. Prospective parents/carers are invited to an Open Evening in the September preceding the year of entry to the school. All prospective parents/carers receive a school prospectus with details of examinations results.
2. Prospective parents/carers are invited, along with students, to an induction evening in June/July where the main channels of communication are outlined and information about the school is presented.
3. Parents/carers are invited to a 'Year 7 Academic Review' in the November of Year 7 to meet a senior member of staff and review how the student has settled into the school.
4. Parents/carers of each year group are invited into school to a Parents/carers' Consultation meeting once each year.
5. The Student Planner is used as a key vehicle for communication between parents/carers and the school and this planner is fully explained at the induction evening for new parents/carers in June/July and to all students as they start at the school. The planner is monitored on a weekly basis by both parents/carers and the form tutor.
6. Communication about student progress takes place formally for each student through Go4Schools (which reflects 'snapshot' progress towards targets, effort, behaviour, etc) for a full report.
7. Details about events at the school are published in the schools community newsletter, which is available to view on our school website and sent out in hard copy if requested.
8. The schools newsletter and website are key vehicles for communicating in a variety of ways; alerting parents/carers and students to forthcoming issues; celebrating the life of the school; petitioning for parental views; publishing the results of consultations, etc.
9. The school has all key information on our website [www.reddencourtcloud.co.uk](http://www.reddencourtcloud.co.uk)
10. Queries about events at the school may be made by phone to the school or by email.
11. Parents/carers can email [info@reddencourtcloud.co.uk](mailto:info@reddencourtcloud.co.uk) for the attention of any member of staff.
12. The school has published the following service standards to ensure a prompt response for communication requests by parents/carers. These standards are reviewed on an annual basis by the school's administrative team.



## Service standards:

The following response times are usually adhered to:

Responding to parents/carers - any requests for information, any concerns, requests for references or progress are dealt with within 5 working days (term time only)

## Complaints procedure

Initially, concerns should be addressed to the appropriate Form Tutor, Head of Year or Deputy Head of Pastoral.

Concerns may be raised either via the planner, or by letter, email or phone call.

- Notes in your child's planner will be addressed within 3 working days providing your child ensures the note is shown to the appropriate member of staff.
- Letters will receive either a verbal (usually by phone) response within 3 days or a written response within 5 working days. Verbal responses will generate a brief written note of the discussion and its outcome, to be held on the child's Head of Year record for future reference.
- Concerns raised by phone will be addressed within 3 working days.
- Emails will receive an email response within 3 working days. Those sent at weekends may not be dealt with until the following working week and emails sent in holidays will probably elicit no reply until term-time.
- When contacting a parent/carer to raise concerns or to discuss any delicate issues, voicemails containing details likely to worry the parent/carer should not be left at a time when parents/carers cannot contact the school for an extended duration of time e.g. message left on a Friday evening with no opportunity for the parent/carer to discuss until the Monday. This will raise anxiety levels, may escalate a situation and damage the relationship with that parent/carer.
- All voicemails should be brief, concise and not give information beyond asking parent/carer to contact the school to discuss any issue.

## Consultation:

Consultation between the school, parents/carers and students operates in the following ways:-

1. Questionnaires are issued to parents/carers at Parent Consultation evenings.



2. The consultation process via questionnaires addresses key service areas such as the school curriculum, changes to the timing of the school day, uniform, the framework for parental consultation evenings, homework, the school's reporting system, primary school transition, the quality and accessibility of the school's materials, etc.
3. A comment book is available in Reception for visitors to comment on their experience of the school and make suggestions for the improving services.
4. The Local Governing Body meet twice per term and is consulted on a wide range of issues.
5. School reports are issued on an annual basis and parents/carers are encouraged to comment on the report they have received via email.
6. The Student Council is consulted on a range of key issues relating to the school. Meetings take place at least every half term, with additional meetings for specific issues.
7. Members of the Leadership Team undertake 'Learning Walks' regularly and discuss learning with students and staff as part of this exercise.
8. As part of the school's system of Faculty Self Review, students are involved in Student Voice feedback to review the teaching and learning within the Faculty and contribute their own thoughts on Faculty strengths and areas for development.
9. Students are encouraged to be constructive about how the school can improve provision and may be selected as subject ambassadors to promote, improve and celebrate the work of Faculties.
10. The Teaching and Learning Group meets regularly to share best practice in improving standards of teaching and learning.
11. Consultation between external agencies takes place with a view to improving the service provided by the school.
12. The Special Educational Needs Faculty works closely with individual students, parents/carers and external experts and meetings are held frequently to discuss best practice and provision for individuals and groups.

### Communication During Trips:

Parent/Carers can understandably be particularly anxious during the course of a trip and regular, detailed and accurate information can alleviate this anxiety. It is also important that the school, but particularly the Head Teacher and SLT are aware of the status of the trip. The following bullet points cover the very clear expectations of levels of communication required during trips at this school. These expectations are particularly important in respect of residential and international trips.



# REDDEN COURT SCHOOL

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1. Prior to residential and international trips there must be an information evening where all stakeholders are given accurate information on schedules, itineraries, activities and all other information relevant to the trip. During this evening, parent/carers must be made aware that regular updates on the progress of the trip will be given on the school's Twitter feed.
2. During the course of the trip a delegate of the party must give regular updates using the school Twitter feed and Parentmail if appropriate. These updates should happen particularly during the course of the journey, when the destination is reached, each morning and evening for the duration of the trip at departure time for home, midpoint of the return trip and when 30 minutes from the school.
3. All parent/carers should be given the number of the school mobile taken on the trip which they can then contact in the event of an emergency or concern.
4. In the event of an emergency/incident and, when possible, the Head Teacher should always be contacted immediately. If the Head Teacher is unavailable then either of the 2 Deputy Heads or the School Business Manager should be contacted. Students should not be asked to text or communicate with parent/carers until the Head Teacher has had the opportunity to communicate in the first instance via Parentmail. This will avoid confused messages and bring some clarity to any communication with parent/carers.
5. Last minute changes to schedules should be communicated to all stakeholders immediately.
6. After the trip has returned an article for the school's community newsletter should be submitted to Caroline Morris within 10 working days of the return.


**Review:**

**Date policy implemented:** July 2016

**Date of last review:** July 2017

**Date of next review:** July 2019

**Signed by Head Teacher**.....

**Date**.....

**Signed by Chair of Governors**.....

**Date**.....