



NONSUCH HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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Note: throughout the policy “parents” denotes “parents and carers”

Reviewed and Approved by the Local Governing Body:

4 July 2022

Next Review:

Summer 2025

Policy Notes may be subject to review and revision at any time by the Nonsuch Local Governing Body notwithstanding that the next review date has not been reached

Review dates are for guidance only and whilst the intention is always to arrange reviews within the stated time frame all Policy Notes will remain in force until this has taken place and been formally approved by the Nonsuch Local Governing Body

1. Introduction

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents, other schools, the community and with outside agencies. Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve. At Nonsuch, we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents play in supporting the school.

We will keep parents informed about events and progress through parents' evenings, information evenings, student reports, Twitter and weekly newsletters. We also welcome specific enquiries from parents about any aspect of schooling. The key contacts page of the website provides the relevant GO TO email addresses (Appendix A).

2. Parents Annual Meetings

The key communication points will be:

- **Parent Information Evenings (PIEs)**
These are usually face-to-face events at the start, but not exclusively, of the academic year. They aim to give an overview of the year for students and provide information on key events, deadlines, curriculum, enrichment opportunities, policies and practices. They aim to provide an opportunity for parents to meet the Head of Year and tutors and other parents as well as PTA members.
- **Curriculum events including PSHE/Careers/Wellbeing**
These events may be held as face-to-face events or as webinars with Q&A. They are scheduled throughout the year according to relevance and need.
- **Parents' Evenings / Teacher consultation meetings (PTCs)**
These will be held via the Parent Booking technology we use. Remote meetings are more convenient for parents than face-to-face ones when meeting with a number of staff for subject specific feedback. On these days, school lessons may be shortened to allow for an earlier finish. This allows the school to provide an adequate number of appointments as far as possible.
- **Tutor consultation days / guidance meetings (TCDs)**
Parents of all year groups will also have at least one annual opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with relevant staff. The aim of these meetings is for parents to meet with their child's tutor and/or a senior member of staff for all round feedback and guidance on forthcoming options. Where possible they will also provide the opportunity for tours of the school and to meet other parents. These occasions are appropriately calendared to provide timely advice and guidance prior to options deadlines for GCSE/A level/UCAS.

3. School values and communications

All members of our school community are expected to adhere to the school values of Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Courage and Endeavour. This informs the tone of our communications. We set an expectation for warm, cordial and respectful communication between all stakeholders.

As in all walks of public service, staff have the right to be treated respectfully. Any member of the public who abuses a member of staff verbally or otherwise will be asked to leave the premises. If this should occur during a phone call, the caller will be politely informed that the call will be ended and that the line manager will resume the call at a later date. Any arranged appointment may be deferred until protocols for communication have been set.

Staff will always seek to establish open, positive and professional relationships with parents. To this end, parents will always be addressed in a formal manner (taking care to include the correct salutation: Mr/Mrs etc). School written communications should be as accessible and inclusive as possible, inviting parents to notify us if they wish to receive communications in languages other than English.

Should any parent or carer or member of the public have concerns about school communications they may refer to the Trust Complaints Policy.

4. Salutations

Students should call staff by the appropriate salutation and their surname e.g. Ms Cavilla. Staff will call students by their first name, never by surname only. Tutor groups have audio PowerPoints where students record their names so that they can be pronounced accurately. Staff will call a student's parent/carer by their appropriate salutation and surname when speaking to them or use the appropriate salutation when contacting them in writing.

5. Timing of response

Staff set aside time regularly to check communications within the working hours of the school day, which will depend on teaching and other commitments. If staff are absent due to illness or through attendance at training courses then they will not be able to check for messages until their return to school. Similarly, part-time staff will not receive messages on days when they are not at work. For these reasons a next day response will be undertaken from when a message is received, rather than from when the message was sent. Messages that parents leave during the day may not be received until the following day.

6. Telephone calls and messages

Telephone calls to parents will be made during working hours wherever possible. Messages left for parents should be brief and, whenever possible, reassuring. Staff will always leave their name when leaving messages for parents.

The school switchboard is open from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. daily. After 4.00 p.m. calls will be put through to staff supervising after school Twilight Study, until 5.00 p.m. Teachers are unable to accept telephone calls whilst teaching, so callers may be asked to leave a message. Callers should leave their preferred contact details and times at which they are available to be contacted.

7. **Appointments**

We welcome face-to-face discussions with parents. Although the teaching day ends at 3.20pm, staff often have other commitments such as meetings, clubs and activities; we therefore ask parents to make an appointment if they wish to see a member of staff. Any parent or carer who comes to reception without an appointment, wishing to see a member of staff immediately will be asked to leave a message regarding the subject for discussion so that the relevant member of staff can make contact to arrange a phone call or face-to-face meeting.

8. **Other methods of external communications:**

- **Letters**

The process of checking and typing makes letters slower than other forms of communication; if there is likely to be a significant delay then an initial response should be made via email or telephone. Most letters will be emailed and some will also be posted home.

- **Email**

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent by the end of the next school day after receipt, as far as possible. Staff email addresses are published externally via the website.

- **Website**

The school website is used to publish information that parents and external interested parties will find useful. The website is publicly accessible, so content should be appropriate for a wider audience.

- **School Comms & Gateway app**

This is the main vehicle for texts and emails to parents. They can also receive up-to-date attendance and house credits and debits information along with their child's timetable if they download the app, which the school encourages. School reports are sent via School Comms also.

- **FROG /SharePoint/Teams**

FROG is a teaching and learning tool for students. Parents may receive log-ins when students are working remotely during lockdown but they will otherwise not have FROG log-ins. FROG is an internal tool which is being phased over to SharePoint.

Teams is used for remote teaching but its use is being developed to replace email which is a less effective tool for internal communications and sharing of documents than Teams. With Teams, documents can be shared with messages without the need to replicate the document with each message.

Teams or its webinar version may be used for remote parent meetings where necessary.

- **Social Media**

The school uses social media (Twitter and Instagram) to share good news and headlines that are relevant to all parents. All staff should use their line management structures to check the appropriateness of how they use social media.

- **Newsletter**

The weekly newsletter is distributed via email internally and via School Comms to parents. Notices should be written in a manner that takes into account the wider audience. Any letters sent home to groups of students should be forwarded to the Office for inclusion in the “letters home” section of the school newsletter. The school has a protocol for checking the content of newsletters and school endorsed social media sites. The protocols and acceptable use guidelines for these, as well as internal communications are set out in the school’s E-Safety policy.

APPENDIX A: Key Contacts

<http://www.nonsuchschool.org/479/key-contacts>