

Darrick Wood School

Communications Policy (parents)

Created: April 2019

Next Review: April 2020

Responsible: Head Teacher

Overview

In order for students to flourish, it is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers. To this end, communication is key. We recognise however that it can often be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a very full timetable and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives. This policy sets out what you can expect as a parent/carer and the main methods of communication that can be used with the School.

How should I contact the School?

Student planner

We encourage the use of this very effective way of communicating with the School:

- Notes in student planners are by far the best way to get a message to a teacher promptly and should be used for the majority of everyday communication.
- Please be aware that the student is responsible for showing the note to the correct teacher. This is the best way to ask a teacher to contact you if you require a more detailed conversation.

Telephone

Please use the School's telephone number (01689 850271) to leave a message for us to contact you:

- Office staff will relay messages to the relevant individual as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the Office who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will try to respond to you as soon as possible, usually within three working days.
- Please note that lessons will not be interrupted for teachers to take calls.

Email

Please email office@darrickwood.bromley.sch.uk and in the subject header state the name of the teacher you wish the email to reach. Also mention your child's name and Form. Some teachers do not mind emailing direct and may let you know their direct email address. This is not a whole school policy but is left to them to decide if they prefer this method of working. Please note:

- Teachers are not in a position to check emails throughout the day and the School does not expect work email to be checked during a teacher's personal/family time.
- We aim to respond to you as soon as possible, usually within three working days. Part-time staff may take longer to reply.

How soon will I receive a response?

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so. However, the majority of teachers' time is taken up teaching and preparing for lessons. Teachers' responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, and they may be unable to respond to you on the day a query is made. We have also agreed with staff that there is no expectation to respond to queries during their personal/family time.

Meetings

The day-to-day care, welfare and safety of your child is managed by the person who is placed closest to them.

- In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:
 - 1) Form Tutor (or Classroom Teacher if query is relevant to a specific subject)
 - 2) Achievement Coordinator (or Head of Department/Head of Faculty if query is relevant to a specific subject)
 - 3) Assistant Head Teacher
 - 4) Deputy Head Teacher
- In some instances, the person you contact may forward your concern on to the relevant department or individual best placed to deal with your query.
- Meetings should always be pre-arranged with members of staff.
- If you urgently need to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or a child protection issue, please phone ahead and the Office staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.
- The School will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

Messages and student belongings

Office staff will endeavour to forward on a personal message for a student but will not disrupt a lesson unless it is of a very serious nature. Any belongings such as PE kits or lunch boxes brought in during the day will not be delivered to the intended student by staff. The Office staff will email the appropriate teacher(s) to notify the student but it is the responsibility of the student to collect items from Reception.

The relevant teacher(s) will be emailed with these requests but we cannot guarantee the teacher will see the message in time.

Contacting You

We will usually contact you by telephone or email. We may also send you a letter by post and sometimes attached to an email.

Website, News Blog, Parent Bulletin, Social Media

We use all of the above to promote individual and group achievements, subject information and generic educational information.

No Response

If you have not received a response from the School within three working days please contact the School by telephone or by emailing office@darrickwood.bromley.sch.uk and we will chase up your enquiry.

Respect

All parties are expected to value and show respect for others by demonstrating acceptable standards of attitude, behaviour and communication. Whilst we acknowledge that in some circumstances parents/carers may be upset or angry at a particular situation, we will not tolerate shouting or unreasonable behaviour, including any form of bullying, harassment or intimidation. If proven, this could result in further action being taken. Both staff and parents are responsible for creating a respectful environment that encourages effective communication. This will mean that all those involved in communication will treat each other with dignity, courtesy and sensitivity. This includes all staff that you communicate with at the School, including office and teaching staff.

Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually. It may also be necessary to update aspects of the policy as the need arises.