



## QUEENS' SCHOOL

*Dare to be Great*

### Parent and Carer Communication Policy

#### 1. Introduction

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents/carers and effective communication between home and school is key. We welcome communication and always aim to respond to queries quickly with a resolution to any problems. However, we recognise 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. Modern communication methods can mean more efficient sharing of information, though this needs to be structured to ensure that it is manageable for staff whose primary responsibility is to teach young people.

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.

We will always listen to any concerns but please bear in mind that we may not always agree with your point of view and the school reserves the right to deal with issues in the way we see is appropriate. We aim to ensure we are always polite/ courteous and give parents/carers the opportunity to voice their concerns. **All members of staff deserve to be treated with respect in their workplace, and no parent/carers should use derogatory language/name calling/personal attack to express their frustration at a situation.** If you feel that your concern is not being dealt with appropriately, please contact a more senior member of staff to discuss and resolve it. The school will direct a member of staff to cease contact with a parent/carers who is deemed to be abusive in language, tone or action.

Parents/carers are responsible for keeping the school updated with any changes to their contact details.

ClassCharts can be used for current information on attendance, rewards and consequences, reports and homework that your child has been set.

#### 2. Student planner

For everyday communication, please makes notes in the student planner. This avoids the need to write a letter.

- The student is responsible for showing the note to the correct teacher.

#### 3. Telephone

If you need to contact a teacher, please use the main reception number (01923 224465) during office hours to leave a message for a teacher to contact you:

- Reception staff will relay messages to teachers as soon as possible.
- If a call is urgent, please inform the receptionist who will attempt to find a senior member of staff to speak to you.
- We will try to respond to you within three working days, if not the same day.
- Please note lessons will never be interrupted for teachers to take calls.
- Under no circumstances should parents/carers be contacting students on their mobile phones. It is also not appropriate for students to use their mobile phones to contact home

#### 4. Email

Please use the general admin email, [office@queens.herts.sch.uk](mailto:office@queens.herts.sch.uk) (not the individual staff member's email address) if you need to contact staff. Our admin team will be able to direct your query to the correct teacher or leader.

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

Teachers, on occasion, may find it easier to email you regarding your child using the contact details we have on file. It is acceptable to continue these conversations directly with the member of staff once they have contacted you, but any subsequent new question or issue should be raised through the [office@queens.herts.sch.uk](mailto:office@queens.herts.sch.uk) address so that it can be tracked and routed accordingly.

#### 5. 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:

- Form Tutor or Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Director of Learning / Student Support Manager / Subject Leader (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
- Assistant Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Headteacher

**Meetings should always be pre-arranged** with members of staff. We recognise that sometimes you receive news that may cause upset. It is not appropriate to come to school expecting to speak to a particular member of staff without an appointment. Pre-arranged meetings will allow us to have the right information to hand and to meet with you at a time that both suits you and fits with that teacher's timetable and other fixed commitments.

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 reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you. For non-urgent meetings where possible we will aim to meet with you within ten working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.

## 6. No Response

If you have not received a response from the school within three working days please contact the school by emailing [office@queens.herts.sch.uk](mailto:office@queens.herts.sch.uk) and we will chase up your enquiry. Communication with parents and carers is important to us, and we will continue to monitor this policy and our approach to improve the process further.

## 7. Contacting you

Our preferred method of contacting you is via email. Currently we use SIMS InTouch.

ClassCharts is continually updated and will give you current information on attendance, rewards and consequences, reports and homework that your child has been set.

**If there is an issue regarding your son/daughter throughout the school day we will contact you by telephone using the first contact provided by you. In the event we cannot contact you using this number we will telephone contact 2/another parent/carer.**

## 8. Queens' Social Media

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information and key events at the school. This is for the benefit of parents and students. Our whole-school Twitter feed is [@QueensSch](https://twitter.com/QueensSch). Many of our subjects will have their own Twitter feeds such as [@QueensPE](https://twitter.com/QueensPE) for sports.

Our social media feeds are not monitored for inbound messages. If you have a question about an event or other post on social media, please either email or call the school to be assured of a timely response.

Our social media feeds operate on a 'best efforts' basis by staff whose primary commitment is to the teaching and learning of students. Expectations around frequency and timeliness of updates need to be moderated accordingly, particularly after normal school hours or during holiday periods.

We understand that parents and carers particularly enjoy updates and photographs from school trips. The primary concern of staff needs to be the safety and learning of students on the trip and there may not be time to post about trips in detail. Parents/Carers should also be aware that we are often in parts of the country or abroad where there is limited signal, so it may only be possible to update at the end of the day. We will endeavour to update parents on the return time for trips, though we will always encourage students to contact home themselves directly.

Our social media sites contain terms and conditions relating to acceptable comments and posts. These terms and conditions are available on the main school Twitter page. We reserve the right to remove posts on these pages that breach the terms and conditions.

## 9. Other Social Media

We are aware that some parents set up group chats for classes or year groups on WhatsApp, Facebook and other platforms. Whilst we recognise that these can be useful for some parents/carers, these are not endorsed

by the school and we will never post official messages on these forums. On occasion, information provided by parents/carers on these forums can be inaccurate or not representative of the school's view. Please rely on official social media channels, the school website or email received directly from the school. If you have a query, please raise it with the school and not social media.

Our teachers and staff have a right to a personal life and to be protected from harassment online. We ask that parents avoid addressing staff members directly via social media and avoid posting inaccurate or defamatory statements about staff or the school on social media platforms. If this does occur, we will take appropriate action in line with our policies.

## **10. Complaints**

Contact with the school should be made using telephone, email or in person by appointment. Complaints to the school need to be addressed to the Headteacher in writing. We will not initiate an investigation of a formal complaint passed to us via email, since this is not a guaranteed delivery communication mechanism.

## **11. Linked Policies**

- Social Media Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Managing Aggressive Behaviour from Parents and Visitors Policy

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**Review date: February 2024**

**Queens' School (Bushey) Ltd (registered number: 076506090)**