



The Beaconsfield School

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDANCE NOTE

Overview

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers, and communication between home and school 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. **We aim to respond to parents and carers within 3 school days – whether by email or telephone unless it is a safeguarding matter.**

Communications should focus on the learning experience of students and personal progress. If further information is needed after the initial reply, then please seek clarification by using the departmental e-mails on the school website (under Contact Us), rather than repeatedly emailing individual staff. If the issue is linked to a pastoral matter, then the first email should be directed to the student's mentor followed by the Year Leader (under Students – Year Groups).

When contacting the school, the language used should always be respectful and not emotive or judgemental. Staff should not be subject to language that is offensive or aggressive. Our staff are very important to us and should always be respected and not have their professionalism called into question. Anyone involved in communication between home and school is asked to reflect on the tone and content. For example, calling into question the ability of a member of staff undermines them and does not help to resolve issues arising from the collaborative efforts of the learning process.

If the professionalism of a teacher is brought into question the school has set procedures that we must follow and are triggered through a process that is designed to ensure that thorough investigations can be carried out. We can only deal with complaints following these open procedures.

The Headteacher has the right to ask a parent or carer or other stakeholder to stop communication if the contents of the verbal or written communication are deemed libellous, slanderous, intimidating or if repetitive communications that may be deemed as vexatious are used.

We have a duty of care to our students and staff and therefore will take any necessary steps to protect students and staff whilst undergoing work or activities associated with the school. If emotive, aggressive or unpleasant behaviour is shown verbally or face to face, the Headteacher also reserves the right to remove a visitor from the site and ask them not to return. If a phone call becomes aggressive then staff are asked to end the call in a respectful manner and to report it to their line manager.

Contacting the School

Communication by email to the teacher (via the department email address) is the preferred method:

- If you give your son/daughter a note it is their responsibility for showing your note to the correct teacher. This is the best way to ask staff to contact you if you require a more detailed conversation.

Teachers want to respond to parental queries at the earliest opportunity and will do their best to do so. However, the majority of a teacher's 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 aim to respond to parents and carers within 3 school days – whether by email or telephone unless it is a safeguarding matter.

Telephone

Please use the main reception number 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.
- Please do not try to contact your son/daughter during lessons by text, social media or telephone as this will mean that their phone will be confiscated.

Email

Please use departmental email addresses if you need to contact staff directly. Please mark the subject bar FAO and then the staff name. A list of these are available on the school website (under Contact Us).

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

Meetings

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

- In the first instance, please approach the following members of staff who are responsible for your child in the following order:
 - 1) Mentor or Classroom Teacher (if query is relevant to a specific subject)
 - 2) Year Leader (pastoral matters, learning across multiple subjects)
 - 3) Subject Leader (specific subject matter)
 - 4) Assistant Headteacher
 - 5) Deputy Headteacher
 - 6) Headteacher.

- 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 reception staff will do their best to find a senior member of staff to see you.
 - For non-urgent meetings we will aim to meet with you within five working days. The school will determine the level of urgency at its discretion, to enable it to manage multiple demands.
 - The school refuses the right to get a member of staff should you just turn up at school without a pre-booked appointment.

Contacting You

Our preferred method of contacting you is via In Touch or Milk. We may also contact you via telephone, letter, email and the School Newsletter.

Social Media

We use our social media channels to promote student achievements, subject information and generic educational information.

You can find these by searching:-

- Facebook @TBeaconsfieldSchool
- Twitter @BeaconsfieldSch

Any concerns that lead to friendship issues with regard to the inappropriate use of social media outside of school need to be discussed between parents and families and if you are concerned by the content the Police. The reason for this is that the school cannot monitor the use of social media outside of school hours.

Parents need to discuss with their children about the appropriate social media and sites to access. The school can provide guidance if requested and will act if this leads to bullying in school

No Response

If you have not received a response from the school within three school days please contact the school by emailing office@beaconsfield.school and we will follow 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.