



# Communication, Compliments & Complaints Policy

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## 1 Introduction

At Newsome High School, we believe that good communication between school and the home is essential. Children achieve more when schools and parents/carers work together. Parents/carers can help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve, and how they can help. We aim to have clear and effective communications with parents/carers and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents/carers well informed about school life. This reinforces the importance of the role that parents/carers play in supporting the school in educating their children.

### These are our principles:

- Communicating with stakeholders, particularly parents/carers, is a core part of what we do, not an afterthought.
- We will always try to share as much information as possible about any issue.
- If we cannot share information we will explain why.
- We will endeavour to work as transparently as possible by offering clear explanations for major decisions.
- We will communicate in a timely fashion and try to avoid parents receiving information about the school from other sources first.
- We will communicate in a voice which is courteous, jargon free and warm.
- Where information relating to the School is available in the public domain, we will direct people to it.
- We acknowledge that some information is of a confidential nature and will always respect that confidentiality.
- We will do our best to communicate with all school communities.

## 2 Communication strategies

We communicate with parents/carers through a range of different strategies. Some of our communications are the result of a statutory requirement; others reflect what we believe is important.

### Student Passports

All students have a passport to learning. This should be used daily for parents/carers and teachers to communicate. Both parents/carers and form tutors must review the planner and sign it on a weekly basis. The passport will be used by class teachers and form tutors to share positive and negative comments about student's behaviour and progress on a daily basis. The passport and the child's form tutor or Year team should be the first point of contact for all school issues. Staff, Class Teachers, Form Tutors, Subject and Year Leaders are always available to discuss student's progress and welfare by email or telephone by request. We endeavour to return all emails and calls within 2 working days. However, if you need to talk with staff in more detail, please make an appointment for a meeting in person. Many parental queries and concerns can be dealt with in this way. It is possible to request appointments through the school reception/office by calling 01484 516712. It is also possible to request meetings with Senior Leadership through reception or the Head Teacher's Personal Assistant at [office@newsomehigh.kirklees.sch.uk](mailto:office@newsomehigh.kirklees.sch.uk). Unfortunately as we are a busy school, it is not possible to meet with parents without an appointment.

### Website

The school website is regularly updated with information, including up-to date-policies, current news, Headteacher's blog and news of any changes to routine. The school diary and holiday lists can also be found on the website and are regularly updated. Staff lists and responsibilities are also kept on the school website in the information section.

### Text Communication

The School uses an electronic text messaging system. Parents/carers are regularly updated about attendance issues, events and subject updates by text. Details for the protocol for communicating with parents and carers via text and email are provided in appendix 1.

### E-Mail Communication

The school uses e-mail communication where preference is made by parents/carers. Parents/carers are asked to indicate their preferred method of communication at the beginning of each academic year, and or on admission into



the school. If e-mail is chosen as the preferred method then newsletters, whole school and group letters will be sent electronically, wherever possible, replacing the paper copies.

### Letters

Most information is sent out by letter and copies placed on the website. Depending on the importance of the letter will determine if a text is sent home to expect the letter. Letters are usually sent home with students unless the letter pertains to fixed term exclusion (these letters are posted first class). Copies of letters sent home are kept in the school office.

### Staff communications with parents

At the beginning of each term we will share a summary of their curriculum plans and homework timetable through the website. This enables parents/carers to support their child's work through a range of suggested activities to be shared with the child at home.

### Progress grades (Creating Futures Assessment Cycles)

A copy of the student's progress grades will be sent home every term with details of current grades, effort grades and progress towards target grades. A copy is also placed in the student's passport.

### Consultation evenings and school reports

Parents/carers are expected to show an interest in the school's teaching methods and in their child's progress by attending Parent Consultation Evenings, workshops and open days and reading their child's reports. We do encourage parents/carers to contact the school at any time if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being, but we also provide a formal opportunity to meet one to one with the class teachers and form tutors during the academic year. Parents/carers will be given information and advance notice about such events by letter and on the website. During the academic year parents/carers will receive an end of year written report and parents/carers can subsequently arrange to meet with teachers if there are any concerns.

### Newsletter

Details of School events, reminders, requests for help and news are shared in our newsletter. This comes out in a recognisable colour format and is also published on the website.

### Meetings

There are a number of meetings through the term which provide opportunities to discuss current developments in the school:

- **New parents** - we hold two meetings for new Year 7 parents/carers each July and September. The first is preparation for the new term (induction) and the second is to discuss progress (settling in). Both meetings provide an opportunity for parents/carers to meet each other and members of the school including the Leadership team.
- **Open Evenings** – we hold open evenings each year in the autumn term for Year 6 students wishing to explore Newsome High School an option for their secondary school choice.
- **Consultation evenings** – we hold at least one formal consultation evening for each year group each year. These evenings are scheduled throughout the year and complimented by our reporting to parent's programme, to ensure regular contact with regards to student's welfare and progress.
- **Home Visits** – The Attendance and Alternative Provision teams make regular visits home to discuss individual issues.
- **Residential trips** – where a major trip is taking place, the trip leaders will organise a meeting for parents/carers well in advance to provide detailed information about all aspects of the trip.
- **School's aims and values** - the School's responsibilities towards children, the responsibilities of parents/carers, and what the school expects of the children. We ask parents to sign this agreement when their child starts in our school (or September). The agreement covers the standard of education in our school, the ethos, our expectations on attendance and good behaviour, and our expectations about homework.
- Our governing body reviews the agreement annually.



## School Prospectus

The School prospectus is available containing a range of information to give new and prospective parents a full picture of provision at Newsome. We will update this document every year and will add it to our website. An up-to-date copy will also always be available in the reception area. The school makes available a range of documentation for parents/carers. We keep a master set in the main office, and we make this available on request. It contains copies of all curriculum policies, minutes of governing body meetings and copies of policies that the governing body are required to have in relation to charging and remissions, sex education, health and safety, curriculum, performance management, admissions and action planning following inspection. It also contains a range of national and LEA documentation. A copying charge may be levied where requests for printed materials are made.

## 3 Attendance

We ask that students do not take holidays in term time as it does have an effect on their education. Any holidays which are taken during term time will not be authorised. If a child is unwell and they are unable to attend school their parent/carer must telephone 01484 516712 every morning that they are absent (before 8am if possible). A text will be sent home if we have not received a reason for absence. Good communication is vital to home-school partnership. The raising of standards cannot be achieved without such a partnership.

## 4 Conduct when communicating with the School

In order to ensure a respectful, calm and swift solution, there is an expectation that any member of staff in school and member of the public behaves in an appropriate manner. As with any public or private sector organisation, aggressive, discriminatory or violent behaviour will not be tolerated and issues or concerns should be discussed calmly and professionally. If a member of the public demonstrates such behaviour, the police may be notified. Alternatively, if a parent or carer has concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, the appropriate senior member of staff for that area should be notified. This list can be found later in this document.

## 5 When Communication fails or you are dissatisfied

The majority of issues raised by parents/carers, the community or pupils, are concerns rather than complaints. The School is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the schools' formal complaints procedure found later in this document. For the School to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one year of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a year it will not be investigated. The prime aim of the policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the School.



**6 Communication Process**

The School policy has specific steps to follow and the following table outlines the stages that can be used to resolve complaints. In summary they are as follows:

Stage	Pastoral Issue	Learning or Progress Issue
1	Form Tutor	Subject Teacher
2	Key Stage Leader	Head of Department
3	Director of Learning	Director of Learning
4	Assistant Headteacher for Pastoral	Senior Leader Link
5	Headteacher	Headteacher
6	Chair of Governors	Chair of Governors
7	Local Authority	Local Authority

**Curriculum Contact Information**

Subject Area	Head of Department	Senior Leader Link
Maths & Computing	Mr J Jesson	Mr D Watkin – Headteacher
English	Mrs A Greenwood	Miss R Dodds – Deputy Headteacher
Science & Technology	Mr R Mohammed	Miss L Mogan – Assistant Headteacher
Humanities	Mr T Carr	Miss L Morgan – Assistant Headteacher
Creative Arts PE	Miss E Cole	Miss R Dodds – Deputy Headteacher
Languages	Mrs R Fox	Miss R Dodds – Deputy Headteacher
SENDCo	Miss A Hall	Mr J Hinchliffe – Assitant Headteacher

**Pastoral Contact Information**

<b>Assistant Headteacher</b> Mr J Hinchliffe <b>Pastoral Standards Leader</b> Mr S Mitchell <b>Pastoral Standards Manager</b> Mrs J Robinson		
Subject Area	Key Stage Leader/Manager	Senior Link
KS3	Mr N Kitterick - KSL	Mr J Hinchliffe/Mr S Mitchell
	Miss R LeRoy - KSM	
KS4	Miss D Carter - KSL	
	Miss L Hey - KSM	

**7 Compliments and Complaints Procedures**

The Education Service is delighted to receive compliments about its schools, their Head Teachers and their staff. It also welcomes compliments about the Central Support Services.

Compliments will be accepted by Head Teachers, staff and the Education Service in the loudest possible tones! We will make sure they get to the correct individual or school.

Equally, we must be prepared to listen to complaints about schools, Head Teachers, staff or the Education Service itself. We must also have clear procedures for handling and managing any complaints.



We advise all parents and carers to also follow the guidelines and information housed in our communication strategy found on our Newsome High School website under the 'policy' page.

**Making a complaint**

We would advise anyone wishing to make a complaint about a school or someone in a school to discuss the issue in the first instance with a member staff, the senior leadership or pastoral team (whichever is most relevant). Please refer to the above information outlining key members of staff to contact depending on the type of the issue. It is vital that all steps are followed before a complaint is made.

**If the problem still remains unresolved please follow this process:**

Step	Approach
1	Contact the Headteacher in the initial stages to express concern. The Head teacher will investigate and assign the most appropriate member of staff where appropriate to investigate the matter further.
2	If not satisfied, outline the details of concern in writing e.g. details of incident(s), nature of difficulty(ies), with relevant dates to Headteacher. The Headteacher will respond in writing.
3	If you are still not satisfied, arrange a meeting with the Head teacher to agree the next steps and a suggested way forward to resolve the issue. The Headteacher will confirm agreement in writing.
4	If you are still not satisfied, put in writing as per above and send to the Chair of Governors c/o the school.
5	Meeting arranged with Governors' complaints committee.
6	If still not satisfied, the complainant is to write to the Governors' Appeals Committee.
7	Meeting of Appeal committee arranged and held.
8	If not satisfied, report concern(s) to Local Authority.