



400 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Communications Policy

Policy approval date	July 2024
Policy review date	July 2025
Policy Lead	Ian Hawkins (Headteacher)
Governor or SLT approval	SLT
Governor committee responsible for policy	Pastoral

Rationale

Richard Hale School recognises the importance of clear and effective communications with all stakeholders (students and parents/carers, governors, Local Authority, outside agencies, national bodies, etc), and is committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school. The key stakeholders for a school are parents and students and this policy addresses the main ways in which the school ensures effective two-way communication between home and school.

Communications can take a variety of forms: verbal (through meetings or by telephone), written (through letters, notices on email etc.).

Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers may be teaching all day and running clubs or otherwise working with students at lunchtime or after school. Parents may be exasperated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been no available opportunity for the member of staff to reach a telephone to return a call.

For this reason, the school feels that the use of modern communications methods, email in particular is a more effective method of communication.

Aims of the policy:

1. To improve the quality of service given to students at Richard Hale School by ensuring that effective communication and consultation takes place between the school, parents, students and other stakeholders.
2. To improve the quality of service by ensuring robust processes for consultation between the school, parents and students.

Communication

Communication between the school and parents operates in the following ways:-

Prospective parents

- Prospective parents are invited to an Open Evening in the autumn term preceding the year of entry to the school and can book an arranged tour in the first half term to attend during the school day.
- Year 6 parents are invited to a 'Treasure Hunt' in May preceding entry to the school in September.
- Prospective parents are invited, along with students, to an induction evening in July where the main channels of communication are outlined and information about the school is presented.
- Parents are invited in the November of Year 7 to meet the student's form tutor and review how the student has settled into the school

Parents events at school

- Parents are invited to attend an online subject consultation evening each year to review the overall progress of the student. These evenings will consist of pre-booked video meetings with individual subject teachers.

- Parents of each year group are invited to appropriately themed Parents' Meetings to cover issues relating to the relevant year group of their child (e.g. Study Skills for Y11, Core subjects for Y10, options for Y8.)
- Parents are invited to a parent forums to discuss a specific area of school improvement.
- Parents of all students (except Year 11 and 13) are invited to attend an online meeting with their child's form tutor at the end of each year to review their year at RHS and prepare for the next academic year.

Email

- Emails are used to inform parents of letters from the school about key information, notifications and detentions. Email is used in a variety of ways to inform parents of key information in the school that applies to your student.

SIMS App

- From September 2022, parents will access all key information, including attendance and behaviour data, via the SIMS Parent App.
- Progress reports will be published up to two times each academic year. These can be accessed via the SIMS Parent App. Progress Report issue dates are published on the school website.

Newsletters

- Details about events at the school are published in the Headteacher's newsletter to parents, which is emailed each week, and is available on the school website. The Headteacher's newsletter and the website are key vehicles for communicating in a variety of ways: alerting parents and pupils to forthcoming issues; celebrating the life of the school etc.

Website

- The school has all key information on an up to date website. This includes links to sites such as the DFE performance tables, Ofsted reports etc.

Specific Queries

- Queries about events at the school may be made by phone to the school or by e-mail
- A list of email contacts is available on the website for parents to ensure the email is sent to the most appropriate person.
- A general Admin@richardhale.co.uk can be used if a message is to be sent to the Headteacher, the main office or a parent is unsure who to contact initially.

The school has published the following service standards to ensure a prompt response for communication requests by parents. These standards are reviewed on an annual basis by the school's administrative team.

Service Standards at Richard Hale School

The following response time will be adhered to:

Responding to parents – any requests for information, any concerns, requests for references or progress will be acknowledged or responded to within 48 hours initially. This

may only be a holding email with a set date and time for further communication to take place. (This applies to term time only and working weeks).

Response to issues or concerns – initially concerns should be addressed to the appropriate teacher, Form Tutor, Head of Year, or Head of subject. Concerns may be raised either by letter, email or phone call.

- Letters will receive either a verbal (usually by phone) response within 3 working days or a written response within 5 working days
- Concerns raised by phone will be responded to within 2 working days initially
- Emails will receive an email response within 2 working days. Those sent at weekends may not be dealt with until the following working week, and emails sent in holidays will probably elicit no reply until term time.

If you do not receive a response within 48 hours to your email, please email head@richardhale.co.uk stating you have not received a response and include your original email.

There is a system in place for monitoring the nature of concerns at the school in order to identify trends and address any recurring issues. These are also monitored by the Governing board.

Formal complaints should use the Complaints Policy. The policy refers to the process and deadlines for responding to these.