



Communications Protocol

Introduction and aims

Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre is centred around the following values:

- Honesty – all members of our community should be open and honest, acting with integrity in their dealings with others.
- Excellence – all students must apply themselves to the best of their abilities and strive to achieve excellence in all that they do.
- Accountability – at Newent, we recognise that all members of our community are human and can make mistakes. We expect that the members of our community take responsibility for their actions and seek to reconcile their differences.
- Respect – that all members of our community treat each other with respect, regardless of race, age, gender, faith, sexual orientation, disability.
- Teamwork – that in order to be a true community, we must work together and support each other in our efforts to achieve.

We believe that clear, open and respectful communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on students' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education.
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers.
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.

The aim of this policy is to promote clear, open and respectful communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers.
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers.
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Monitoring the implementation of this protocol
- Regularly reviewing this protocol

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this protocol and the school's Acceptable Use of ICT protocol



- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours 8.30am until 3.30pm, during term time or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours, 8.30am – 3.30pm, or during school holidays.

The school's Parent Code of Conduct is available on the school's website.

How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

SatchelOne

All parents are able to access the School's homework and communication portal, SatchelOne. Teachers will use this facility to set homework, feedback to parents, set classwork for remote learning (for example in the instance of a prolonged absence where a student is unable to attend school but requires school work).

We also use this to communicate other messages to parents.

Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Text messages



We will text parents about:

- Attendance / absence updates
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

School calendar

The Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre website includes a full school calendar for the year. This is a “live” calendar which is kept up to date as events are added or changes are required.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks’ notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for students to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

Phone calls

As part of our Behaviour policy, teaching staff should contact parents by telephone to update them of any significant issues within the classroom. This might include being sent to Shadow timetable, or the need for On-Call. Teachers will also call to notify parents of positive rewards such as House Points awarded for excellent work.

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly either electronically via SatchelOne or hard copy using Royal Mail:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Our weekly newsletter (Newent News)
- Letters about attendance

Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child’s learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance.
- Progress reports.
- A report on the results of public examinations.
- Information about vocational qualifications gained (or credits gained towards these).

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child’s teachers about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

Meetings

Throughout the year we hold a parents’ evening for each year group. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child’s achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child’s wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents’ evenings if there are concerns about a child’s achievement, progress, or wellbeing.



Parents of students with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 3 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within a further 3 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email admin@newent.gloucs.sch.uk and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 3 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school reception. Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school reception.

Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1) or call the school to book an appointment.



We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

The school's website can be translated into a number of languages using the facility on the homepage.

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Links with other policies

The protocol should be read alongside our policies on:

- Acceptable use of ICT
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement
- Staff wellbeing

Monitoring and review

The Senior Leadership Team shall review this protocol from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. If you have any questions about this protocol please contact the Principal or Business Manager.

The School will continue to review the effectiveness of this Protocol to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

Date of Review

May 2023



Appendix 1: School contact list

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the school office using admin@newent.gloucs.sch.uk or 01531 820550
- If sending an email, put the subject and the Department / name of member of staff / role of member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line
- Your request will be forwarded on to the relevant member of staff

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within 3 working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's subject teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	School office / Tutor or Head of House
Payments	School office / Finance Office
School trips	School office / Finance Office
Uniform/lost and found	School office / Reception
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01531 828927
Bullying and behaviour	School office / Head of House
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	School office / SENCo
Before and after-school clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	School office / Site and Community Manager
Trustee board	School office / Clerk to Trustees
Catering/meals	School office / Catering Manager

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which is available on the school's website.