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| Governing Body Sub-Committee | Steering Group |

**The Hayfield School
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RATIONALE AND PURPOSE:

Our customers are students, parents and others who have reason to visit, or contact the school - in person, by letter, phone, or e-mail. We seek to respond with courtesy and helpfulness to all queries and questions and encourage parents to contact us if they have a concern or a problem. Good relationships depend upon a commitment by all of us (teaching staff, ancillary and support staff) to respond in a helpful and courteous manner, reflecting our key values of kindness and decency.

BROAD GUIDELINES:

Internal Communication

We seek to ensure teaching staff communicate on issues relating to pupils/parents in a variety of ways:

- Regular briefings for all teaching staff and key support staff.
- Meetings of Leadership Team, Curriculum Leaders and Year Tutors on a regular basis to discuss pupil problems and successes, parental contacts etc.
- Updating our pupil database by staff on a regular basis as a record of events including parental contacts.
- Bespoke reports for pupils causing concern to be signed by staff and parents.
- Reports by teaching staff to Subject and Year Group Leaders where a problem has arisen possibly needing parental contact.
- Monitoring of student planners by parents and Group Tutors.
- Parental Survey, at parent's evenings over the academic year.
- Ofsted parent view feedback.
- Group Tutor/Year Tutor reviews of Tutor Group individuals including parent contact.

Incoming Contacts from Parents, Community and Outside Agencies

- A message informing callers to school that calls maybe recorded is given prior to speaking to the receptionist.
- All parents are asked to sign a Home School Agreement when pupils join the school.
- We seek to respond to a query in writing or by phone within 48 hours (2 school days) and if the response time is extended to explain to a customer why there is a delay to allow for appropriate consultation on data collection.
- Queries are channelled as appropriate - by hand if urgent; e-mail, memo, or by internal phone system.
- We ask parents/carers wherever possible to make an appointment if a query requires face-to-face discussion.
- staff are asked to:-
 - Answer the phone promptly.
 - Apologise for any undue delay.
 - Respond warmly and helpfully.
 - Avoid becoming emotional even if the caller is irate: seek to be non-confrontational, calm and rational.
 - Record accurately the name of the caller, phone number, organisation and reason for call, plus appropriate time to phone back.
 - Pass on telephone call information clearly to the appropriate link in the school checking they have received the message if clearly very important.

- Be sensitive to callers own time management problems.
- Avoid making controversial statements.
- Phones are normally manned from 8.00 am to 4.30 pm (Monday – Thursday) and 8.00 am to 4.00 pm (Friday) seeking to ensure that a member of the support staff is in this area throughout.
- Visitors arriving on site are asked to 'sign in' and will be issued with an appropriate lanyard. The receptionist will contact the member of staff to be seen. We seek to treat a visitor with kindness and decency and to offer them a seat etc. Visitors are escorted by a member of the support staff or the member of staff they are seeing both in and out of school.
- We seek to arrange appointments with school staff at mutually convenient times between staff and 'customers'. We are willing to see parents out of school hours within reason.
- We seek to hold discussions with visitors in a private area or room wherever possible.
- We encourage young people on site to be helpful to visitors (opening doors, giving directions, helping to carry materials (given Health and Safety factors etc) and to be personable and courteous off site.
- We have made car parking provision on site with an extra staff car park, short stay and visitor's bay. The car parks are covered by lighting and security cameras as are other areas of the site.
- We review support staff on a regular basis including aspects of their reception duties, telephone manner, and transmission of information.
- We seek to make available to support staff the whereabouts and return time of after school groups (e.g. sports fixtures, trips out) in order that they can respond to parental queries. We also have 4 mobile phones, which can be taken by a trip or sports group leader.
- A large number of staff (all teachers and some support) have been trained in Basic First Aid and we have a Medical Room and disabled toilet.
- We designate an emergency parking area in case of a need for an emergency service (ambulance, fire engine) or a special delivery.

Correspondence

- Direct correspondence with parents/carers and external agencies is normally via:
 - Phone conversation.
 - Email.
 - Letter.
 - Meeting.
 - Form tutor.
 - Heads of Subject.
- The communication process relating to Progress, Achievement, Teaching and Learning:
 1. Subject Teacher.
 2. Subject Leader.
 3. Assistant Headteacher responsible.
 4. Deputy Headteacher.
- The communication process relating to Behaviour, Attitudes, Personal Development,

Health and Wellbeing and Safety:

1. Form tutor.
 2. Year Leader.
 3. Assistant Headteacher.
 4. Deputy Headteacher.
 5. Headteacher.
- Other communication is direct to:
 1. Appropriate person responsible.
 2. Assistant Headteacher.
 3. Deputy Headteacher
 4. Headteacher.
 - We seek to respond in an informative way with a clear indication of the name of the respondent for further contact. The aim is to be logical, rational, and helpful and where necessary with a sense of humour and occasionally a sense of firmness.
 - We keep copies of all key correspondence and circulate on a need to know basis to internal colleagues.
 - Letters of complaint are responded to. Complaints are taken seriously even if we feel they are unfair - it is what the customer believes! We seek to record any complaint about an individual for investigation by a member of the Leadership Team. Formal complaints should be referred to the Headteacher (refer to the Complaints Policy).
 - We correspond with all our parents and community by text message system, twitter, website, and letters.

Social Media

As a school, we are absolutely committed to keeping children safe and promoting the highest standards of education. As with any large organisation, however, it is inevitable that parents and/or carers will on occasion wish to raise a specific concern regarding their child's education or safety. We passionately believe in the power of partnership between school and home and ask that any concerns be raised directly with the school rather than taking to social media. If having raised concerns with the appropriate member of staff you remain unsatisfied, we have a robust Complaints Policy available to view on the school's website.

The school uses its twitter account to share with parents and carers the other side of school life. As parents you, like us, expect high quality learning in the classroom, but as a school we feel strongly about sharing with you the other side of school life, the things that shape our character and culture. We want students to have good memories of their experience of school. Occasionally it will be used for an urgent message and we hope we will never have to use it as part of an emergency plan. From time to time we will retweet posts from other organisations and articles that we think may be helpful. We follow some really good organisations that can offer support to children and families.

If you want to respond to our tweets, we welcome that, but we kindly ask that this is in a positive way. As adults we have a duty to act as 'digital role models'. One way in which we can all do this is to show respect and provide a right to reply through official processes and procedures. This supports the work we do with our students on anti-bullying and how to use social media responsibly. No post is private. It leaves a digital footprint.

Verbal/aggressive inappropriate communication

The school understands and appreciates that sometimes parents/visitors may be upset, concerned, annoyed. This may be for a legitimate reason or it may be as a result of not having all the facts.

We understand that worries and concerns can lead to people presenting themselves in various ways. We want to know about worries and concerns and we want to either reassure or resolve the issues. We want to work together. With that in mind we expect all communication to be delivered in a considered manner.

The School's response to improper communication

Please be in no doubt that the school will respond robustly against any individual who:

- Uses social media, written, verbal communication to make unfounded malicious or vexatious comments with an intention to undermine and misinform.
- Is verbally aggressive towards staff.
- Is malicious, aggressive, threatening, intimidating or violent;
- Is made using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- Knows a complaint to be false;
- Uses falsified information;
- Uses conduct which is intended to intimidate, harass or is otherwise similarly inappropriate.

Linked policies:

Complaints
Managing, Abusive Visitors to school
Social Media