



Kisimul School

Operational and Education Policy and Procedure

Home - School Contact

Policy

Kisimul School has an open access policy whereby parents are encouraged to maintain contact with their child by visits, post or telephone. In order to help the School maintain this policy, the following procedure and guidelines have been prepared to assist parents and other carers. These are designed to ensure that the security and stability of the pupil is maintained, that any health & safety considerations are addressed and that the child's needs are catered for. Kisimul School sends out a pre-placement package to all new parents/guardians of which this Home-School Contact policy and procedure are a part.

Procedure

Visits

- With the exception of official visits, for example to attend education/social services reviews, visits are encouraged to take place during non-school time if possible. Having regard to the possible travelling distances involved, it may be advisable to telephone the School before a visit to ensure that the child is not out on an activity, although this is by no means imperative.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to take children home with them on weekend visits or for special occasions. In the case of an overnight contact, parents/guardians are urged to give the School at least 24 hours notice (except in the case of emergency) in order that arrangements can be fully communicated to staff and to ensure that everything will be made ready for the child to take home with him or her. However, in the event of an unexpected visit and in the absence of specific management instructions to the contrary, parents' reasonable wishes must be complied with.
- Any member of staff who has received a telephone call from a parent/guardian in which a visit to the school is discussed must make a

note of the call in the handing over file and also the telephone log. Details of the time and date of the call, and of the parents/guardians requirements should be given. To facilitate them when making these arrangements Team Leaders are issued with a regularly updated list of names of each pupils parents or persons with parental responsibility and are appraised of any issues which may affect contact i.e. Current restraining orders against one or the other parent.

- Whenever a pupil leaves the school with a parent/guardian a note of that fact must be entered in the handing over file together with their expected return time and date.

Telephone Calls

- Wherever possible incoming telephone calls should be made before 9.30 pm, after which time the children will be settling down to bed. All children will have free access to make calls if they are able, and with assistance of staff where necessary. Permission does not need to be given by any member of staff nor does the child need to tell any staff member who they are calling. Privacy must also be respected at all times.
- All incoming telephone calls must be noted in the pupils/students handing over files so that care staff on each shift are fully aware of the status of communication.

Letters

- A Pupil/student must be allowed to send letters home and to receive letters from home without restriction. Letters must not be read by any staff member nor must they be allowed to be read by any other person unless the pupil/student wishes them to do so. In certain circumstances and if the content of the letter is suspected to be such as would upset the pupil/student the Head Teacher or the Head of Care reserve the right to open the letter prior to giving it to the pupil/student.
- Where necessary the pupil/student should be able to request any person of their choice to assist them to read or to write a letter. In this case, the letter should only be opened in the pupils/students presence and a letter to be sent should like wise be sealed in their presence.

- There is a system whereby events such as relatives birthdays are recorded when the child is first introduced to the School and parents/guardians are asked to provide as much information as possible. The main office should also ensure that pupils/students personal file contains current details of any special events and celebrations pertinent to their immediate situation, these can then be passed on to the key worker (see Key worker policy and procedure). The Key Worker should maintain a record of events connected with each pupil and endeavour to honour those events in an appropriate manner.
- Parents are encouraged to send letters and assistance is given to pupils to convey the contents where necessary.

Travel

- When students reach the age of 16 years, wherever possible they are encouraged to develop independent travel skills. This can lead to them using public transport and all necessary precautions are taken to ensure the student's safety and welfare. It is unlikely that travel will take place without a member of staff at least 'shadowing'. In the event of a pupil undertaking totally independent travel written consent will be obtained from the parents/guardians.

Communication from the school

- A School News Sheet is compiled and circulated to parents/guardians at least every term. They contain such information as important diary dates and news of events which happened at the school as well as forthcoming events planned for the next term. The Schools News Sheet will either be posted to parents/guardians or will go home with the child. Any less general sharing of information is done on an individual basis and is usually conveyed by telephone.
- At parents request pupils can have home school diaries which contain information about what the pupil/student has been doing on a daily basis. These diaries are kept in the handing over files. The diaries will go home with the pupil and/or be photocopied at regular intervals and sent home.
- Parents/guardians will also be informed of their child's teachers email address and non contact times if requested.