

December 5th 2013

Guidelines for Staff & Parents

RE: Parent-Teacher Communication & Meetings.

GOOD COUNSEL COLLEGE



Guidelines for Staff - Parent Communication

These guidelines suggest approaches for communication between the staff and parents/guardians of students attending Good Counsel College.

Communication should take place in a respectful atmosphere where the unique contribution of each is recognised. Teachers are the educational professionals and will endeavour to offer the most appropriate educational advice in the circumstances. Parents/guardians are the main carers of the student and are supported in this role by the school community. Students attend school to achieve a high standard of education and are supported in this role by the school community.

Where a teacher has a concern, (academic, behavioural or pastoral) regarding an individual student they may:

1. Make a note in the “Student Journal” or the students copy.
2. Forward the relevant concern to the Class Tutor or Year Head.
3. Ask the Year Head, Principal/Deputy Principal to make contact with the student’s parents/guardians in order to discuss the issue or arrange a meeting or contact the parent/guardian directly.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to and assisted to be actively involved in the education of their children. If an issue of concern arises, parents can make an appointment to meet or speak with the relevant and appropriate person. Issues of a serious nature can be taken directly to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

With this in mind:

1. Meetings between parents and teachers should be arranged by appointment through the office & Principal/Deputy Principal;
2. Participants in meetings should be aware of the time constraints from the beginning of the meeting;
3. A written copy of the issues discussed and decisions made should be recorded on the standard form and entered in the student file.
4. Parent-teacher meetings are opportunities for a short input from the teacher and brief comment from parents. Any issue needing more time should be dealt with through the normal appointment system;
5. All participants in the meeting should deal respectfully with each other. If this does not occur the meeting may be terminated and rescheduled where appropriate;
6. Use of positive language is encouraged with the focus on solving the issue in question rather than dwelling on the negative;
7. Staff members may refer parents to other agencies inside (Guidance Counsellor, Principal, etc.) or outside (Youth Reach, Social Services, National Education Welfare Board, etc.) the school community where the need arises.

Guidelines for Parent-Teacher Meetings

For Parents

Welcome to the Parent Teacher meeting for your son. We hope that you find the time spent with each teacher a useful experience in adding to your information as to how your child is progressing in our school. You also receive a school report close to Christmas, after Mock exams and at the start of Summer which reports on recent assessments that your child has completed.

Please remember that you can contact any individual subject teacher or Year Head through our office in order to make an appointment to discuss an issue of concern. Your child's class tutor and year head have a special role in taking care of your child while they are in our school and may be of assistance where the issue is not related to a specific subject. We also have career guidance and counselling staff available to meet you by appointment.

Due to the brief time available for each parent and teacher to talk about each student, we ask you to observe the following guidelines for the duration of the parent-teacher meeting.

1. Please bring any helpful documentation with you: list of the relevant teachers' names and subjects, student journal, recent report, etc. (some of which will be provided on the day)
2. Check you are in the correct line before queuing to see a teacher. Some of our staff members share the same surname, so it will be useful to know if it is Ms X the science teacher or Ms X the French teacher. Students and staff members will be happy to help if you have any questions.
3. When you meet the teacher, please introduce yourself and state the name and class of your son. Teachers can sometimes find it hard to remember a face on such occasions even if they have met you before.
4. Because of the number of people present at parent-teacher meetings, conversations may not be very private. If an issue arises that you would prefer to discuss privately, please inform the teacher and arrange an appointment for a later date.
5. If a teacher is finishing the meeting and you feel you have more to discuss, ask for additional time. If this is not possible, the teacher will suggest you make an appointment for a later date.
6. If an issue arises that is confrontational, try to address it in a manner that is respectful of all concerned. If you are unhappy with how an issue is dealt with, you may make an appointment to see the Principal/Deputy Principal to discuss it further.

For Teachers

Parents are anxious to meet with you to add to their information as to how their child is progressing in our school. They also receive a school report close to Christmas, after Mock exams and at the start of summer which reports on recent assessments that their child has completed. Parents have been reminded that they can contact any individual subject teacher through the administrative staff in our office in order to make an appointment to discuss an issue of concern. In addition they have been told that their child's class tutor and year head have a special role in taking care of their child while they are in our school and may be of assistance where the issue is not related to a specific subject. Parents can also be referred to career guidance and counselling staff by appointment.

Due to the brief time available for each parent and teacher to talk about each student, we ask you to observe the following guidelines for the duration of the parent-teacher meeting.

1. Please check the notice displaying the seating position for the parent-teacher meeting and ensure that your name is included or excluded where appropriate. The Principal should be informed if you are unable to attend a meeting.
2. Please arrive on time and ensure that your name is clearly displayed. Please bring any helpful documentation with you: list of the students, recent results, samples of student work, etc.
3. Have a copy of the seating arrangement with you so that you can direct parents to their next teacher if they are having difficulty.
4. Parents have been asked to introduce themselves and to state the name and class of their son.
5. Because of the number of people present at parent-teacher meetings, conversations may not be very private. If an issue arises that you would prefer to discuss privately, please inform the parent and suggest that they arrange an appointment for a later date.
6. Try to provide brief but useful information as to the progress of the student. Some teachers may prefer to write a brief summary to give to the parents. Be mindful of those waiting to speak with you and try to keep each discussion brief.
7. Invite the parent to make a comment or ask a question before finishing the meeting.
8. If you are finishing the meeting the parent may ask for additional time. If this is not possible, suggest that they arrange an appointment for a later date.
9. If an issue arises that is confrontational, try to address it in a manner that is respectful of all concerned. If you are unhappy with how an issue is dealt with, you may report the matter to the Principal. If a parent is unhappy with how an issue is dealt with, suggest that they make an appointment to see the Principal to discuss it further.