

## Communication

Our approach to education is founded on the co-operation between home and school in each child's best overall interests, be this with regard to specific aspects of a child's learning, more general academic or pastoral matters within school, or family and other circumstances beyond school which will inevitably have an effect on a child's happiness and development. We aim to know, to understand and to support each child as an individual and communication is therefore an essential part of our work within school and with parents.

The simple principle for parents is to let us know of any concerns and to share with us any joys, in the certainty that we shall wish to celebrate the latter and address the former. It is this principle which underlies both our informal contact with you and the more formalised annual pattern of communication set out below. It is the same principle which is followed through in our internal arrangements for the monitoring and care of each child.

### **Staff Review of each child**

Prior to the beginning of each academic year, we spend two days conducting a full review of all matters relating to each child in the school. This ensures that all teachers and tutors receiving a new group of children are fully aware of a child's history and that any action necessary to support a child is planned before the year begins. An action plan is created for each child.

### **At Homes and Meet the Tutors**

In the first days of the new year, our 'At Homes' and 'Meet the Tutors' sessions take place, to provide parents with information about the year ahead, to allow them to put faces to the names of those most directly responsible for the care of their child and, most importantly, to encourage them to let us know of any matters relating to their child, of which we might need to be aware.

### **New Parents' Party**

For those parents whose child is new to Byron House or Senior House, a New Parents' Party is held in the first few weeks, at which all teachers are present. The party is informal and allows us all to meet as friends with your child's best interests at heart.

### **Pastoral Responsibilities and Internal Meetings**

While all teachers are accessible to parents, the Pastoral System functions primarily through the Form Teachers and Tutors. It is their role to be aware of all issues, at School or at home, that might affect a child's progress and to ensure that other staff understand the needs of the children in their care. No tutor is responsible for more than twelve children and all staff (including the Head and the Senior Managers) are expected to welcome pastoral responsibility as a key part of their rôle.

Within the Head's overall authority, Pastoral Responsibility at Byron House falls to the Head of the Junior Department and, at Senior House, to the Deputy Head, who is also responsible for whole school pastoral matters. Tutors in each Year Group meet each week to discuss concerns and causes for celebration. Notes of any action required are circulated to the Head and any matters arising are pursued with and communicated to all to whom they may be relevant.

There is a weekly staff meeting at Byron House and at Senior House, led by the Head, at which any matters of general information can be shared, in addition to which staff noticeboards on each site draw attention to issues of significance.

**Parent – Teacher Evenings and Reports**

Formal Parent-Teacher Evenings are held at the end of the Lent term for the whole school and additionally at the end of the Michaelmas Term at Byron House. Formal reports are sent home for every child at the end of the Academic year and additionally for Senior House children at the end of the Michaelmas term.

**Contacting the Tutors and others**

Given that they are the people most directly concerned with the overall care of your child, Form Teachers or Tutors should generally be the first point of contact for any concern or query.

Any specifically academic concerns can be raised through the pastoral system or directly with the child's Subject Teacher, as appropriate, and Heads of Subject or the Director of Studies will be happy to discuss any general curricular matters.

Serious concerns of any kind should be addressed to a member of the School's Senior Management, with whom appointments can be made at short notice through the school's offices.

You should feel free to write to us or to email or phone the school if you have any worries. The school's staff are required to inform the Head, the Deputy Head and the Head of the Junior Department of all significant concerns. In the interests of the children, we prefer to share confidentially among the staff all information which may be relevant to the care of a child. In the rare cases where, at the request of a parent, this is not done, the Head must be party to this decision.

*For information on the school's policy for communicating with parents who are divorced, separated or parenting separately of the other, please see the separate policy entitled ['Arrangements when parents are divorced, separated or parenting separately of the other'](#).*