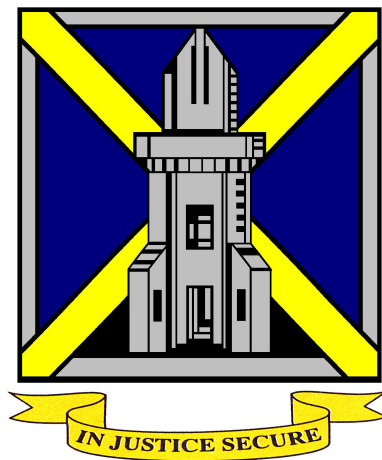


MEARNS ACADEMY



CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE**



The Government Standard

November 2010

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VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

Vision

We aspire to be a school community acknowledged as a centre of excellence for learning, teaching, and the care and welfare of all who work here.

Values

In carrying out our work we exhibit the values of:

- Fairness
- Honesty
- Respect for all
- Working together
- Communication

Aims

To support the school's vision our aims are:

- Learning: To ensure that each pupil is encouraged to respect learning and is provided with a relevant, challenging and motivational experience
- Teaching: To ensure that all teaching is of the highest possible quality and that staff are provided with a supportive and rewarding working environment
- Caring: To ensure the development in school of a positive and caring ethos in which all members of the school community are valued and supported as individuals
- Partnership: To ensure opportunities are created for parents and others in the wider community to be involved in the life of the school and its programme for improvement
- Improvement: To ensure that thorough and ongoing evaluation leads to improvements in the quality of service we provide
- Achievement: To ensure that all members of the school community are encouraged to achieve all they can and that such achievements are recognised and valued

a) Purpose of this Policy

This policy serves to:

- Confirm expected levels of service to our customers (customers taken to mean young people and their parents/carers)
- Provide information for customers and others with regard to contact points
- Provide confirmation of our complaints procedure
- Indicate our strategies to monitor and improve further the quality of our provision in this area
- Ensure Aberdeenshire Council expectations regarding customer care are pursued

b) Points of contact

1. Parents Contacting School

For parents/carers the usual contact points are:

For seeking general information about the school	See the school website: www.mearnsacademy.org.uk
For general school enquiries	School Office - Tel: 01561 378817 Email: mearns.aca@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
For reporting pupil absence	Call the School Office - Tel: 01561 378817
For general issues relating to a pupil/learner	The relevant Guidance Teacher i.e. 'C' Classes – Mrs Logue 'J' Classes – Mrs Anderson 'T' Classes – Mr Westland Tel: 01561 378817
For subject specific issues	Via the School Office - ask to speak with the Guidance Teacher or subject Principal Teacher (Please note that it is school policy that individual class teachers are not contacted directly by parents/carers)
For disciplinary issues	The relevant Year Head i.e. Mr Johnson – S2/S5 Mrs Wotherspoon – S3/S6 Mr Cowie – S1/S4 Tel: 01561 378817
For emergency closure, etc	See www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk OR Telephone 0870 054 4999, followed by PIN: 02 1090
For any matter of significance	Mr I Parkin, Rector, via the School Office Also available via monthly scheduled parental meetings

In the event of any matter not being resolved via school staff, parents/carers should be advised to contact:

Mrs Helen Shanks
Quality Improvement Officer
South Aberdeenshire
(Tel: 01569 766960)

2. School Contacting Parents

For parents/carers the methods of contact by the school include:

- Letters to cited contact address
- Phone calls from promoted staff/office staff
- SMS text messages to all parents
- Annual pupil reports
- Termly newsletters
- School website

3. Other Contexts

Additionally there are a range of contexts in which two-way dialogue between the school and parents can occur:

- Parents' Evenings
- Information Evenings
- Parent Council (MACG) participation
- Open mornings

c) Targets for Customer Contact

For phone calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answer should be made after 5 rings• Acknowledgement of receipt of phone message should occur the same day• Facility for message recording when phones not manned
For letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receipt of letters should be acknowledged (including wherever possible an appropriate response) within 5 days
For emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receipt of emails should be acknowledged the same day as receipt

Response times in terms of resolving issues raised will inevitably vary according to the specific context. The expected time to resolve issues should be communicated to parents.

The above details should be accessible to parents via the school website, newsletters, policies available at parents' evenings and via the school prospectus.

d) Complaints Procedure

A complaint is defined as any aspect of our service that fails to meet expected standards.

Process:

The person to contact regarding a complaint will depend on the context – see previous list: Points of Contact.

The complaint will then be investigated by the appropriate member of staff. This may involve interviews / discussions, etc with other parties.

In the event of dissatisfaction with how a complaint has been dealt with – as per previous reference, either the Head Teacher or Quality Improvement Officer may be contacted.

Expected Timescale:

Acknowledgement of receipt of a complaint should be as per previous Targets for Customer Support. The conclusion of investigating a complaint will be context dependent.

Analysis of Complaints:

A form to allow for recording type of complaint should be filled in on each occasion.

On a termly basis, the Quality Improvement Committee should analyse and publish an analysis of such complaints.

e) Reaching All Customers

Strategies to reach and engage with all (including difficult to reach parents) will include:

- Ensuring communications from school are available in languages other than English – as appropriate
- Updating methods of communication to include electronic communication when preferred
- Using all opportunities to pursue dialogue with parents when they are visiting the school (e.g. even if visits re disciplinary issues, use the context to raise other school/home matters)
- Analysing and responding to attendance at annual parents' evenings (e.g. phoning directly parents who are identified as not attending even when such a presence is seen as important)
- Considering use of available transport to assist parents in visiting the school – this to offset potential geographical difficulties

f) Evaluating and Improving the Quality of Provision

Strategies will include:

- Logging of all complaints
- Analysis of all complaints
- Sample analysis to show percentage of targets met re timeliness of communications
- Providing ongoing opportunities for pupils and their parents/carers to feedback of all aspects of our service (e.g. improvement planning consultation, use of Pupil Representative Council, learning discussions, Parents' Evening surveys, use of school website)
- Measurement of our standards against Aberdeenshire Council policies on customer service