

Wallace Hall
Customer Care Policy

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CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

February 2022

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Customer Care Policy

**First impressions count,
we do not get a second chance to make a first impression.
This initial contact may be through the customer receiving a letter or
leaflet; a visit to the school or a telephone call.
How we look, sound and behave is very important.**

WALLACE HALL AIMS

- We feel that it is important to treat all people (parents, staff, pupils, the community and outside agencies) with dignity and respect at all times.
- We want all concerned in the learning environment to be happy and feel safe and secure, enjoying a full range of social relationships, whilst being free from exploitation and abuse, but not being over-protected.
- We are keen to ensure that the privacy of the individual and his or her property are respected.
- We encourage all involved to make informed choices to aid their individual development and the improvement of the whole school. To that end, we work to provide information at a level appropriate to the needs of all users.
- We wish to ensure that all are treated equally and that each individual is allowed to work in an environment, which is free from bullies, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.

We would encourage individuals to bring any concerns to our attention as soon as possible, so that they can be addressed. We are committed to providing education of a high quality to develop the personality, talents, mental and physical abilities of the individual to help each reach his or her fullest potential.

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The aim of this policy is to provide a commitment to all our customers – responding to all their needs as and when they arise.

- Customer Care is the responsibility of every member of staff.
- The aim is to provide a service in a friendly and helpful atmosphere.
- Staff should be alert to the needs of customers (pupils, parents, the community, outside agencies and other staff members).
- Feedback is encouraged and staff will be responsive to comments and suggestions.
- The school has a clear procedure for dealing with concerns and suggestions.

GENERAL

A good initial appearance is part of the first and lasting impression that we want to give to our customers. We should also ensure that Wallace Hall has a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

- All calls should be answered within 6 rings.
- All visitors to the hatch should be dealt with immediately. If there is a shortage of office staff and you are on a phone call you should acknowledge the person at the hatch immediately to let them know that you are aware they are there and that you will deal with them after your phone call.
- Visitors should be requested to "sign in" in the visitors' book and given a visitor's badge.
- The reception area should be kept clear of obstruction and seating should be provided to allow customers somewhere comfortable to wait if they have an appointment. This includes the office side of the hatches – these should be free of clutter in order to give the impression of an organised office.
- Publicity displays and leaflets should be tidy and kept up-to-date. This includes the notice board outside the front entrance.

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- You should be alert to the needs of all customers and ensure that you are approachable and welcoming at all times.
- You should acknowledge customers in a pleasant, appropriate manner.
- When you come into direct contact with a customer be polite and friendly. Show the customer that you are willing to help them. Always be prepared to approach someone who you think may need assistance.
- You should dress appropriately, according to any guidelines previously agreed.
- You should be familiar with and confident about first aid, emergency evacuation and lockdown arrangements and handle any accidents and incidents which arise calmly. Reassure customers and take charge of the situation.
- You should be able to respond to the needs of customers with mobility or other problems.
- Offer to help all customers with filling in a form as they may have a hidden disability.

COMMUNICATION

Telephone Contact

- You should answer the telephone calls with "Good Morning" or "Good Afternoon" followed by "Wallace Hall" and add "Your Name" / "How may I help you?" as appropriate. The tone of the voice used is particularly important and must convey friendliness and enthusiasm to the caller.
- You should take responsibility for all telephone calls you answer. This includes taking clear messages, noting caller's name, time, return number and details of the call; referring callers to someone who can help them.
- If a customer asks for specific information, you should ensure that the information that you provide is correct. If you are unable to answer the enquiry, you should assist the customer by directing them to someone who is able to provide the information.
- If you are unable to deal with your caller's enquiry or request, take a message.

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- Do not put calls from parents through to a member of teaching staff directly. Explain that this is not protocol and that their enquiry or concern should be made through the PT PS or the DHT if unavailable.
- If there is a telephone call for a member of staff at a time when that member of staff has a class, the caller will be asked to call back at a more convenient time or else a message will be taken. If there is an emergency that will override normal practice, but teaching commitments have clear priority in normal circumstance.
- If the call is a concern, make sure you can deal with the matter. If you cannot deal with the concern, tell your caller who you are passing the concern on to. Give the caller details of the person dealing with their concern and say when that person will contact the caller.
- If you receive an abusive call ask the caller to moderate their language and say that it will not be possible to continue the call otherwise. Do not lose your temper or argue. If the caller continues to be abusive give them a warning that if they don't stop being abusive you are going to end the call. If they continue then end the call. Report any abusive call to the School Support Manager or another member of SMT if she is unavailable as soon as possible.
- If you receive a personal telephone call you must ensure that the call is kept as brief as possible.

Personal Contact

- Use positive body language, for example, good eye contact and facial expressions.
- Give your customer your full attention.
- Tell your customer what you are going to do before you go and do it.
- When talking to customers, use plain language that is easy to understand.
- Don't criticise the Council, the School, or colleagues to customers.
- You should be aware that inappropriate topics should not be discussed when customers are present.
- Ensure that, where appropriate, you are aware of activities and events happening each day and the movement of colleagues.

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- Where customers call in without an appointment make every effort to minimise their waiting time but make no promises that they will be seen.
- Where a customer is attending for an appointment with a member of staff who is absent, give the customer an explanation, an apology, and the opportunity to be seen by someone else.

Written Enquiries

Letters and Emails –

Customers do not always tell us that they do not understand letters and forms we send to them. Some customers think that it is their fault if they do not understand the information we have sent them.

- All letters/emails should be dealt with within 10 working days. If you think that an enquiry will take longer than 10 days, a standard acknowledgement card/letter/email should be sent to your customer giving the date by which they can expect a full response.
- Current corporate stationery should be used for all correspondence sent externally from the school.
- All replies should be written in plain language that is easily understood.
- All letters received into the office should be date stamped and passed to the appropriate member of staff to be dealt with.
- All letters should be checked for accuracy before leaving the office. This is carried out by the School Support Manager. The person who has dealt with the enquiry should sign the letter, and it must show their name and job title.
- Appropriate systems should be established to record and monitor post received and response time.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

- Feedback from customers is always welcome and is a vital part of ensuring that we all continue to deliver a quality service.
- We encourage customers to use our customer feedback form which you can request from the school office.

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- Staff are also encouraged to use their own feedback system for information which they receive from customers simply by passing on information to colleagues informally or at staff meetings.
- All customer comments, good and bad, provide evidence which can help shape the future development of Wallace Hall.
- Where possible suggested improvements are put in place.

CONCERNS

Any customer "concern" will be dealt with in line with the School's "Have You a Concern Policy".

A "concern" may come in a variety of different forms (formal/informal). However, this should be seen as an opportunity to improve and learn from mistakes. To ensure customer concerns are dealt with effectively the following procedure should be followed.

- Listen very carefully to what the customer has to say. Find out the reason and validity of the complaint.
- If you are unable to resolve a problem yourself you should consult with a senior member of staff.
- If the complainant is unhappy with the reply, or wishes the matter to be dealt with at a more senior level, the details will be passed on to the Head of Education or Chief Executive of the Council.

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CONCLUSION

The main aim of the Customer Care Policy is to provide an easily understood working document to which all staff can aspire to meet the objectives.

WALLACE HALL
CUSTOMER CARE CHARTER

Our commitment to you

We aim to –

- **Provide services in a friendly and helpful atmosphere.**
- **Be alert and respond to the needs of our customers.**
- **Encourage feedback and be responsive to any comments and suggestions.**
- **Have a clear procedure for dealing with concerns and suggestions.**
- **Provide well-maintained, safe community facilities/buildings.**

As a user of our services –

- **You will have the right to expect courteous and helpful service at all times.**
- **You will be treated with respect.**
- **You will be dealt with honestly and fairly.**
- **You will be listened to and wherever possible action will be taken on what you say.**