

PARTNERSHIPS TOOLKIT: Communications checklist

Why are good communications important? It is vital that everyone is clear about what you are doing and why so that there is a consistent message to people inside and outside your school. This area of school life may be quite new and may not be visible to all students and staff; if funds are being spent on partnerships all should know what and why. Depending on your partnership aims there may be external people you should keep in touch with your news and impact evaluation*, including funders and local community groups. But communications are two-way, so consider the inward flow of information too from all your stakeholders: local press, schools, universities, community groups.

Where to start? First, check that you are conforming with existing policies on communications and/or marketing. Do you need to discuss with colleagues, external relations, development office, bursary? You could use this list to brainstorm on your own or with colleagues:

Internal Communications			External Communications		
Things to consider	Tick		Things to consider	Tick	
Senior leadership team	Regular reporting to/steer from SLT, whether or not you are a member		Website	A page on partnerships with links to co-curricular, community, charity, news stories	
Teaching staff	Regular briefings, opportunities, report on student involvement, CPD?		Social Media	Commit before starting! Policy* for your protection. Use school account first?	
Support staff	Catering, transport, grounds staff involved – thank and celebrate!		Alumni	Include partnership updates in alumni newsletter for support/funding	
Staff directly involved in partnerships	Public thanks and celebration on their behalf, awareness of what others are doing		Local community groups, e.g. council, charities	Good news stories about building bridges – termly email? Press?	
New staff	Briefing at induction (or even recruitment docs) to give overview		Funders, e.g. businesses, charities	Always thank funders and keep in loop about activities for future	
Students	Assembly, notices/display about opportunities, celebrate involvement		Marketing literature	Prospective parents ask about partnerships... Infographics effective	
Student leaders/council/voice	Role as partnership leaders* to inspire others & communicate opportunities		Charities Commission	Annual public benefit return* includes partnerships – collect termly?	
Parents	End-of-term letter to update on partnership activities, student volunteering		Independent Schools Council annual census	Census* in January – start preparing December.	
Governors	Regular briefing to governors, defend resource spending		Schools Together website	Upload case studies* regularly	

Next steps: Consider writing a document setting out these ideas and stress-testing it with colleagues/stakeholders. Can you include partnerships in some existing communications (e.g. prospectus)? Check out other schools' websites for inspiration. Consider a partnerships/project logo, branding. * = further resources available