

Home-school communication policy

Newton Hall Infants' School



Approved by: The Governing Body **Date:** 2022

Next review due by: 2025

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	3
2. Roles and responsibilities	3
3. How we communicate with parents and carers	4
4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school	6
5. Inclusion.....	6
6. Monitoring and review.....	7
7. Links with other policies.....	7
Appendix 1: school contact list	8

1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policy

- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Respond to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

3.1 Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Class activities or teacher requests

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.3 School calendar

We use the school calendar on the website to communicate with parents about events.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors.

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Phone calls

We may call parents if their child is ill or they have forgotten to send something with their child.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

- Letters about trips and visits
- Consent forms
- Our newsletter

3.6 Seesaw

We use Seesaw to:

- send out urgent communication
- send out newsletters
- send whole school announcements
- message parents individually

3.7 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance
- A report on Key Stage (KS) 1 tests

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.8 Meetings

We hold two parents' evening(s) per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

3.9 School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements

- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school office about non-urgent issues in the first instance newtonhall@durhamlearning.net

4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should ring the school office and the relevant member of staff will return their call at a convenient time due to teaching or other commitments.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries, please call the school office on 0191 3861203

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 2-3 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in other languages than English if needed.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Home-school agreement

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the school office on 0191 3861203 newtonhall@durhamlearning.net

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher via Seesaw / telephone call
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher via Seesaw / telephone call
Payments	School office via email / telephone
School trips	School office via email / telephone
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's class teacher via Seesaw / telephone call
Attendance and absence requests	School office via email / telephone
Bullying and behaviour	Your child's class teacher via Seesaw / telephone call. Headteacher via email / telephone call
School events	Your child's class teacher via Seesaw / telephone call
Special educational needs (SEN)	SENCO via email / telephone
After-school clubs	Your child's class teacher via Seesaw / telephone call. School office via email / telephone
PTA	A member of the school PTA committee
Governing board	d.maw600@durhamlearning.net
Catering/meals	School office via email / telephone. Taylor Shaw

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy which can be found on the school website.