



Milecastle Primary School

Communication with Parents Policy

Reviewed March 2017



MILECASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Milecastle Primary School recognises the importance of clear, effective and timely communication with all stakeholders and is committed to working with all who have an interest in the school.

The key stakeholders for school are parents, carers and pupils. This policy addresses the main ways in which the school ensures active two-way communication between home and school.

AIMS

Our principal aim is to ensure that effective communication takes place between school and home. We aim:

- to make the school as welcoming and inclusive as possible.
- to make parents aware of the ethos, aims and objectives of the school and promote their involvement and support of them
- to provide information about all aspects of school life including the curriculum and wider opportunities in which school is involved so that parents can help their child's learning
- to actively involve parents and carers in the life and work of the school and its community
- to ensure that all written, telephone and personal enquiries are dealt with as quickly as possible.

COMMUNICATION

Communications can take a variety of forms: verbal (in person, through meetings or by telephone), written (through letters, texts, e mails, on reply slips or in reading records or homework planners) or via the school website. Our aim is to use all means of communication effectively.

School staff will endeavour to reply to letters from parents as quickly as possible. Please note all written communications are approved by the headteacher (deputy headteacher in her absence). Letters of complaint or those concerning a significant issue will always be referred to the headteacher - our Complaints Policy explains this in more detail.

The first steps of communication between the school and parents will be:

- All prospective parents will receive a school prospectus on request and information about the school website.
- Prospective parents are invited to an Open Evening in the autumn term of the year before their child is due to start school in Reception.
- Parents of children allocated a place to start Reception will be invited to a meeting in the summer term before a child's September start. At this stage parents will be given information about the arrangements for starting school, information about school uniform and school meals. Parents will also meet Reception staff.
- Children are invited to spend 2 afternoons in school in the summer term before the September start. The children will meet Reception staff and their new classmates.
- Parents of Reception children have access to an online secure 'Learning Journal' through 'Tapestry' where they can find out about their child's days and supply news from home.

MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Other than the meetings held for new and prospective parents, other meetings are arranged throughout the year. These may be held during the school day or after school hours. We will always try to ensure that parents will be given sufficient notice of dates.

These include:

- at least two parental consultation sessions to discuss with your child's class teacher his/her academic attainment and progress and personal progress.
- meetings to deliver specific information e.g. a meeting to provide information about how we teach maths and reading, information about end KS2 SATs, meetings connected with residential.

We also hold 'Family Fridays' and other workshops where parents can come into school to work on activities with their child. A range of after school workshops are also offered by 'Family Learning' and others.

Parents are invited into school to attend celebration assemblies, productions and other special events.

THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

The school website is the main source of information about the school. It contains all the statutory information school is required to provide alongside other information including:

- the school prospectus
- information about curriculum

- copies of policies and procedures
- copies of letters to parents
- a 'Week Ahead' and 'Forthcoming Events' section
- information about special events
- a photo gallery
- class and headteacher blogs
- links to Ofsted information
- links to the School Gateway online payment system.

Parents are able to request that their child's photo does not appear on our website.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES/BLOGS

Staff regularly update the class blog so that parents and children can see up to date information about class learning and events.

In line with safeguarding procedures, staff are not permitted to communicate with parents or children via social networking sites or accept them as 'Friends'.

We request that parents/carers contact school directly rather than posting comments or enquiries on 'Facebook' pages or the Milecastle parents' page so that an accurate response can be made.

E MAIL, TELEPHONE AND TEXT

Parents are welcome to use e mail as an alternative to a letter to contact school by using admin@milecastle.newcastle.sch.uk

Please note that this should not be used if the information supplied is urgent or requires an immediate response. To report an absence before 9 am, the telephone is the best method - a message may be left.

School may use e mail to supply information or reminders. Text messages are used to remind parents or to provide a general alert e.g. a delayed coach journey after a residential.

If a child is ill or has had an accident, school will contact home via telephone.

It is therefore important that all emergency contact information supplied by parents is up to date and correct.

SUPPORTING PARENTS/CARERS OF PUPILS WITH SEND

Communication with parents of children who have additional needs may be different to the general school population. We:

- arrange parent meetings with staff from other agencies to provide information about how we can support a child in school
- invite parents to initial consultation and review meetings with school staff and staff from any external agencies involved with the child
- invite parents to attend a separate review meeting with school's SENCO
- offer longer parental consultation meetings
- provide parents with copies of reports from external agencies
- invite parents to share their views on their child's provision each term as part of the review process and on information supplied in the SEN Information Report annually
- will provide all relevant information in a way in which parents can understand.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

A weekly and termly calendar of forthcoming events is published on the school website.

The school encourages parents to share with staff any issues relating to their child which may affect a child's learning or well-being. There are forms of support which can be offered to a child with parental consent e.g. our Family Welfare and Support Officer.

If a child is absent from school and we have had no indication of the reason, a member of staff will contact parents by telephone to find out the reason. If possible, we ask parents to have contacted school by 9am.

SEEKING VIEWS/COMMENTS

Questionnaires are sent to parents from time to time to find out how we are doing and to determine ways in which we can improve.

Parents can also comment on the school at any time using the Parent View link on the Ofsted website.