



Backworth Park Primary School
Communication Policy
September 2024

Parent and Carer Communication Policy 2024

Introduction

At Backworth Park Primary School, our 3R values are at the heart of everything we do – Respect, Resilience and Responsibility.

Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together.

Parents can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve. At Backworth Park Primary School we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents and with the wider community.

Communication from school to home

Annual written report to parents: children's achievements

Every year we provide a written report to each child's parents on the child's progress in the various National Curriculum subjects. This report identifies areas of strength and areas for future development. We also give parents in Year 1, 2 and 6 the details of their child's performance in the national tests, and in Year R the EYFS profile outcomes. As well as receiving the annual written report, parents are provided with the opportunity to speak to their child's teacher for a private parent-teacher consultation. This gives them the opportunity to celebrate their child's successes, and to support their child in areas where there is a particular need for improvement. Parents are also given information on where their child is performing in relation to age related expectations and targets which the child is currently working on in core subjects. We encourage parents to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being throughout the academic year. Prior to these parent consultations, parents have an opportunity to attend school to look at their child's books with them. When children have special educational needs, or if they are making less than the expected progress, we find it helpful to speak to and/or meet with parents more regularly. A child, whose progress is causing concern, or a child who has identified Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be reviewed and supported in line with the 2014 SEND Code of Practice and within school policy, protocol and procedures. Parents/carers will be kept informed of all monitoring outcomes and educational provision made. In accordance with the 2014 SEND Code of Practice, parents are encouraged to be involved right from the initial stages. Parents are given the opportunity to express their views, be active in decision making and participate in their child's education, at review meetings, parent consultations and induction meetings.

School Prospectus

The school prospectus contains a range of specified information to give parents a full picture of provision at our school.

Prospective parents and carers

Prospective parents and carers are invited to an Open Evening in the Summer term of the year preceding their child's year of entry to the school. During this staff present key information and parents can tour the school setting.

Public access documents

The school makes a range of documentation available to parents on the website, including a range of policies, and the school office can make a copy of these available on request.

Media

Class teachers regularly communicate information to parents and carers through Marvellous Me and Tapestry however these are not used as tools for dialogue.

Newsletter

We send a newsletter to parents/ carers every half term throughout the year. It contains general details of school events and activities.

Information Letters

We send other letters of a general nature when necessary, such as:

- Any meetings that may be occurring
- Letters regarding out of school visits or residential trips
- Invitations to school performances, sporting events
- Letters regarding curriculum enrichment activities – Music, Sport, Modern Foreign Languages etc.
- Information about assemblies
- National awareness days/ themed weeks
- In school events such as the disco

At the beginning of the year all teachers write to the parents of the children in their classes with details of the routines and information specific to their class. Each half term, a homework grid is sent out with details of the curriculum overview and learning for the forthcoming half term. We invite parents to learning assemblies and book looks throughout the year. Parents can contact teachers via the school office if there are particular concerns or an urgent issue to discuss.

Reading diaries

Children throughout school have access to an electronic reading diary through an app called Boom Reader. Parents are requested to sign the diary when they listen to their child read and/ or make a comment. It can also be used for messages between home and school. A paper copy is available for parents upon request.

Direct contact with teachers

The school encourages parents and carers to share any issues about their child at the earliest opportunity. Where there is the need, they are encouraged to write a note to the class teacher, or catch them at the end of the day or email them via the school office to arrange a conversation. Staff do often have meetings, other commitments or can be working off site but will endeavour to make an arrangement to call or meet as soon as possible. Should the frequency of these meetings be deemed overly onerous, the Headteacher or member of SLT reserves the right to withdraw or place limits on this communication channel.

At Key Stage 2 (Y3 – 6), we promote independence to prepare the children for secondary school. Children may be given messages to take home verbally or communication may increase via Marvellous Me.

Other points of contact

We arrange 'Curriculum Meetings' for parents. We hold a meeting for new Early Years Foundation Stage parents and schedule a Phonics Meeting for Key Stage One children.

Absence

If a child is absent, parents and carers are asked to contact the school as soon as possible on the morning of the absence notifying their child's absence. If a child is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, we contact a parent (by telephone, if possible) to find out the reason for the absence (see Attendance Policy). We may need to follow this up with a text and/ or email. We reserve the right to authorise absences where we see fit – a telephone call from a parent/ carer does not automatically authorise the absence. This will depend on the circumstances.

Behaviour

Parents are contacted in line with our Behaviour Policy, should behaviour concerns arise.

Texts

Automated texts are sent to parents/carers when appropriate, including in the event of an emergency closure of the school or significant change to arrangements.

Questionnaires and consultations

Questionnaires and consultations are issued each year. These take the form of an online electronic response, or a hard copy form.

Medical Incidents and Medicines

If a child has a minor accident (e.g. grazed/cut knee) in school, this will be noted in an incident book, but parents/carers will not necessarily be informed. When discussing the day with their children, their child may therefore inform them about any minor accidents they had, such as a cut or graze. If a child has a more significant injury, an accident form will be completed and sent home with the child to inform parents, these are usually in the child's book bags, which parents should check daily. For more serious issues, sickness or diarrhoea or where a child has received an injury to the head a parent/carers will be contacted. Please note that only prescribed medications will be given in school. However, a form must be completed in the office first, and medicines must come in their box as prescribed by the doctor. (See Medicine Policy)

General home/school communication

We always try to do the best for all our children and ask parents to check their child's book bags for notes, particularly if they are in the Infants (Years R—Y2). At Key stage 2 (Years 3—6) we promote independence to prepare the children for their transition to secondary school. Children are encouraged to give messages themselves, including passing on an accident form, we ask parents to encourage this too.

Severe weather and emergency closure

In the event of emergency closure communication will be made to parents and carers via text or email. Parents and carers should also check the school website and Twitter.

Communication from home to school

The school has a home-school agreement with parents which states that parents agree to:

- Maintain good, open communication with my child's class teacher and other staff and respond to school letters and correspondence promptly.
- Demonstrate how to be a good role model, supporting our 3Rs (values) in school and home life by my attitude and behaviour.

We welcome visitors to Backworth Park Primary School. We will act to ensure it remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all members of our community. If you have any concerns, we will listen to them and seek to address them. Please be aware, however, that inappropriate, aggressive communication

or abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated in this school ([see Parents and Carers Code of Conduct and Unacceptable Communications Policy](#)).

General communication

Please remember that most teachers will be teaching when you try to contact them. While it would be ideal for them to respond to your query immediately, this is simply not possible most of the time, unless it is urgent.

Please consider the following points:

- School does not monitor emails outside of the normal working hours evenings, weekends and school holidays. Whilst parents/carers may compose emails at hours to suit their own needs, they can only be addressed during working hours.
- If an email is received which has an aggressive tone, sets unreasonable demands or could otherwise be interpreted as harassing, or if the email exchange is not moving forward constructively, school will contact the sender to ask for a modified approach as per the Unacceptable Communication Policy.
- If, for whatever reason, the exchange does not go well despite your best efforts to resolve the issue, escalate it to the staff member's line manager.

The line of escalation is as follows:

- Class Teacher
- Key Stage Lead
- Assistant Head
- Deputy Head
- Headteacher

Responding to letters

Staff will always respond to a letter from parents and carers as quickly as possible. An immediate response will be given where there is a safeguarding concern. For any other queries, a response will be given within 5 working days.

E-mail

Emails received will be treated in the same way as letters. The school's email address is: office@backworthparkprimary.org.uk Parents and carers are encouraged to provide the school with a current email address for prompt and effective communication.

Telephone Calls

Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers may be teaching full-time and running clubs or working with pupils at lunchtime or after school. Parents and carers may be frustrated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been no available opportunity for the member of staff to reach a telephone to return a call. In a non-emergency a return call will be made within 3 working days, with any follow up action from the request /query/problem being dealt with within 5 working days.

Accessibility

We will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary to enable a parent or carer with a disability to participate fully in a meeting or to receive and understand a communication. Documents printed using a larger font can usually be provided upon request. If a translation of a document is required, in the first instance parents/carers should access Google Translate. Where

appropriate and possible and where required, a translator provided to ensure effective communication.

Home-school agreement

Our home-school agreement is a requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It reflects our school aims and values and our approach to respectful communication. Please sign this agreement and return it to the school office.

Collection of children

Children must be collected promptly at the end of the day and from all after-school clubs. Staff offer clubs on a voluntary basis and therefore persistent late collectors will be advised they will be unable to attend due to a lack of adequate supervision.

Pastoral Team

Our school Inclusion Team are available to offer help and support to both our pupils and their parents and carers, across the whole school on a wide range of issues affecting education and general family life. Our Pastoral Team aim to be as accessible as possible to parents and carers but as we have over 300 pupils at our school, the demands on their time are high. They have to work on a priority needs basis and always put the needs of any children first. Therefore, there are times when they may not be able to meet with or speak to you or respond to a query or request that you have made immediately. Wherever possible please always book an appointment to see any member of the team with the school office. For non-urgent matters they will always aim to reply to queries or other requests within 5 working days. Please always attend any meeting booked, or notify us as soon as possible if you can no longer attend. If 2 support meetings with the team are missed without a good reason we reserve the right not to schedule any further meetings.

Communication with other schools and outside agencies

Towards the end of their final term in Year 6, we pass on information about the children to their intended secondary schools. We try to give a view of the whole child, and we include their expected national test results, their strengths and weaknesses, their interests and responsibilities (e.g. sports team member, school council representative, buddy etc.). There is also an electronic transfer of further information about the child, organised by the government. We also arrange various transition visits for all Y6 children, which we will communicate to you. We recognise that children have diverse needs, and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who keep us informed on better ways to meet these needs, so that children may participate more fully.

Support comes from medical services such as Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Language and Communication and Educational Psychology, from child development centres, from doctors and specialists, and from school nurses. It also comes from various welfare-focused services, such as Social Services and The Early Help Team. We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, that their protection is a shared responsibility, and that our school should provide a safe and secure environment. During the school day, we are the people most in contact with your children, and we are therefore in a unique position to identify and help abused children. So, when any member of staff has concerns about a child, these will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Head Teacher, who may share this information with Social Services, through a Front Door Services referral (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy). However, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will communicate this to you before making the referral, unless it is of the most urgent safeguarding concern.

We hold information on pupils in our school, and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Parents have a right to view the information we

hold, and we have contact details of the agencies to which our information is passed. (See Data Protection and Information Sharing Policies)

We look forward to working in partnership with all members of the community in a positive manner, supporting our 3Rs values and ethos.