

Communication Protocol

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out expectations for how school and home can successfully communicate, to ensure the best partnership of support for each child's learning. On-going research continues to demonstrate the vitally important role parents/carers play in the education of their child.

“Parents, carers and families are by far the most important influences in a child's life. Their support can play a vital role at all stages of education. Parents who take on a supportive role in their child's learning make a difference in improving achievement and behaviour. Schools can benefit from developing positive partnerships with parents [and] engaging with parents gives them the chance to understand the role that they play in their child's learning and development and fosters parental involvement.”

“Why Get Parents Involved?”
www.educationscotland.gov.uk

“Parental involvement in children's education from an early age has a significant effect on educational achievement, and continues to do so into adolescence and adulthood ... Effective home-school partnerships are essential to ensure that each child gets the most out of their school and the education system”

“The Impact of Parental Involvement on Children's Education”
Dept for Children, Schools and Families

Why partnership and good communication is important to us all

At Moorlands, we believe:

- that every child is entitled to the best learning opportunity and we are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to deliver this.
- that the child is the most important consideration of any conversation
- that a three-way process of communication between the child, home and school is essential for all children thrive and flourish
- that all communication should be open, accessible, timely, respectful and appropriate
- that communication is about more than information exchange: it is about the development of positive relationships
- that communication involves active listening
- when parents/carers understand what a school is aiming to achieve and work with the school to achieve this, they are able to help their own children more.

Methods of Communication

We continually seek to refine how we liaise with parents/carers in order to meet our aim of providing you with all the information needed to be active partners in your child's learning journey. We recognise that everyone has their own preferred method and availability and aim to accommodate this wherever possible, but hope that what we have set out in this document will put you in contact with the person best placed to help you as soon as possible.

We are committed to being a 'listening' school and always welcome parents/carers who want to meet with our staff. However, we do recommend that an appointment is made if you have a particular issue you wish to discuss as this will ensure the member of staff you wish to see is focussed on you. Appointments can be made in a number of ways: sending a note in with your child, telephoning the office to leave a message or emailing the member of staff directly (contact details for all staff are provided in Appendix 1).

In addition, for children in Reception (and, if deemed appropriate, for any child or family) we provide a HASP (Home And School Partnership) book. This is an additional layer of communication where the parents and teacher can communicate directly via short notes as regularly as needed.

Generally speaking, we would always recommend that you discuss concerns with your child's class teacher in the first instance, as this will be the person who will know you and your child best. If this doesn't provide you with the information you need or you feel the issue hasn't been resolved, then we would ask you to contact the member of staff identified in Appendix 2 – Our Communication Process.

Staff Availability

Staff will endeavour to meet with parents as soon their timetable allows. Please bear in mind that teaching commitments have to be met and that there are other circumstances that lead to staff not being available at school. All teaching staff have Preparation, Planning and Assessment (PPA) time as part of their working week, there are also times that they may be absent for training or liaison with other schools or agencies to ensure we are continually delivering Best Practice to our children.

Members of the Senior Leadership team are also required to attend meetings with External Agencies, such as the Local Authority or Ofsted, often away from school and they have also more meeting commitments with other local schools, or Leaders of Education, again to ensure we are delivering the best learning to your children. Should the member of staff you need to speak with be away from the school, arrangements will have been made for someone to deputise or for the meeting to be fitted in at the earliest opportunity, in discussion with yourself.

Regular Meetings and Correspondence

Throughout the course of the school year, we will provide information relating to your child's learning, achievement, activities as well as offering you opportunities to come into school for formal and informal meetings. We have set out a detailed programme of meetings and correspondence, so that you know what to expect and when, which is attached at Appendix 3.

Other Communication Options

We do try very hard to provide all the information needed to help you to be an active partner in your child's personal learning journey. We know that open and effective communication between home and school helps children to learn, thrive and achieve their potential. Please let us know if there is anything else we can help with - place suggestions/requests in the Suggestion Box which is located outside the main office or boxes outside the classrooms in the Moorfields building or just leave a message with the office. We really do value your thoughts and ideas on how things might work better and will try to accommodate them wherever possible.

All the information published by the school can be found on the website **www.moorlands-school.org** Each class has its own class pages which can be accessed by clicking on the appropriate tab. We are committed to being as environmentally friendly as possible so we do try to limit the amount of paper used and ask for your support by requesting as much information as is possible be sent via email. We also send reminders and short information notices using the Teachers2Parents text service. The school office will ask you about adding your email address and mobile number to our communication data base (a contact sheet is issued at the start of each year for you to check – if you do not think you are receiving correspondence, please tell us as many times as necessary – you receiving information is vitally important). From time to time letters need to be sent out directly to parents and require a paper response. These will be given out in class and the children asked to put them in their book bags. **Please check your child's book bag daily.**

Communication Protocols

The Governing Body of Moorlands Schools Federation is clear about the immeasurable value of support parents/carers give to their children. The Federation staff are expected to engage positively with all members of our community and work to foster the positive relationships that will help children to learn, thrive and flourish so that they can achieve their potential. We want parents/carers to feel they are active partners in their child's learning at school.

The Federation is committed to the concept of partnership in supporting your child. To this end, we have set out here the commitment we make to sharing information with you and how we can be contacted for any matter that you wish to talk through with us. As you would expect, if you feel any of our staff have not met the commitments set out in this policy, we ask that you bring this to the attention of the senior leaders or staff immediately. Our Federation Complaints Process and Policy is available on our website.

The Governing Body wish to make clear that they will always listen to concerns or complaints from any member of the community, which includes staff at the school as well as parents/carers or children. We greatly value the professionalism of all our staff and expect them to be treated with respect appropriate to their position within the school community by all. We would like to take this opportunity to re-affirm our belief that communication is a two-way process that involves active listening by all parties.

The Governing Body will not tolerate violence, aggressive, threatening behaviour and/or abuse (verbal, physical or emotional) against any member of the school community, including staff, and

we reserve the right to remove right of access to the school from any member of the community who does not behave in an appropriate manner. Any such incidents would be dealt with formally, through the correct official channels. **All members of the school community have a right to expect that the school is a safe place in which to work and learn.**

Appendix 1: Federation Contact Details

Contact Details	
Georgina Scott– Headteacher (maternity leave)	gscott@moorlands-school.com
Warrick Barton- Acting Head Teacher	wbarton@moorlands-school.com
Katy Pearson - Deputy Headteacher	kpearson@moorlands-school.com
Rachel kennard - EYFS Phase Leader	rkennard@moorlands-school.com
Joe Vine – KS1 Phase Leader	jvine@moorlands-school.com
Ellie Amato – Lower KS2 Phase Leader	eamato@moorlands-school.com
Michael Cainen – Upper KS2 Phase leader	mcainen@moorlands-school.com
All office Staff	office@moorlands-school.com
Class teachers	
Rachel Betts	rbetts@moorlands-school.com
Rachel Kennard	rkennard@moorlands-school.com
Kerry Swift	kswift@moorlands-school.com
Ellen Harris	eharris@moorlands-school.com
Sally Handley	shandley@moorlands-school.com
Nicola Walker (maternity leave)	nwalker@moorlands-school.com
Joe Vine	jvine@moorlands-school.com
Sally Clark	sclark@moorlands-school.com
Suzanne Stewart	sstewart@moorlands-school.com
Jan Fairweather	jfairweather@moorlands-school.com
Suzanne Mandziuk	smandziuk@moorlands-school.com
Ellie Amato	eamato@moorlands-school.com
Alex Bell-Auge	abellauge@moorlands-school.com
Karen Berry	kberry@moorlands-school.com
Kelly Moore	kmoore@moorlands-school.com
Emily Bone	ebone@moorlands-school.com
Karen Lowe	klowe@moorlands-school.com
Jodie Chapman	jchapman@moorlands-school.com
Michael Cainen	mcainen@moorlands-school.com
Chair of Governors	governors@moorlands-school.com
If you are unsure of a member of staff's contact details, please send your message to the school office address and it will be forwarded to the relevant member of staff	

Appendix 2 – Communication Process

We have set out below the staff who we believe will be best placed to respond to various types of enquiry:

Type of Query	Member of Staff to Contact
Any issue relating specifically to your child (learning, behaviour, equipment, timetable) ----- If you feel that any issue, as described above, has not been resolved or you need more advice following these discussions, please follow these stages:	Your Class Teacher ----- Stage 1 - Phase Leader (details below) Stage 2 –Ms Pearson (Deputy Head) Stage 3 – Mr Barton (Headteacher)
Any issues relating to other children in the class	Stage 1 - Class Teacher Stage 2 - Phase Leader
Serious Concerns or Complaints	Mr Barton – Headteacher
Formal Complaints (as per Federation Complaints Policy)	Mrs Clark – Chair of Governors
Curriculum and/or whole school pupil enquiries	Curriculum enquiries - Ms Pearson Whole School Pupil enquiries - Office
Further information about Special Educational Needs and Outside Agency Involvement with your child	Ms Pearson – (Day-to-Day SENCo -Infants) Mr Barton – (Day-to-day SENCo – Juniors) Ms Maggs – Named SENCo
Child Protection/Safeguarding	Mr Barton – Ms Pearson Ms Mairi Lanyon – Deputy DSL
Health and Safety	Mr Barton– Headteacher
Finance and payments	Mrs Dinning – Trust Head of Finance
Letters, administration, attendance, admissions, school dinners and clubs	Miss Elley or Mrs Paget - Office Managers

Phase Leaders:

Early Years Foundation Stage	-	Miss Rachel Kennard
Key Stage 1	-	Mr Joe Vine
Lower Key Stage 2 Phase Leader	-	Mrs Ellie Amato
Upper KS2 Phase leader	-	Mr Michael Cainen

Appendix 3 - Programme of Regular Meetings and Correspondence

Throughout the course of the school year, the following meetings and information will be provided to all parents/carers:

Beginning of the year

In September your child's class teacher will provide you with lots of information including:

- weekly timetable
- curriculum and homework information
- how you can help your child at home with their learning

Weekly and Termly Information

- a weekly class blog on the website will tell you all about the learning that has taken place
- an overview of learning for the forthcoming week and an overview of the learning each term.
- Reception classes will receive a weekly information letter.

Monthly Information

- The Federation Times - this provides updates to the school calendar or date changes, reminders, events, achievements and celebrations including birthdays, Class Assemblies, attendance and house winners. The school governors and PTA (Parent and Teacher Association) will also update you on their work too.

Text Service

We use the Teachers2Parents text service to provide urgent information, reminders and updates for parents and carers as it is a great way for the school to communicate quickly and briefly. This year, class teachers will be able to use this service also to specifically contact the parents and carers of their class. Any parents/carers who choose to sign up to this service must make sure they keep the school office notified of any changes to mobile numbers or any concerns that they are not receiving messages.

Teacher and Parent Consultation Meetings

These are important meetings where class teachers meet 1:1 with parents/carers to discuss their child's progress, behaviour and attitudes so that we can work together to help unlock your child's potential.

- home visits in September for Reception Parents/Carers
- early September meeting for YR-Y6 - this is an information sharing opportunity to discuss how your child has settled into their class and identify any concerns or ways parents/carers/school can support a child.
- meeting in Term 3 for all year groups - this is an opportunity for parents/carers/class teachers to discuss a child's progress, identify strengths and next steps in helping them to move forward as a learner.
- during Term 6 you will be invited to make an appointment at a mutually convenient time with your child's class teacher to discuss any transition concerns and/or ways to help your child maximise the learning progress and opportunities right until the end of the academic year. Not all parents/carers feel it necessary to make an appointment but if you have anything you wish to discuss with your child's teacher this is an ideal opportunity.

Annual Report to Parents

This year reports will be sent out in Term 6 for Y1-Y6 instead of the end of the academic year. This, we believe, will provide both the school and parents/carers with the opportunity to discuss and put in place further support for a child if it is needed or an opportunity to maximise the learning and progress right to the end of the year. Children in Reception Classes will receive their annual report at the end of the academic year.

Statutory Test Reports

Throughout their time at school, children are required to take a number of statutory tests which are set by the government. The results of these tests will be sent out to parents.

- Y1 Phonics Screening - End of Term 6
- KS1 SATs - End of Term 6
- KS2 SATs - End of Term 6

For parents/carers with children in these year groups, meetings will be held to explain what these tests are, how and when they take place.

Curriculum Workshops, Information and Transition Meetings

Throughout the year meetings are held to provide information about the various different methods used in school to teach your child and how you can support them with their learning. Dates and times for of all workshops will be published in advance in a planner for the year ahead, which will be added to should the need arise. We really would encourage you to attend as many of these meetings as possible, as the shared understanding between home and school of these teaching methods really does help your child to learn. An overview of the sessions and any other details will be placed on our website but any parents/carers who cannot attend are always welcome to contact the school if they would like to find out more information.

Appendix 4 – Detailed Protocols for Home-School Communication

Protocols for Email Communication

This is an excellent form of communication between home and school but we would ask that the following be borne in mind:

- The Governing Body have asked our staff not to respond to e-mails after 5.00 pm in the evening.
- Please be aware that staff may need to forward your e-mails to someone else e.g. the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team if they are unsure of how to assist you, or to obtain further information on your query.
- All of our staff will always try to help you as quickly as possible, but may need to speak to someone else first or ask another member of staff for advice before they get back to you with a response. This is so you and your child can be supported in the best way possible.
- If an urgent response is required then email may not be the quickest form of communication as there are occasions when emails cannot be accessed or responded to daily. In these circumstances, a telephone call to the school office would enable them to more quickly put you in touch with the most appropriate person, who may be able to help.

Protocols for Informal Discussion with Class Teacher Before and After School

Teachers are usually in their classrooms 10 minutes before the start of the school day or in the playground after school to receive and dismiss the children safely. We hope you agree that this helps you to feel you can approach the staff and continue our 'Moorlands family' feel of our school.

- Please however remember that staff are responsible for the safety of all children in their class at these times and will, therefore, not be able to have long conversations with individual parents.
- If you wish to discuss something urgently with the Class Teacher, please arrange a time to meet or speak on the telephone. The office staff will be able to assist with this if necessary.
- Alternatively, if the matter is not urgent, please e-mail or write to the Class Teacher (cc to the School Office) to make an appointment with them.

Protocols for Meetings with Parents

Meetings in addition to our Parents' Consultation/Information Meetings are sometimes necessary in order for Home and School to share information about an individual child's needs.

- These will be arranged in advance at a mutually convenient time.
- Meetings will be held in an appropriate and/or open area in the school.
- Staff may ask for a colleague to join the meeting in order to be able to give you the best advice possible.
- Electronic recording of meetings e.g. on mobile phones is not acceptable. A member of staff or a governor can take notes at meetings if necessary.
- Teachers and Senior Leaders will always try to help you as quickly as possible, but please be aware that they may need to ask another member of staff for information/advice before they get back to you with a response. This is to ensure that you and your child are supported in the best possible way.
- All meeting attendees are expected to speak courteously, listen to each other and have the opportunity to respond to questions and/or statements.
- If any meeting attendee becomes concerned about their safety during any meeting, it will be stopped immediately, reasons for the meeting being stopped will be given verbally and, where necessary, the party behaving inappropriately will be escorted from the school premises.

- Agreed actions will be confirmed verbally at the end of the meeting.
- Follow up communication will be issued in a timescale agreed at the meeting