



THE MENDIP SCHOOL

COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Review Due:	23.03.2023
Last Review	23.03.2020
Applicable to:	The Mendip School
Reviewed By:	Emma Cooper
Approved By:	Governors

Contents

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

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
- Has a positive impact on attendance

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

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards 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)
- Working effectively with other agencies to support the best interests of the child

Staff **may not** respond to communications between the hours of 5pm and 8am, or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during school holidays.

In an emergency where you are worried about the safety of a child or you need to update us about COVID 19 please call or email the Emergency Designated Safeguarding Lead on dsl@themendipschool.com or 07851862940

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.

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 Class Dojo

Class Dojo connects teachers with students and parents to build amazing classroom communities.

We use Class Dojo to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Day to day communication about your child through the direct messaging facility
- Daily posts showing what pupils have been doing at school

- Newsletters and notices
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

3.2 School Website, Social Media and Statutory Information

We use the school Website and Social Media to share information regarding

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Statutory information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Notice of events and activities
- Sharing of news, progress, special achievements and 'Mendip Moments'.

3.3 School calendar

Our School Website includes a full school calendar for the year. Notices of events will also be shared.

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, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

3.4 Phone calls

We are happy to speak to parents over the phone regarding their child. We do ask parents to understand that between the hours of 8:40am and 3:15pm teachers are working with your children. We will endeavour to ring you back when we can, or arrange a meeting at a convenient time for all. You are welcome to email the school office for non-urgent enquires on office@themendipschool.com

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

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

3.6 Progress meetings

We regularly meet with parents to discuss your child's progress. These meetings will be scheduled for at least three times a year including your child's annual review. During these meetings we discuss your child's achievements and targets they are working on. We will discuss and review your child's care and behaviour plan with you.

All of our children have an Education, Health and Care Plan, these will be reviewed with you yearly.

3.7 Reports

Parents receive an annual report 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
- KS1 and KS2 SATs tests if appropriate
- The results of any public examinations
- Information about any vocational qualifications

3.8 Care Plans

Every child at The Mendip School has a care plan. A care plan is a way for you to share information about your child and for us to work with you to ensure we can meet your child's needs. The plan is written information about how to best care for your child's health, behavior and emotional needs. We will ask you to attend meetings to discuss these plans with us at least three times spread over each year.

3.9 Parent's Evenings

We recognise that you play a vital role in supporting your child's progress and we are always reviewing how we can involve you in your child's learning journey through school. Progress meetings are opportunities for you to discuss your child's progress and areas for development. In addition to this parents will be offered opportunities to come into school for shared learning events such as;

- Open mornings/afternoons
- Qualifications meetings
- Celebration assemblies
- Sports challenges

Dates for school events will be sent home via Class Dojo, the website or by letter

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

We will always be polite and respectful when we talk to you and we ask that you do the same. We believe that a positive, respectful relationship between school and parents promotes the best outcomes for all of the children in our school.

4.1 Class Dojo

Parents should always use Class Dojo about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all Dojo messages within 24 hours where possible. Please remember that during the hours of 8:40 and 15:15 teachers will be teaching your children and may be unable to read Dojo messages.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school office.

4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please either Dojo message your child's teacher or call the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact you as soon as they are available and within 48 hours where possible (excluding weekends and holidays)

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 2 days of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please call the school office.

Urgent issues might include, but are not limited to, things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues
- Changes to pick up routine at the end of the school day

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

If you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please Dojo message your child's teacher or email the school office at office@themendsipschool.com or call the school to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 7 working days of the request.

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

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

4.4 How the school will communicate with other agencies

We recognise that our pupils have diverse needs and we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals who help us meet those needs. Support comes from medical professionals, occupational therapy, vision support team, physiotherapy, Educational Psychologists, Local authority SEND colleagues and other health and education professionals.

We also work with various welfare services, such as Education Safeguarding Team and Social Services.

We hold information on all pupils in our school and on occasion we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational or safeguarding purposes.

It is important that we balance the requests of parents with our legal duties. Having parental responsibility does not allow a parent to obstruct a school from carrying out their duties under legislation. Information sharing will always be in the best interests of the child.

We will seek consent from parents on a case-by-case basis. We recognise it is good practice to work in partnership with parents and carers. This means that we will share information with other agencies with parents' knowledge and consent. When we feel that a referral should be made to social care, we will seek the consent of the parent. However, the duty to refer overrides this, as the safety of the child is paramount. Seeking consent is not required, if to do so would: place a person at increased risk of harm (usually the child, but also a family member or another person); or prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime; or lead to an unjustifiable delay in making enquiries.

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 the following languages:

- English
- Polish – please request this via the school office
- Other – if you require a letter in another language please ask the class teacher or contact the school office and we will endeavor to help.

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:

- ICT and internet acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints

Appendix 1: school contact list: Who should I contact?

The chart below may help direct you to the right person for your query

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Your child's class teacher
Payments	School Office
School trips	Your child's class teacher
Uniform/lost and found	Your child's class teacher
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01749 838040 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact The School Office: office@themendipschool.com
Bullying and behavior	Your child's class teacher in the first instance. They may seek support from Assistant Headteachers Alisa Creaser – Primary Sinead MacPhee – Secondary
School events/the school calendar	Class Dojo/Social Media/Website/Your child's class teacher
Before and after-school clubs	Jen Morfey: jmorfey@themendipschool.com
Friends of Mendip School	Kate Smedley: kateesmedley@gmail.com
The governing board	Nigel Newbutt: NNewbuttGov@themendipschool.com
Catering/meals	School office/James Honess: Catering Manger

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy.

<https://thebathandmendippartnershiptrust.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/TBMPT-Complaints-Policy-Apr-20.pdf>