



NEW MILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent Communication Policy

DCC Policy

This policy has been reviewed and has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies and the Equality Act 2010.

| Date Created | Changes | Committee | Date Approved | Min No. |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| March 2023 | | SDC | 15/03/2023 | SDC23/8 |
| | | SDC | 11/03/2024 | SDC24/13 |
| | FSW Details added | SDC | 24/03/2025 | SDC24/10 |
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| Is this policy on the website? | Yes |
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Communication Policy

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| School Office (Miss Moody): | enquiries@newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| Headteacher (Mrs Taylor): | ctaylor@newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| SENDCo (Laura Shepley): | lshepley@newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| Website: | newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| School phone number: | 01663 744453 |
| Breakfast and After School Club: | 07922 081644 |

Key Objectives:

All communications at New Mills Primary School should:

- Keep staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders well informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and professional
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context and audience

Effective communication enables us to share our school aims and values as well as keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the vital role that parents play in supporting the school and their child/ren. Staff will always seek to establish open and friendly relationships with parents.

We aim to make our written communication as accessible as possible so we will ensure that all of our parents can access a form of communication, making alternative arrangements where necessary.

Class Dojo

Class Dojo is our main method of communication and it enables staff and parents to speak directly to each another. It is an effective communication system and it allows us to share what is going on through posts and photographs. Recently, however, there has been a much higher volume of messages being sent to staff. In order to maintain the wellbeing of our staff and ensure they have a work life balance **we ask that Class Dojo messages are kept to a minimum**. Staff agree that face-to-face chats are still the simplest method of communication.

To ensure our communication systems are effective for all, the following procedures have been put in place:

- Staff and parents should communicate in person as much as possible.
- **Messages may be sent to staff at any time. However, staff will have quiet times set between 5pm and 8am and they are asked not to respond to messages during these times.**
- Staff will aim to respond to messages within 48 working hours.
- For concerns which needs a longer conversation, use Class Dojo to arrange a meeting or phone call with your child's teacher – please do not discuss the issue in the messages.
- Incidental messages regarding lost clothing, water bottles, appointment times, absences or medicine should be made to the school office. Lost property and water bottles can be searched for and collected daily – labelling all items makes this a much simpler task!
- If you write in the Comment Section under a post or photograph on Class Dojo, this may not be seen by staff as we are not notified – please message directly if you need to contact us.
- Class Dojo offers a paid upgrade – we DO NOT recommend you pay for this.

Safeguarding

If there is a safeguarding concern and you are worried about a child/family contact Starting Point on 01629 535353 for advice or use the link on our website. For non-emergency enquiries call the police on 101. You are welcome to call the school for support or advice – the Designated Safeguarding Lead is Carol Taylor and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Sue Clarke, Laura Shepley and Charlotte Broadley.

Our Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Team are:

Laura Shepley is the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo).

Louise Carberry supports with referrals and funding requests.

Emma Fletcher provides learning support for children with SEND.

Kirsty Tomlin is the Pastoral Lead; she supports children with social and emotional needs.

Laura Hartley is the Speech and Language Therapist.

Louise Coker is the Family Support Worker – louise@wearetakepart.com

The SEND Team can be contacted by email: sendteam@newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk

Communication Procedures

The office staff can be contacted by email, Class Dojo, telephone or in person. The phone will be answered between 8:30 and 4pm – messages can be left outside of these times.

| Message, Queries, Concerns | Who to Contact |
|--|--|
| If your child is absent from school ... | Notify the school office each day of absence by 9.30am either by telephone or in person. |
| If you need to let us know who is collecting your child ... | Contact the school office if you do not get chance to speak to the teacher. |
| If you have concerns or would like to talk about your child’s learning progress... | Make an appointment to speak with your child’s teacher (in person or by phone) through the school office or Class Dojo. |
| If you would like to discuss your child’s special educational needs ... | Email the SEND team (see the SEND section below). |
| If your child needs to have medicine in school ... | Complete the form available from the school office or on the website. |
| For information or queries about Breakfast or After School Club, other events, payments, school dinners, etc ... | Enquiries can be made to the school’s office staff or access information via the Parent Pay booking system. If you need to contact the staff directly, the number is: 07922 081644 |
| If you wanted to check if the school is open... | Please check the school website, Class Dojo or Derbyshire school closures online. |

If having followed the above the steps above and your question or concern is not resolved, please contact the Headteacher. If your concern still isn’t resolved, follow the complaints procedure which is available on the website.

Other forms of communication include:

Email

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating information and it is more formal than Class Dojo. We will send sensitive information by email. Emails do not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required. Staff should acknowledge emails within 3 working days and will call to discuss the issue or send a reply within 10 working days.

Telephone calls

Where it is not possible to meet staff face-to-face, a telephone call should be arranged instead (through the office or Class Dojo).

Meeting with parents

We encourage parents to contact the school if issues arise regarding their child's progress or wellbeing. Use Class Dojo or the school office to arrange a meeting with the child's teacher and/or a member of the SEND team. For persistent or serious issues, parents should contact the Headteacher.

Parents should sign in at the school office prior to a meeting. If the meeting is due to take place outside of office hours, separate arrangements can be made. If a meeting with a parent is taking place outside normal school hours, the member of staff should try, where possible, to ensure that another colleague is nearby. It is perfectly acceptable to call a meeting to a close in order to allow time for further investigation.

When a child is accompanying a parent to a meeting, it is perfectly acceptable to ask the child to remain out of the meeting, particularly if parents feel they need to be critical of staff or any aspect of the school. It is damaging to the relationship with the child for them to witness this, but parents may need to air particular feelings and this is a useful mechanism for this. Staff should not feel threatened at any time and are encouraged to stop a meeting should this be the case.

Possible contentious meetings

Staff may ask other staff to accompany them and should always do so when the meeting may be contentious in any way or if their input will add value to the meeting. When possible, a senior leader will attend this meeting. The key discussion points, actions and decisions should be recorded.

Staff should call a meeting to a close in the event of the parent becoming angry or abusive. Staff should report such an incident to the leadership team and seek further advice. The Headteacher should either accompany the staff to a further meeting with the parent or hold it without the original member of staff present.

Written reports

Once a year, a full written report is sent to parents on their child's progress in each subject. The report identifies areas of strength and areas for further development. Pupils are also given the opportunity to comment on their own progress and parents are invited to make a comment. In addition, parents meet their child's teacher twice a year, at parents' evening. When pupils have special educational needs and/or a disability, or if they are making less than expected progress or experiencing behavioural or disciplinary difficulties, we will arrange to meet with parents more regularly.

Newsletters

Termly class newsletters are sent to parents and shared on the website. They outline the teaching plans and activities that the children will be engaging in. Monthly newsletters are sent by the Headteacher to share information about what is happening in the school community.

School Website

The school website is full of relevant information and it provides guidance on admissions for prospective parents and pupils. It also has regularly updated areas for current parents. Copies of newsletters, curriculum information, policies, recent letters, key dates, etc. are also available on the website.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Equal opportunities
- SEND information report and SEND policy
- Admissions policy
- Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement for staff and pupils
- Safeguarding Policy