



We Care. We Aspire. We Belong.

Milverton Community Primary and Pre-school

Communications Policy

Reviewed January 2023

Next Review: January 2026

Policy Statement

As part of the Department of Education's action to support schools in reducing workload, the DfE has launched a 'workload toolkit' to support school leaders reduce workload in their schools. This policy was created in response to this. The need to communicate with parents and carers places demand upon our staff within a busy teaching day. This policy from the Government's toolkit is our way to manage both the parental expectations of teachers and school staff and ensure high standards of home-school communications.

Overview

It is very important to us that we work closely in partnership with parents and carers and communication between home and school is key.

We believe that clear, open communication between the school, parents/carers and other agencies has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/ carers the information they need to support their child's education.
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.

We recognise, however, that it be difficult communicating with teachers because they have a full timetable; and we recognise that parents and carers also have very busy lives.

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

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/ carers and other agencies.
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/ carers and others.
- Helping parents/ carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they get a response as quickly as possible.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Regularly reviewing this policy.

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's ICT and Acceptable User 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).

Staff will aim to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30am to 4pm) or their working hours if they work part-time. In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of their hours, but they are not expected to do so.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with school is respectful at all times.
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.
- Checking all communications from school.
- Respond to communications from the school in a timely manner.

Any communication to the school that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our Parent/ Carer and Visitors Code of Conduct.

Parents should not expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30am to 4pm), at weekends or during school holidays.

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 regularly monitor email communication from school that is sent either by Parentmail or by email to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

We are an Eco-school so we try to limit our use of paper.

We use **Parentmail**, online software, to keep parents informed about the following

- Parent and carer updates.
- To send a weekly newsletter (the 'Friday Flyer') to parents.
- Class activities and teacher requests.
- Reminders about upcoming events.
- Payment information and reminders.
- Emergency school closures.

Phone Calls

We will phone parents/ carers to:

- To check on non-attendance if no message has been received.
- To inform parents that their child is ill and needs to be collected from school.
- To inform parents of any accidents that may have happened to their child.
- To clarify information that has been sent to school by parents.
- To set up parent meetings.
- To discuss issues with parents.

Text Messages

We will use text messaging to tell parents/ carers:

- Short notice changes to the school day.
- Cancelled after school clubs.
- Emergency school closures (for example, due to bad weather).

Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including;

- Interim and end of year reports covering their achievement, how well they are progressing and their attendance.
- A report on end of Key Stage 1 statutory assessments and Key Stage 2 SATs tests.

Meetings

- The school holds two parents' meetings a year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement, progress and child's wellbeing.
- The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings if there are concerns about a child's behaviour, achievement, progress or wellbeing.
- Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEND) or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

School Website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including;

- School times and term dates,
- General information for parents,
- Important events and announcements,
- Curriculum information,
- Important policies and procedures,
- Contact information,
- Information and before and after school club provision,
- Our weekly newsletter, the Friday Flyer'
- Absence request forms,
- Information about our Board of Governors.

Please remember to check our website first, a lot of information can be found there.

How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in Appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue through either the school office number, email address or class email addresses.

Email

Parents should always email the school about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 48 hours and respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call, if appropriate) within 3 – 5 working days.

If a concern is urgent, parents should call the school office. Parents should only contact teachers via the class email addresses regarding teaching and learning enquiries. All other enquiries should go via the school office email address.

Phone calls

If a parent needs to speak with a specific member of staff about a non-urgent matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 48 hours. If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 3 to 5 days of a request. Some staff members work part-time and therefore may not be available until they are in school.

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

Urgent issues might include:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For general enquiries, please email or call the school office.

Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff this needs to be organised through the school office to book an appointment. Whereas it may seem like a good opportunity to speak with teachers at the start or end of the school day, this does not always mean staff can give as much time and focus to the issue that has been brought. It is recommended that parents arrange meetings with teachers via the school office so that discussions can take place with the appropriate amount of time and attention. This includes:

- Any concerns about their child's learning
- Concerns or updates about pastoral support, their child's home environment or wellbeing

If a parent urgently needs to see someone, for instance if there is a serious family emergency or child protection issue, parents can phone ahead to the school office and staff will do their best to organise a senior member of staff to meet with them.

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school. Parents who need help communicating with the school can request:

- School communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls.

Any requests should be made through the school office.

Monitoring and review

The Head teacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years.

APPENDIX 1

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak with a member of staff:

- Email the school on office@milvertonprimary.co.uk or call on 01823 400439
- Put the subject and name of the relevant member of staff in the subject line and office staff will ensure that emails are directed to the right place.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/ lessons	Class teacher either through the class email address or office email address.
My child's wellbeing/ pastoral support	School office
Payments and school trips	School office
Attendance reporting	School number and press 1 for absence line Parentmail School office email
Absence requests	School office
Lunches	School office
Clubs	School office
Behaviour concerns	School office
Special Educational Needs	send@milvertonprimary.co.uk
Child protection and safeguarding concerns	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) through the school office
Board of Governors	Clerk to Governors/ school office
MSA (Parent Association)	Msa-somerset@outlook.com

Complaints –for procedures to file a formal complaint, please follow the process outlined in our Complaints Policy.