

KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Small School...BIG Opportunities!



COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL POLICY

January 2025

INTRODUCTION:

Schools have many lines of communication to maintain: with parents and carers, with other schools, with the community, with outside agencies, and within the school. Good communication between the school and the home is essential, and children achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents/carers can naturally help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve.

In our school we aim to have clear and effective communications with all parents/carers and with the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values, through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents/carers play in supporting the school.

We aim to foster high quality communication by:

- Being respectful, honest and courteous and expecting similar behaviour in return
- Being clear about the balance of rights and responsibilities between the school and parents/carers in our communications
- Promoting a culture of openness and honesty
- Seeking parents'/carers' views and taking them into consideration when making decisions
- Valuing parents' expertise and knowledge
- Providing timely, appropriate, and accessible information
- Avoiding information overload
- Seeking to overcome any barriers to communication

1. WHAT CAN PARENTS EXPECT FROM US?

1.1 Information on school events etc:

- Notification of school events and clubs – through Parent Pay and school website calendar
- School letters or notifications – Schools NI and Class apps
These apps are our main form of communication to parents/carers. Parents/carers should download the “Schools NI” app [see link on Parents’ Page on school website] and log on to their child’s class app [codes for Seesaw are sent home at the beginning of September each year]
- Killylea Primary Facebook page
This is our main form of instant communication about what is going on in school including photographs and video clips.
- School Website [www.killyleaps.com]
School information e.g. policies, dates, uniform, class information, after-school clubs, PTA events, etc. are all on our school website. Parents/carers are expected to use the website to access information they may need.
- Half-termly newsletter

1.2 Information on child’s progress:

- Parent-teacher interviews [January]
- P7 Interviews for pupils sitting transfer test [September]
- Class app updates
- Annual School Report [June]
- Individual Personal Learning Plan [PLP] and review [for SEN pupils, as appropriate- twice a year]
- Reading Partnership report [as appropriate]
- Informal meeting with teacher [at parent or teacher’s request]
- Praise message/ certificate etc.

At Killylea Primary School we will work with parents/carers and pupils to resolve any problems or issues you or your child may have. However, we would ask, that if you wish to speak to your child's teacher or principal, that you make an appointment for a time that is convenient to all parties so that privacy and time to deal with any issues can be assured. Please note that unless an emergency, staff are not available during morning preparation/supervision time.

1.3 Information on School policies and procedures:

- School policies are available on the school website or from the office [on request]. Parents/carers should familiarize themselves with these.
- Summary leaflets of key policies are on display in entrance porch
- Within school prospectus
- Home School Agreement – all parents sign annually a Home School Agreement in support of school policies and to give permission for internet use, photographic permissions, intimate care and local visits.
- Parents and pupils are involved in the review of our policies. We use our Parents' Focus Group, either in person or seeking views via email, to discuss changes and will send draft policies home for parents' comments.
- P1 Induction Meeting [June] and P1 Parents' Information Evening [September]
- P1 Parents and those of new entrants will receive a folder of school policies containing:
 - Child Protection & Safeguarding
 - Positive Behaviour
 - Pastoral Care
 - Online Safety
 - Intimate Care
 - Anti-Bullying
 - Home School Communication
- All parents will receive a copy of the School's Child Protection policy every 2 years.

1.4 Informal opportunities:

- Parents' Focus Group
- School concerts and productions
- Assemblies
- Outdoor Activity days
- Grandparents' Day
- Sports Day/ Football Tournament
- School Events and fundraising activities
- PTA meetings and events
- Volunteering opportunities

2. CONTACTING US:

Telephone: 02937 568621.

This would be appropriate where enquiries are deemed more urgent by the parent, such as communicating particular information about the child to the school. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, we aim to do this within 2 working days. When the office is unmanned an answering machine will be in operation, however, staff are teaching and not always able to access messages before 3pm.

Class app:

Each class teacher is responsible for responding to messages via the class app [Seesaw] on their contracted working days. Please note that staff will only respond to messages after 8.30am or before 4pm. Please also be aware that wifi difficulties around school, mean that parents/carers should not rely on the class app for urgent messages, but should ring the school instead. Our Seesaw class apps is appropriate for absence notes and homework queries. Staff will use it to share photos and pupils work and notices of upcoming events. **Seesaw should not be used if you have a concern or issue with your child or school.** Please ring and ask to make an appointment [phone/face to face] giving a brief outline of the issue so that we can investigate and arrange to meet with you/phone to discuss your concern when the full facts are known. All communication should be conducted in a respectful manner.

Email:

info@killyleaps.armagh.ni.sch.uk

We ask parents/carers to use the email address above. For the purposes of administration, we require all emails to go to a central email address. However, all emails will be treated with full confidentiality and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please note all emails should specify the member of staff to whom the query is addressed. We will respond to emails within 5 working days (during term time).

Letter:

Letters can be handed into, or posted to, the school office. As with emails all letters will be treated with full confidentiality and the responses will be made by the member of staff addressed. Please note all letters should specify the member of staff to whom the query is addressed. Please let the office staff know if the letter contains information about your child which you would like the class teacher to receive urgently. We will respond to letters within 5 working days (during term time).

Parents should not use social media to contact the school and any contact made this way will not be responded to.

In event of an emergency:

- If your child is sick during school hours, staff will telephone the numbers on the data form, issued each September, in the order of preference. If any of these phone numbers change during the year, please ensure the school is notified.
- Parents should notify the school of the reason for any absence on the first day of absence followed by a written note via the class app. [See Pupil Attendance Policy]
- If the school has to be closed due to weather/power failure etc., all first preference numbers will receive a message via the Schools' NI app and class app and a message will be posted on the school's Facebook page and school website.

3. WHAT DO WE EXPECT OF PARENTS?**3.1 Mutual Respect:**

As a partnership, we work with our parents/carers to provide the very best education for our pupils at Killylea Primary School. Just as we treat our parents/carers with dignity and respect, so we expect the same for our staff. They should not have to endure abusive, disrespectful or threatening behaviour whilst at work. Where this is the case and a member of staff considers that a parent/carer is being abusive, disrespectful or threatening, the parent/carer will be asked to stop. If the behaviour does not stop, the discussion will be terminated. The School may continue to communicate with the parent/carer but will use another form, such as a letter.

Similarly, staff will not respond to correspondence that is abusive or threatening. In this case, we will write to the parent/carer explaining that it is not our policy to reply to such communications. We shall suggest that they communicate in an acceptable manner so that we are able to respond to concerns.

3.2 Early Communication of issue or concern:

Social media is NOT an acceptable way to air a grievance or complaint about the school.

If a parent/carer, has a concern they should speak **in the first instance and at the earliest opportunity**, to the class teacher or principal so that the concerns can be investigated and addressed within our policies and procedures. **The use of Seesaw or email is not the most appropriate forum for this. While we appreciate that you may be concerned or upset for your child, we ask that you approach the issue or concern with an open mind until you have the full information/facts.**

We encourage you not to hesitate to get in touch, as we appreciate that small problems to adults can seem insurmountable when you are a child. We will work with all parties involved to seek a resolution and repair relationships and keep you informed of progress. We ask that parents/carers allow time for this to happen as staff have a full teaching timetable.

3.3 Support for School Policies:

We expect that parents/carers fully support our Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies, which do not tolerate any physical behaviour or bad language. Within school, pupils are taught appropriate response strategies including the importance of reporting unwanted behaviour. Parents should not tell their child to hit back.

Parents/carers are asked to read and sign our Home School Agreement each September which includes a copy of our Pupil Code of Conduct. We ask that parents sign homework and comment if necessary. Parents/carers should contact the school if their child is sick and inform the class teacher via a message on the class app. [These are kept as a written record of the absence.]

We also expect that pupils come to school prepared for the day including homework folder, book bag, correct uniform, PE bag etc. and **arrive at school BEFORE the start of the school day** [i.e. 8.55am] so they are ready to participate in Huff and Puff. Late attendance will be monitored by the principal.

Parents/carers should read and act on information sent home via notifications on the Schools NI app i.e. sign and return permission slips **promptly**/ plan to attend parents' meetings. Prompt response is appreciated so that time following up notes does not take away from contact time with pupils.

3.4 Up to Date Information:

Please ensure that your contact details and mobile phone numbers are up-to-date throughout the year. Emergency contact will be to the first preference given on your data form. Please try to give 3 numbers for emergency contact.

Parents/carers should inform staff of any allergies or medical problems that your child may have including seasonal or temporary conditions so that staff are informed how best to help your child. You **MUST** complete an **Administration of Medication** Form if your child requires to be given medication during school hours. See <https://www.killyleaps.com/parents/school-forms/>

It is helpful for staff to know if a close relative is unwell, a pet has died, you are moving house etc. so we can support your child through any changes or difficult emotions.

4. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

We hope that through good communication and a partnership approach, that any difficulties or problems can be addressed to the satisfaction of all parties.

If, however, you do not feel satisfied that your issue has been handled to your satisfaction you can make a complaint initially to the principal and then to the Chair of the Board of Governors for resolution. [See school Complaints Policy.]

5. POLICY REVIEW:

This policy has been reviewed in conjunction with governors, staff and parents.

KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL POLICY	
POLICY DATE:	January 2025
PRINCIPAL'S SIGNATURE:	P. Lowry
CHAIRPERSON, Board of Governors, SIGNATURE:	Rev B Atkins
REVIEW DATE:	January 2028