

DISLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

'PROUD TO BELONG'



COMMUNICATION POLICY

Approved by	Head Teacher	Date: October 22
	Governors	Date: October 22
Last review	September 2020	
Next review	September 2024	

Disley Primary School Communication Policy

Introduction

Positive communication is an essential element of the aims and vision of Disley Primary School. This enables our children and families to feel valued and listened to. The majority of this communication takes place through the frequent verbal interactions between families and staff as children are brought to and from school as well as Class Dojo, Tapestry, email, telephone and video calls.

Aim

To ensure that Disley Primary School is a thriving and successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our children, with their families and with other members of the wider community. We need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are open, honest, respectful, ethical and professional.

Contact details

The school holds emergency contact details for all children on the School Information Management System (SIMs) and families are contacted on an annual basis to ensure that these are up to date. Families are expected to inform the school immediately in the event that contact information needs to be revised. Depending on the nature of the communication, the school will use the most practicable means to contact families.

Communications with Families

Hereafter the term 'families' will be used to refer to all those individuals who have a role in the up-bringing and care of the child.

Families are welcome to visit the school to discuss their child's progress, ask questions, and gain support or to have the opportunity to talk about their child/home issues with their child's class teacher first, then Phase Leaders or specific individuals within the school.

Outside of teaching their designated class, all staff have additional duties which they perform either before school, during break/lunch or after school. These duties will include care of children, organisation of extra-curricular activities or whole-school coordination of a curriculum subject. We aim to be able to facilitate requests for an immediate meeting, however for the reasons stated above, when this is not possible, staff may not be able to facilitate an immediate, unscheduled appointment but will aim to do so **within 5 school days**.

Arranging a mutually convenient appointment allows the school time to organise cover to make staff available to speak to the families and to gather any necessary information prior to the meeting. This process will make the meeting much more conducive.

The following list, whilst not exhaustive, covers the main ways in which we will communicate with families. All response times are indicative and where extensions

are needed i.e. for further investigation a holding response will be given to the family along with an updated expected response time.

Class/Phase updates

Families will receive class/phase updates via Class Dojo, Tapestry and class pages on the school website from the teachers from their child's phases regularly. These updates will identify the focus of the learning taking place during the period indicated, any relevant communication in relation to the school day and will help families identify how they can support their child's learning at home.

Telephone calls

Inbound

Telephone calls will be answered by staff in the main office. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call unless it is an emergency. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant person. If the call requires a response from a member of staff, we aim to do this **within 2 working days**. The answer phone is checked on a daily basis by the office staff.

Please ensure reports of illness are reported by contacting the school office on the school phone number.

Outbound

Telephone calls will be made where immediate contact with a family member is required i.e. for injuries or accidents. A member of staff will call the first named emergency contact as listed. Where no contact is made, a call will then be made to the second named contact and so forth. In the event that no live contact can be made, the member of staff will either leave an answer phone message or ensure that repeat calls continue to be made to the contact numbers, where possible.

ClassDojo/Tapestry

ClassDojo/Tapestry connects the school and families through building virtual classroom communities. It enables staff to share photos, videos, announcements and celebrations as well as messaging between school and home. As with emails, staff are not expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to Dojo/Tapestry messages outside of their working day.

Families are reminded that teachers have little to no time during their teaching day to check messages and therefore requests, which require immediate or quick action should not be sent via Dojo/Tapestry. For example, messaging your child's teacher to inform them you will be collecting them for an appointment or to change pick-up arrangements is not appropriate due to the high-likelihood that the message will not be read in time. It is important that families telephone the school office with this information. Staff, if appropriate, may forward communications to the Headteacher.

Staff are encouraged to work flexibly and respond to Dojo/Tapestry messages in a way that suits them to balance their working hours. Staff do not expect families to read, respond or action Dojo/Tapestry messages outside hours that suit them. Dojo

messaging does not replace face-to-face meetings where some discussion is required. Face-to-face or telephone communications should be sought, when Dojo/Tapestry is not the most effective form of communication. Staff and families are discouraged from entering into in-depth discussions about a child's progress or well-being via ClassDojo/Tapestry.

We will aim to respond to all messages requiring an answer **within 2 working days**.

Social Media Sites

Staff are advised not to communicate with families via social networking sites or accept them as "friends".

Written Reports

Once a year, we provide a full written report to each child's family on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and next steps. Families will be given appropriate time to raise any queries/concerns about the report.

Weekly Newsletter

Our weekly newsletter is posted on ClassDojo, Tapestry and the school website at the end of each week and contains important reminders, dates and messages for the week and term ahead. Families are strongly encouraged to read these to ensure important information is not missed.

Pupil Progress Meetings

All families are provided with two, 10-minute meetings each academic year. Families are asked to sign up for an allocated date and time. Should an appointment day not be suitable, families are asked to contact their child's teacher who will make every effort to arrange a more mutually convenient time.

Families are encouraged to request additional meetings should they have a concern regarding their child's progress or well-being. Likewise, staff will arrange additional meetings, if necessary.

Annual Reviews for Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will have an Annual Review each academic year to discuss their progress in relation to the aims and objectives of their plan. Termly plan, do, review meetings are held to ensure provision and support is up-to-date and appropriate.

Personal Plans

Children on the Special Educational Needs Register, have an updated Personal Plan every term, which is shared with families. Teachers will arrange to meet with the family each term to review prior targets and set new ones. Each Personal Plan offers practical advice to families on how they can work with school staff to support their child in achieving targets to assist the child's progress.

School Website

The school website <https://www.disley.cheshire.sch.uk> provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a

wider audience.

Complaints

All formal letters of complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the school's separate Complaints Policy. All formal letters to families must be approved by the Headteacher before they are sent.

Formal correspondence with families will be kept in the child's personal folder in the School Office and held for a period of time in accordance with our Disposal of Records Schedule. The school does **not** accept or act upon anonymous communication unless in relation to matters of serious Child Protection.

Requests for Information

Please refer to our Data Protection and GDPR Policy for copies of children's records, freedom of information and Subject Access Requests. This will detail procedures and protocols, including timings.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our school community is of the utmost importance and whilst we value the importance of communication, the information in this policy outlines the preventative measures and timescales that are in place to protect staff mental health and wellbeing.

Whilst staff will always strive to communicate relevant information with families, it is important to be mindful that their main duty is to educate and care for the children. In situations where communications become inappropriate, aggressive, vexatious, persistent or disproportionate in nature, it is important to identify that this will fundamentally take the time away from the teachers that should be used to prepare and provide the very best care and education for the children.

When communication becomes inappropriate, aggressive, vexatious, persistent or disproportionate and the school deems it is unacceptable, then actions will be put in place in accordance with our Vexatious Complaints Policy, which can be found here:

https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/disleyprimary/UploadedDocument/798f358f-cc3e-4315-baf6-f070a03c6edb/23_http-vexatious-or-persistent-complaints-policy-2022.pdf

Appendix A:

Commonly asked questions:

When should I contact school?

As soon as you have a concern! If in doubt, please contact us; we would far rather you contacted us for reassurance over something that turns out to be minor than spend time worrying about something.

I know the class teachers are very busy. Is it ok to contact them?

As outlined within this policy, you can reach teachers via ClassDojo and Tapestry. These platforms are there for quick communications relating to things you would like the teachers to know. Teachers will endeavor to respond as quickly as they can and will aim to do so **within 2 school days**. Anything requiring a more formal discussion, it would be advantageous to arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient time. Teachers will aim to facilitate a meeting **within 5 school days**. If you want to communicate something during the school day, please call the school office on **01663 797 332**.

Can I contact the headteacher if I have a problem?

We would recommend that the class teacher or the member of staff who has a better awareness of the subject of the communication is contacted as the first point of contact. However, you are always welcome to contact the headteacher if you feel you need to via the school phone number or email (head@disley.cheshire.sch.uk).

How quickly can I expect a response to my query?

Ordinarily, you can expect a response **within 2 working days**.

Is there anything else I should bear in mind?

The only other thing we would say is that we understand that sometimes parents or carers may be frustrated about issues that arise and we will always work with our families to resolve these. Equally, we would much prefer parents or carers to contact us directly with concerns rather than raise them on social media before we have had the chance to respond.

At the same time, please understand that our staff are trying to resolve your concern around their teaching commitments and therefore any communication that is sent should not be rude, abusive or aggressive. We do not expect staff to respond to inappropriate communication.