**KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

***Small School…BIG Opportunities!***

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**COMMUNICATION**

**BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL POLICY**

**January 2022**

**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 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 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 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 in our

communications

* Promoting a culture of openness and honesty
* Seeking parents’ 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 communications
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 Seesaw 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 Seesaw app.

* Killylea Primary Facebook page

This is our main form of instant communication about what is going on in school including photographs and video clips. We also use this for information about trips e.g. ETA if a journey is delayed.

* 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
* Board of Governors’ Annual Report

**1.2 Information on child’s progress:**

* Parent-teacher interviews [October and February]
* Transfer Interviews [P7 only- February]
* Seesaw updates
* Annual School Report [June]
* Individual Education Plans and reviews [as appropriate- twice a year]
* Reading Partnership report [as appropriate]
* Informal meeting with teacher [at parent or teacher’s request]
* Praise text/ 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 is not available during morning preparation/supervision time. The principal is non-teaching on Mondays and Tuesdays and generally available during school hours on those days or after 2pm Wednesday - Friday.

**1.3 Information on School policies and procedures:**

* School policies are available on the school website or from the office [on request]. Parents should familiarize themselves with these.
* Summary leaflets of key policies are on display in entrance porch
* Within school prospectus
* Within Board of Governors’ Annual Report
* 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
* 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
* Grandparents’ Day
* Sports Day/ Football Tournament
* School Events and fundraising activities
* PTA meetings and events
* Volunteering opportunities
1. **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.

Please be aware that the secretary works each day to 12noon. 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.

**Seesaw:**

Each class teacher is responsible for responding to messages via 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 should not rely on Seesaw for urgent messages, but should ring the school instead.

**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 Seesaw 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 Seesaw and a message will be posted on the school’s Facebook page and school website.
1. **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:**

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. Please do not 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 has a full teaching timetable.

Parents **should not discuss school issues on social media.**

**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 Seesaw. [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.

**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 should 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/*](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.

1. **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.

1. **POLICY REVIEW:**

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

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| **KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY** |
| POLICY DATE:  | January 2022 |
| PRINCIPAL’S SIGNATURE: | P. Lowry |
| CHAIRPERSON, Board of Governors, SIGNATURE: | Rev B Atkins |
| REVIEW DATE: | September 2023 |

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PARENT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Please use the space below to make any comments about our Home School Communication Policy and return this section to school.

Name: [optional]\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_