

Introduction and Rationale

We recognise that the relationship which exists between our school and the community is a partnership, and that all good partnerships thrive on excellent effective communication. This policy therefore seeks to define the means by which we are able to maintain effective communications between all stakeholders within our school community in addition to providing an overview of what parents/carers can expect of the school and, in turn, what the school will expect of parents/carers.

This policy embodies the current national priorities around developing increased opportunity for parental involvement and engagement and recognises the importance of including parents/carers in meaningful dialogue relating to a young person's learning.

Within all avenues of communication, we politely request that all members of our school community ensure the tone of communications remain polite, non-confrontational and solution focussed. We seek to develop confidence and trust between parents/carers, children, young people and staff and recognise the importance that the views of all are listened to so that together we can build the best possible experience for our full school community.

Contact Details

The school holds emergency contact details for all children on the SEEMIS System 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, they can also update their own details on the ParentsPortal system or contact the school office. Depending on the nature of the communication, the school will use the most practicable means to contact families.

Communications between the school and Parent/Carers

Parents/carers 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 and/or a member of the Senior Management Team. Outside of teaching their designated class all teaching 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.

➤ *Ready Steady Learn Booklets*

The Ready Steady Learns (RSL) are a valuable tool for good communication at Newfield Primary. Every child in the school has a RSL and this is brought to and from school and home and provides an excellent way to communicate with the class teacher. Notes about homework, areas of work the child is doing well with or needing help with and general comments about how they are getting on can all be communicated here. We would always encourage parents/carers to pop a note in the RSL for general issues. If they have a more sensitive issue or want to raise something confidentially then a phone call to the school is preferred. The pupils have access to the RSL and so both teachers and parents/carers should be mindful of what is written between school and home so not to upset pupils or

cause them upset. The RSL is also used for setting termly and weekly learning targets by our pupils, with the help of both school and parents/carers.

➤ *Termly Newsletters*

Families will receive a Class Newsletter via ParentPay email. The newsletter is also uploaded to the school website and to ParentsPortal. This document will identify the focus of the learning taking place during the period indicated and identifies how families can support their child's learning at home.

➤ *School Newsletters*

A school newsletter is sent out 7 times throughout the school year, sharing important news, reminders, dates and events with our school community as well as reflecting on our successes. The newsletter is emailed to all families and uploaded to both ParentsPortal and our school website for easy reference.

➤ *Emails via ParentPay*

The school uses ParentPay to email information to families. Not only is this more environmentally friendly as it decreases paper usage, it also reduces photocopying and other costs in the school. We urge families to provide us with a valid email address. Families are encouraged to use e-mail as a means of providing a quick, effective way of communicating information about their child.

Parents/carers should always email the school office to share information and not the specific class teacher. This ensures that messages and information is picked up and passed on correctly. Not all teachers will check their emails during the school day nor are they expected to, and are discouraged from, checking and responding to emails outside of their working day.

It is important that families telephone (01698 792084) or email the school office (office@newfield-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk) with any concerns or queries. There email will then be forwarded onto the most appropriate member of the school team who can deal with their concern/query.

➤ *Messages via MySchoolApp or ParentsPortal*

Immediate short messages are sent out via MySchoolApp and/or ParentsPortal to all families. In the coming year ParentsPortal will be our only method of messaging as MySchoolApp is being retired. It is essential that all parents are signed up to ParentsPortal in order to receive up to date information regularly.

➤ *Telephone calls - inbound*

All telephone calls are answered by staff in the main office. It is our policy that office staff do not interrupt teaching time so parents cannot be transferred to speak to teaching staff during the school day. Messages are taken and forwarded to the relevant staff to be dealt with as soon as possible.

➤ *Telephone calls - outbound*

Telephone calls will be made where immediate contact with a parent/carer is required ie for injuries/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 contact can be made, the member of staff will leave an answer phone message.

➤ *Parents Night*

All parents/carers are provided with two 7 minute meetings with the class teacher each academic year. Parents/carers are asked to sign up for an allocated date and time. Should an appointment day not be suitable, parents/carers are asked to contact the school office who will make every effort to arrange an alternative telephone conversation with the class teacher at a mutually convenient time. We are unable to provide in-person parents night meetings outside of the assigned parents nights planned. (October and March)

➤ *Written reports*

Once a year, we provide a full written report to each child's parents/carers on their progress. This report identifies areas of strength and next steps along with general progress across the levels of Curriculum for Excellence.

➤ *Annual reviews for Additional Support Plans*

All pupils with an Additional Support Plan will have an annual meeting review each academic year to discuss their progress in relation to the targets of their plan. Parents/carers, class teachers, school support assistants and, at times, the specialist support teacher will be invited to attend. There is also an opportunity for the pupil to attend the meeting and be involved in the discussions.

➤ *Newfield Primary Twitter page*

Our private Twitter page is where we share our learning with the wider parent body. Users are only added to our Twitter page when we have checked their identity and only parents/carers of current pupils are permitted to follow our page. If a parent/carer does not wish for their child to feature on our Twitter page they should notify the school where this will be noted and passed on to the relevant staff.

➤ *School Handbook*

A school handbook is made available to all parents/carers through the school website and is updated by December of each year. This handbook meets the requirements of the Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 and its purposes include:

- providing a welcome for new parents/carers to the school;
- helping parents/carers to choose a school; and
- helping parents/carers to prepare their child for school.

The handbook should serve as a practical guide to parents/carers about school, authority and national policies and how these will impact on their child's experience at the school. It should also give them a good 'feel' for the sort of school that we are. The school handbook is also available in hard copy upon request.

➤ *Parent Council*

The Parent Council, which meets regularly throughout the year and is attended by members of the Senior Management Team, is a key vehicle for parents/carers to share their views with the school leadership. We have an enthusiastic group of parents/carers who are keen to be involved in the life of the school. These meetings are also used by the school leadership to provide parents/carers with updates on a wide range of issues, ranging from small changes to procedures to very significant government policy changes. The Parent Council also plays a significant role in fundraising for resources and events in the school.

➤ *Standards and Qualities Report*

The school is required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc (Scotland) Act (2000) to publish an annual report including key performance measures such as those relating to attainment and attendance. This report is published on the school website in September.

➤ *School Improvement Plan*

The Improvement Plan is written annually in June in preparation for the next school year. During the school year, the whole school community is involved in self-evaluation of our Improvement Plan Priorities. A parents version of our Improvement Plan is shared on our School website. Full copies can be obtained from the school.

➤ *Seeking Parent/Carers' views*

The school is committed to consulting parents/carers wherever possible, particularly in cases where significant changes in policy or procedures are under consideration. As well as pupils themselves, parents/carers are key

stakeholders within the school community and their views are valued and will be taken into consideration in the making of decisions.

The school is also committed to seeking regular feedback from parents/carers on activities and we may issue evaluation forms to seek parents' views on how events might be improved at appropriate times of the session.

In addition to these methods of seeking parental views, the school may also conduct a formal parental survey, covering a wide range of the school's functions, towards the end of an academic session. These questions largely remain the same each year which allows the school to note trends – either positive or negative – in terms of parental responses.

➤ *Involvement in School self-evaluation and planning*

The school is also keen to involve parents/carers, as well as other stakeholders, in its annual processes of self-evaluation and planning. Parents' representatives are invited to take part in our annual improvement planning survey, which takes place towards the end of each academic session.

Have Your Say

The South Lanarkshire Have Your Say procedure provides families to comment, compliment and complain directly to South Lanarkshire Council should they feel the need to. Information leaflets outlining the procedure can be found in our main office foyer and on the South Lanarkshire Website or by clicking the link below.

[Have your say on our performance - South Lanarkshire Council](#)

Date of last review and reprint: June 2023
Will be reviewed annually and updated where required.

Leadership Equity Achieving Resilience Nurture