



Communication Policy

Rationale:

“Successful partnership working depends on the development of mutual trust and respect between practitioners and parents. The skills, knowledge and experiences that all parents and practitioners contribute should be used to support children’s learning.”

Engaging Parents and Families, Education Scotland, March 2019

Children have the right to be supported by their parents as they grow and develop

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 5

Aims:

In Balmuildy Primary School we aim to:

- Develop trusting relationships between parents/carers and school staff to support children and their learning
- Promote open, two-way communication between home and school
- Establish shared expectations between home and school to balance requests for information with the needs and capacity of the school at any given time
- Define roles and responsibilities for the management of communication
- Ensure that home/school communication is inclusive and supports all parents/carers to participate
- Provide opportunities for formal and informal home/school communication

Context

Balmuirdy Primary is a large and busy school that receives, creates and responds to a significant amount of communication on a daily basis. It is important for parents/carers and the school to have a shared expectation and understanding about lines of communication to support partnership working.

Roles and responsibilities

Admin and Clerical Staff

Admin and Clerical staff in the school office are the first point of contact for parents/carers. Office staff will:

- Meet and greet parents/carers who contact the school
- Forward call back requests and emails to relevant staff members
- Ask parents/carers to give information about why they are calling. This helps staff to prioritise need. If parents/carers do not wish to share information about why they are calling this will be respected
- Arrange interpreters for parents/carers who require this

Class Teachers

In the first instance, parents/carers should direct questions and requests to the class teacher, the class teacher can then link with the appropriate member of the leadership team if appropriate.

Leadership team

Each member of the leadership team will be responsible for specific stages across the school. This may change on an annual basis due to the configuration of the school and remits. Roles and responsibilities of the SLT will be communicated at the beginning of each session.

Parents/carers can contact their child's teacher or the Leadership Team by Telephoning the school office on **0141 955 2276** or e-mailing the school office at office@balmuirdy.e-dunbarton.sch.uk

The school office is open to accept telephone calls Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 4.00pm. Due to teaching commitments and other demands on their time, members of staff are not always available to take a call. If this is the case, the office team member will pass on a message requesting a call back. The office staff will also forward emails to the relevant member of staff.

You should receive a call or e-mail back **within 48 hours**, excluding weekends and holiday periods.

Parents and Carers

- Please ensure the school has current contact details, including address, telephone number and email address
- We encourage you to contact the school with comments, concerns or compliments. Your feedback is important to us
- Online chat groups are a helpful way for parents to get reminders and catch up with missed information but we appreciate any concerns being brought to the school so that we can work with you directly to resolve any concerns you may have

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the school's Communications Policy, in partnership with staff and parents/carers.

Electronic Communications

E-mails

We are working hard to be a paperless school in terms of our communications and to share information electronically wherever possible. Parents/carers should receive the following information electronically:

- Letters
- Newsletters
- School handbook
- Updates and notifications from East Dunbartonshire Council
- Electronic surveys from school and EDC to gather the views of parents/carers
- Curriculum information
- Policy and procedure updates
- Diary dates about school events
- Updates/notification of diary changes

Groupcall Text Messaging Service

This enables us to send reminders, updates and information quickly. We can send Groupcall text messages to the whole school, groups and individuals. If you change your mobile phone number, please inform the office so that records can be updated.

Parent Portal

This is a single entry point to a range of school services including reporting pupil absence, cashless catering and booking parents' meeting appointments. Please contact the school office if you would like support to set up an account.

SeeSaw

Seesaw is used within the school to share learning and to communicate informally. Pieces of work and school experiences will be posted to your child's account throughout each term. Parents and carers can comment and like posts. Seesaw should not be used to communicate important information to the class teacher (e.g. appointment dates, notes of concern). This should be reported to the school office via email or phone call as outlined above. Please contact the school office if you are having problems accessing Seesaw.

School Website www.balmuildy.e-dunbarton.sch.uk

The school website contains information for reference. This includes our school handbook, policies and procedures. There is a Parent Info section with information about the Parent Council and the PTA.

Written Communications

- At the beginning of each school session, parents/carers are asked to update their child's **Annual Data Check**. It is very important to check this carefully and update your contact details, emergency contact details and medical information.
- Parents/carers will also be asked to complete an **EV3 form**. This gives consent for your child to be outside of school at any time during the school session. Parents/carers will be notified in advance of any plans to take your child off site
- You will receive paper copies of letters where **parental consent** is required, for example, permission to attend an after school club, evening event, residential excursion or medical check
- Parents/carers will receive an **end of session report** on their child's progress and achievement in June each year

Face to Face Communication

Parents/carers are invited to meet with their child's teacher twice per year to discuss progress and achievement. Outside of these times, staff are happy to respond to a request to meet with parents/carers. This can be arranged by contacting the school office to make an appointment.

School Events and Activities

Over the course of the school session, we welcome parents/carers to visit the school through attending year group assemblies and performances, family learning events or fundraising activities organised by the PTA. The purpose of these events is to give parents/carers experience of the wider life and work of the school.

Consultation with Parents/Carers

The school will seek the views of parents/carers in the following ways:

- Parent Council meetings
- Electronic surveys and questionnaires
- Parent/carer views gathered and recorded in Health & Wellbeing assessments and Team Around the Child meetings
- Parent/carer focus groups
- East Dunbartonshire Council consultations

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and confidentiality

School staff will be polite, sensitive, helpful and discreet in their dealings with parents/carers. Information will be shared, recorded and stored in compliance with East Dunbartonshire Council's General Data Protection Regulations.

Complaints

We are keen that you should be completely satisfied about your child's education and we encourage feedback on our services from parents/carers and pupils. We are, therefore, interested in feedback of all kinds, whether it be comments, compliments, or complaints.

If you do have a complaint about the school, please let us know. It is better that these things are shared openly and resolved fairly, rather than being allowed to compromise the relationship between the family and the school.

Complaints are dealt with in compliance with East Dunbartonshire Council's Complaints Handling procedure.

East Dunbartonshire's Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy

All appropriate parental requests will be met, whenever possible and as soon as practicable. Explanations will be given when requests cannot be met within agreed timescales. School staff reserve the right to terminate and/or report any communication that is deemed to be unacceptable, for example if it is aggressive or abusive or if persistent/unrealistic requests are made that place unmanageable demands on staff.