



Home-School Communication Policy

Introduction and Aims

Our vision is that all children at East Markham Primary School will be happy, successful learners who believe in themselves and achieve their full potential. With this always in mind, our school motto is '**Believe, Achieve, Succeed**'.

At East Markham Primary School, our **respectful** learners feel secure and have positive self-esteem. They develop a love of learning, are **resilient** and enjoy learning, including from their mistakes. They have **courage** in everyday situations, even when they feel unsure, and are a positive role model for our school community. Our **passionate** children stand up for what is right, are open minded and try their hardest in everything that they do. Whilst at East Markham, learners develop a growth mindset and are **empathetic**, considerate and respectful of others, living things and the environment.

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education;
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers;
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs.

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers;
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers;
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible.

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Co-Head Teachers

The Co-Head Teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate;
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy;
- Regularly reviewing this policy.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy;
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves).

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours, or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times;
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance;
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner;
- Checking all communications from the school.

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours or during school holidays.

A copy of our parent code of conduct can be found on our school website or paper copies can be requested from the school office.

How We Communicate with Parents and Carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Key information included in the school newsletter;
- Upcoming school events;
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days);
- School surveys or consultations;
- Class activities or teacher requests.

Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Reminders (including outstanding actions and payments);
- Short-notice changes to the school day;
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather);
- Positive praise, to celebrate children's achievements.

Text messages are sent via the Teachers 2 Parents platform and will be delivered to the app if this has been downloaded.

Please note – emails and text messages are delivered to the 'main' parent contact only. If you would like any assistance with this, please contact the school office.

Teams

Each class from Y1 to Y6 has a Microsoft Teams page and class teachers may use this to share information including praise, updates and resources. Every child has a personal Teams log in.

School Calendar

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials). Dates are included on the school newsletter, which is usually sent out at the start of each week.

Phone Calls

We may call parents to:

- Offer information (for example, forgotten packed lunches);
- Confirm arrangements (for example, wrap around care or club attendance);
- Enquire why a child has not attended school;
- Discuss pupils' performance, both positive and negative.

Letters

We will write to parents about:

- Letters about trips and visits;
- Consent forms;
- Our weekly newsletter.

Letters are usually emailed to parents, unless it is felt that these are more beneficial in paper form, or if a written response or reply slip is required.

Reports

Parents receive an end-of-year report about their child's learning, covering their child's achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance. At the end of each key stage, a report on end of key stage assessments will be included, as relevant.

We also arrange regular meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

Meetings

We hold parents' meetings (also called parents' evenings) during the autumn and spring term. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), or who have other additional needs, may also be asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs.

School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates;
- Important events and announcements;
- Curriculum information;
- Important policies and procedures;
- Important contact information;
- Information about before and after-school provision.

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

How Parents and Carers Can Communicate with the School

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within this timeframe.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

Phone Calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will contact them within 2 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies;
- Safeguarding or welfare issues.

For more general enquiries, please call the school office.

Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email the appropriate email address (see appendix 1), or email the school office to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the beginning or end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning;
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages;
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls.

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

Monitoring and Review

The Co-Head Teachers monitor the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 3 years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints policy. A copy of this can be found on our school website, or paper copies can be requested from the school office.

Appendix 1: School Contact List

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff, please email the most appropriate address below. We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days.

Office hours are 8.30am – 3.30pm, Monday to Friday (term time only).

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher, via class emails: F1 - Caterpillars@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk F2 - Butterflies@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk Y1 - Hedgehogs@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk Y2 - Badgers@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk Y3 - Squirrels@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk Y4 - Otters@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk Y5 - Kestrels@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk Y6 - Foxes@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	School office - office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
Payments / School trips / Uniform / Lost and found	School office office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, email or call the school office. If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office. office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk / 01777870439
Bullying and behaviour	School office office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
School events / the school calendar	School office office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	School SENDCO sendco@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
Before and after-school clubs	School office office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
Governing body / PTFA	School office office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk
Catering / Meals	School office office@eastmarkham.notts.sch.uk