DISLEY
PRIMARY SCHOOL
Part of True Learning Partnership

DISLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

'PROUD TO BELONG'

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Approvedby	Headteacher Governors	Date: November 26 Date: November 26
Last review	November 2024	
Next review	November 2028	

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 (Bromcom) 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 theschool 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 thatsuits 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". Families are encouraged to raise any concerns, queries or complaints directly with the school through the appropriate channels outlined within this policy. This enables concerns to be considered fairly, investigated where necessary and resolved as effectively as possible. The school values open and constructive communication and asks that concerns are not aired on social media platforms before the school has been given the opportunity to address them through the appropriate processes. Social media should not be used as a substitute for the school's complaints procedure or established communication routes.

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.disleyprimary.org.uk provides an opportunity to share information about the school and is an opportunity to promote the school to a wider audience.

Recording of Meetings
The school recognises the importance of maintaining clear and accurate records of meetings with parents and carers. Where appropriate, school staff will make written notes of meetings and retain records in accordance with school procedures and relevant data protection requirements.

To promote open, honest and productive discussion, parents and carers are not permitted to make audio recordings, video recordings or use artificial intelligence (AI) transcription tools during meetings with school staff unless explicit written permission has been obtained in advance from the Headteacher.

The use of recording devices or AI transcription tools can affect the natural flow of discussion and may not always provide an accurate or complete

reflection of the context, tone or content of a meeting. The school therefore reserves the right to refuse requests to record or transcribe meetings.

Where a parent or carer requires support in accessing, understanding or retaining information discussed during a meeting, the school will seek to provide reasonable alternatives, such as providing a written summary of key points and agreed actions following the meeting.

Any unauthorised recording or transcription of meetings may be addressed in accordance with the school's policies and procedures.

Complaints

Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the trust's Complaints Policy, which can be found here: Policies — True Learning Partnership

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 anonymouscommunication 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 True Learning Partnership's Vexatious Complaints Policy, which can

be found here:

Policies — True Learning Partnership

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@disleyprimary.org.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?
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. We therefore encourage parents and carers to contact us directly through the communication routes outlined in this policy rather than raising concerns on social media. This allows concerns to be investigated fully and addressed appropriately.

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.