



BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT



PARENTAL ACCESS TO STAFF – SCHOOL POLICY

In recognising that the education of our children is a partnership between the home and school, the Board of Governors, Principal and staff seek to allow parents/guardians a clear right of access at all reasonable times to their child's teacher, other staff including office staff, and the Principal. The Principal, as the day-to-day manager of the school, will seek to ensure that all such contacts are conducted in a manner which will promote the educational interests of the pupil, demonstrate courtesy and respect and allow for the safety of all the children and staff.

As parental attitudes to school, and the staff, can directly influence the child, it is important that all exchanges between school and home should be informed by a mutual respect for each other's knowledge and concern for the pupil's welfare, and any other aspect of school life. Pupils have much to gain from the shared interest of parents/guardians and staff. Each has an in-depth knowledge of the child in different settings and contexts, and the sharing of this information in a positive way should help the pupil to feel valued and to achieve his/her full potential. It is important that pupils feel secure in the working relationship between home and school.

The means of expressing this working relationship are diverse but parents/guardians will appreciate that some guidelines are necessary. All exchanges between parents/guardians and staff should be conducted in a respectful and tolerant manner, and parents/guardians are asked to adhere to the school's guidelines when seeking contact with staff.

The Board of Governors endorses the school's arrangements for effective parent staff communication as set out below.

The contact between parent/guardian and staff will take the form of:

- (a) messaging online, for example, through Seesaw
- (b) telephone calls
- (c) meetings to discuss the pupil's academic progress;
- (d) casual or informal exchanges of information made for routine housekeeping purposes e.g. dental appointments, illness, lost property, etc;
- (e) more sensitive, wider issues involving school policies that are causing concern.

In such circumstances an appointment should be made with the Principal and the issues clarified in advance to enable the parent/guardian and the teacher/staff member to make appropriate preparation.

On the advice of the Education Authority the school has put in place arrangements for addressing the most serious situations where the approach/behaviour of a parent/guardian might amount to harassment of staff in the workplace. This also includes inaccurate, derogatory or malicious comments on social networking sites. Thankfully such situations are rare in the school system and we trust that they are unlikely to ever occur in the context of this school.

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff would like to thank parents/guardians for their co-operation and support in this matter and look forward to working together to further strengthen home/school partnerships.

Reviewed June 2023