



Thomas Muir Primary School

Communications Policy

Parents/Carers as Partners



Thomas Muir Primary School

Kirriemuir Road

Bishopbriggs

Glasgow

G64 1DL

Telephone: 0141 955 2290

Website: www.thomasmuir.e-dunbarton.sch.uk

Email: office@thomasmuir.e-dunbarton.sch.uk



@ThomasMuirPS

Rationale

Thomas Muir Primary School has agreed a communications policy to ensure that communication between home and school is clear, effective and timely. All communication must reflect our school values and universal charter. The school 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 shared expectations and understanding about communication. This policy has been created in partnership with the Parent Council.

Scope of the Policy

This policy will cover core communication between parents/carers and the school in terms of:

- Telephone communication;
- Electronic communication;
- Written communication;
- Face to face communications;
- Consultation with parents/carers;
- Summary and links to corporate complaints handling policy;
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and confidentiality;

- Complaints; and
- Zero tolerance policy.

Policy Aims

This policy will:

- Ensure that all communication between home and school reflects our school values of Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Fairness and Kindness.
- Promote open, two-way communication between home and school.
- Balance the expectations of parents/carers for frequent, useful and relevant communication with the needs and capacity of the school.
- Define roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that home/school communication is inclusive and supports all parents/carers to participate.
- Ensure compliance with other EDC policies which link to home/school communication.

Roles and responsibilities

Head Teacher

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

Senior Leadership Team

All year groups are linked to a member of the senior leadership team as follows:

P7	Annamarie McIntosh, Head Teacher
P1 to P3	Jennifer Law, Depute Head
P5 to P7	Maria McAllister, Acting Depute Head

Parents/carers can contact their child's senior leadership team link in the following ways:

- **By telephoning the school office on 0141 955 2290**
If the SLT member is unavailable to take the call, the office team member will send an internal email to the member of staff to request a call back on behalf of the parent/carer.
- **By emailing the school office on office@thomasmuir.e-dunbarton.sch.uk**
The office staff will forward the email to the relevant member of staff.

- **By coming into the school office**

Parents/carers are welcome to come into the school office at any time to inform office staff that they wish to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team or to request that a message be passed on to a class teacher.

Class Teachers

Parents/carers can contact their child's class teacher in the following ways:

- **By telephoning the school office on 0141 955 2290**

Office staff will send an internal email to the member of staff to request a call back on behalf of the parent/carer, copying in the relevant link SLT member.

- **By emailing the school office on office@thomasmuir.e-dunbarton.sch.uk**

The office staff will forward the email to the relevant member of staff and copy in the relevant link SLT member.

Parents/carers should not approach class teachers at the beginning or end of the school day; we respectfully ask you to call or email the school office so that we can give you the time and privacy you need.

Office Staff

Office staff are the first point of contact for parents/carers, on the phone, by email or face to face. Office staff will:

- Introduce themselves to parents/carers in all telephone and face to face communication.
- Forward call back requests and emails to the relevant link SLT member.
- Ask parents/carers to give information about why they are calling. This in turn helps link SLT members to prioritise need. Parents/carers may not wish to share information about why they are calling. This will be respected.
- Arrange interpreters for parents/carers who require this.

Parents/Carers

- Ensure the school has current contact details, including address, telephone number and email address.
- Contact the school in the first instance with compliments, comments and complaints. It is useful for parents/carers to use social media to network with each other for information sharing. However, it is not an appropriate space to share concerns or complaints about matters

relating to the school. We strongly encourage parents/carers to speak to the school, not to your screen.

It is important for parents/carers and the school to have shared expectations with regards to the following modes of communication:

Telephone communication

The school office is open to accept telephone calls Monday to Friday between 8.00am and 4.30pm. Please note that the school phone number may not appear on your phone when we call you. It may appear as 0300 1234510 because this is the East Dunbartonshire Council switchboard number.

In order to respond to calls efficiently and in a timely manner, we ask parents/carers to:

- Give their name
- Identify who they would like to speak with
- Give basic information about the reason for their call (as stated above, parents/carers may not wish to share any information and this will be respected).

Parents/carers should not leave sensitive or confidential information on the school answering machine. Parents/carers should not phone the office out of hours and leave a message on the machine to report pupil absence.

Electronic Communication

We aim to be a paperless school and to share information electronically wherever possible. Parents/carers will receive the following information electronically:

- School 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

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

The school website contains information for reference. This includes our school handbook, policies and procedures.

There is an information section for parents in the school website. This contains information and updates from the Parent Council and PTA



Social Media

The only social media affiliated with the school is our Twitter page [@ThomasMuirPS](https://twitter.com/ThomasMuirPS)

This is regularly updated with information about learning and teaching, special events and achievements. Parents/carers are welcome to post and share good news stories about learning and achievement out of school.

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. Please note that texts are sent to one nominated parent/carers. If you change your mobile phone number, please inform the office so that records can be updated.

Non-Residential Parent/Carers

Non-resident parents/carers can request to receive electronic communication from the school. Non-resident parents/carers should contact the school office to arrange this.

Written communication

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 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. Please note, however, that parents/carers will be notified in advance of any plans to take your child off site.

In addition, 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.

Face to face communication

Parents/carers are invited to meet with their child's teacher twice per year to discuss progress and achievement. In addition to this, staff are happy to respond to a request to meet with parents/carers. This can be arranged through contacting the school office.

Open events

Over the course of the school session, we welcome parents/carers to visit the school, attend year group assemblies and performances or to attend family learning events. The focus of these events is to give parents/carers experience of the wider life and work of the school, rather than to discuss individual pupils.

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, in particular, you 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 valued by the school and dealt with in compliance with East Dunbartonshire Council's Complaints Handling procedure. A summary of this is detailed below:

In relation to making a complaint:

- Stage 1 – Frontline resolution, we will always try to resolve the complaint quickly and to the customer's satisfaction wherever we can. This resolution will be provided within five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Stage 2 – Investigation, if you are dissatisfied with the decision at stage 1, the complaint will be investigated, acknowledged in three working days and a decision provided as soon as possible but within twenty working days.
- If you are still unhappy after the further investigation and reply you can take the matter up with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, our reply will include the contact details.
- You should also note that you have the right to raise unresolved concerns with your local councillors, MSP or MP.

Zero Tolerance Policy

School staff reserve the right to terminate and report any communication that is deemed to be unacceptable for the following reasons:

- Refusal of person making telephoning the school to give their name.
- Aggressive or abusive communication – shouting, making threats and/or using bad language.
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that place unmanageable demands on staff will not be accepted. Requests will be met, wherever possible, and explanations will be given when they cannot be met by the school.
- The school will action East Dunbartonshire Council's Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy



Draft for consultation