



Everyone can shine

Communication Policy

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1. Introduction

At Shelf Junior and Infant School, we value strong partnerships between home and school and are happy to talk to parents about their worries or concerns. Positive communication with parents and carers is essential in supporting children's education and well-being. This policy sets out clear guidelines for how we communicate with parents, ensuring open and respectful dialogue while managing expectations regarding response times and staff availability to ensure that staff are able to fulfil their professional responsibilities while maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

2. Principles of Communication

- To foster positive and productive relationships between staff and parents.
- To ensure communication is clear, professional, and respectful at all times.
- To set realistic expectations regarding response times and appropriate channels of communication.
- Our priority is the education, welfare, and safety of our pupils, and communication should support this goal.
- To protect staff from unreasonable demands and direct approaches that may impact their ability to focus on teaching and school duties.
- We aim to respond to queries in a timely and reasonable manner, balancing the needs of parents with the workload and well-being of staff.

3. Methods of Communication

Method	Purpose	Expected Response Time
Ad hoc on the door face to face	Non-urgent queries, sharing information, requesting appointments	Maximum 5 minute conversation
Seesaw	Non-urgent queries, sharing information, requesting appointments	Within 3 working days
Email- to the office	Non-urgent queries, sharing information, requesting appointments	Within 3 working days after an initial acknowledgement
Phone Call	Urgent matters, attendance, safeguarding concerns	Office will take messages if staff are unavailable
Face-to-Face Meetings	Pre-arranged discussions about a child's progress or concerns	By appointment only via the school office
Parent-Teacher Evenings	Formal opportunity to discuss a child's progress	Twice a year
School Newsletters & Website	General updates, key dates, announcements	Updated regularly

Response Times

- Staff will endeavour to respond to emails and messages within three working days during term time.
- Urgent matters should be directed to the school office during working hours.
- Staff are not expected to respond to emails, messages, or phone calls outside of school working hours (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday).
- Communication sent over weekends or holidays will be responded to upon return to school.

4. Expectations for Parents & Carers

We ask that parents and carers:

- Use correct communication methods (e.g., emails, scheduled meetings).
- Meetings with teachers or staff must be arranged in advance; unannounced visits may not be accommodated.
- Respect that teachers are primarily focused on teaching and pupil welfare and may not always be available to respond to matters immediately.
- Allow up to three working days for non-urgent responses. Urgent matters should go through the school office rather than individual staff.
- Be respectful in all communication – aggression, rudeness, or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. This may result in restrictions on communication channels or immediate termination of a face to face meeting, particularly where the child is present.
- Recognise that staff may not be available outside school hours, during weekends, or over holidays.
- If concerns are not resolved through initial communication, parents should follow the school's complaints procedure.

5. Expectations for School Staff

Our staff will:

- Communicate professionally and courteously with parents.
- Acknowledge emails and messages within the expected response time (even if a full response takes longer).
- Direct parents to the appropriate person if the query is outside their role.
- Maintain confidentiality and follow safeguarding guidelines when discussing pupil matters.

6. Managing Unreasonable Communication

Please bear in mind if the incorrect method of communication is used you may be redirected or communication may not be responded to. Please contact the office if you are unsure which method of communication to use.

While we encourage open communication, the school will take action if a parent's behaviour is:

- Excessively demanding or unreasonably persistent.
- Aggressive, abusive, non-courteous or threatening towards staff.
- Repeatedly disregarding the communication guidelines outlined in this policy.

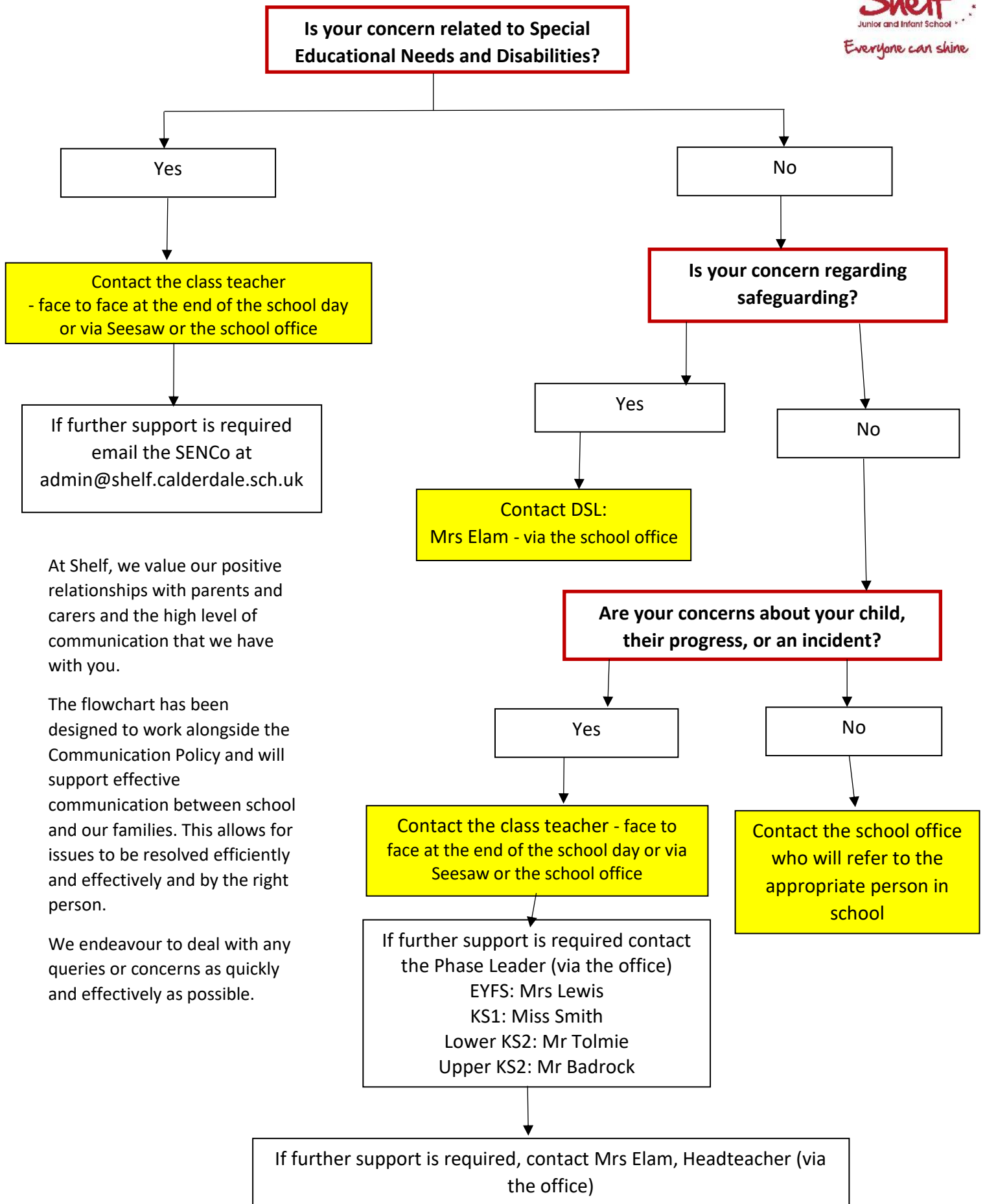
If necessary, the school may:

- Set clearer boundaries for communication with the parent.
- Require all communication to go through a designated senior staff member or school governor.
- Implement a restricted contact policy in extreme cases.

Last review: March 2025

Next review due: March 2026

Who do I contact if I have a concern?



At Shelf, we value our positive relationships with parents and carers and the high level of communication that we have with you.

The flowchart has been designed to work alongside the Communication Policy and will support effective communication between school and our families. This allows for issues to be resolved efficiently and effectively and by the right person.

We endeavour to deal with any queries or concerns as quickly and effectively as possible.