

Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning, and levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with children's academic outcomes. This is never truer than when a child is struggling with an aspect of school, the curriculum or their learning.

Here are our expert top ten communication tips for PARENTS...

1 Start with the teacher

The class teacher (in primary) or form tutor (in secondary) should always be your first port of call as they have the closest relationship with your child.

2 Communication is key

Figure out how best to communicate. Whether over the phone, via email or letter. Make sure you have some face-to-face interaction too – a quick chat can often solve a lot more than a long email chain!



3 Understanding the graduated approach

The class teacher is responsible for making adjustments via the **graduated approach** before any additional support or intervention is put in place.



The **graduated approach** is a four-part cycle where plans for the learner are assessed, then planned. Following the plan being put in place (do) they are reviewed and, if necessary, changed (and so the cycle continues).

4 Ask (LOTS) of questions...

There's no such thing as a silly question! Ask how, when, where, what and (especially) why.



5 ...But give lots of answers too

Help the school to support your child's learning by providing teachers with information on how you support your child at home. Feel confident in sharing and asking for support to reinforce your strategies to ensure consistent approaches.

If you need to raise a concern...

6 SENCOs

Arrange a meeting with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or Head of Learning Support. If possible, try to include the class teacher or form tutor in these discussions too.



7 Schools have policies to help in these situations...

If you do have to escalate the conversation, further additional information about the school's SEN policy and complaints procedure will be available on the school website.

8 Communication (again)

Consider whether the communication method is commensurate to the concern. Is this a small thing where a short conversation in the playground will suffice or do you need to keep a record of the correspondence?



9 Don't wait

Raise concerns quickly – waiting risks embedding a problem and may make it harder to resolve.



10 Know what you want

Try to make a specific suggestion about how you would like to see your concern resolved. Going into a discussion with a constructive suggestion rather than a complaint can be helpful.



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