



Carrongrange HS Parent Questionnaire

**Amplifying the voices of parents & carers and their
experience of communication with CHS**



Background



Communication has been a longstanding issue for many parents and carers. It is a frequent topic at Parent Council meetings and is often raised informally in other forums, with families sharing a wide range of experiences: positive and negative.

Parents and carers know all staff at Carrongrange High School are committed to continual improvement.

Communication is a vital part of that commitment, and parents and carers recognise that more can be done. The Parent Council believes this should be a process of genuine co-production, where the school and families work together in partnership.

This report presents the findings of the Parent/Carer Communication Survey, which gathered views on school communication, the use of Seesaw, and wider links to learning and external services. Its purpose is to highlight strengths, identify areas for development, and set out priorities for action.

Ultimately, this report marks the beginning of a shared journey—a journey of collaboration, co-production, and collective determination to do better for our young people.

Aim

The parent council wanted to gather the thoughts and feelings of as many parents and carers as possible.



Approach

Over the space of a week, parents and carers received the link to an online questionnaire that had been devised by the parent council.

25 responses were received. Given the short timescale, further collaboration may wish to be explored.

Our Learning



All responses have been gathered and summarised into key themes. Some people shared detailed thoughts, others gave brief agree/disagree responses.



We are grateful to everyone who took the time to respond.



This has generated a wealth of rich, often raw data. For clarity, we have grouped the insights into key themes, which will be shared in the report.

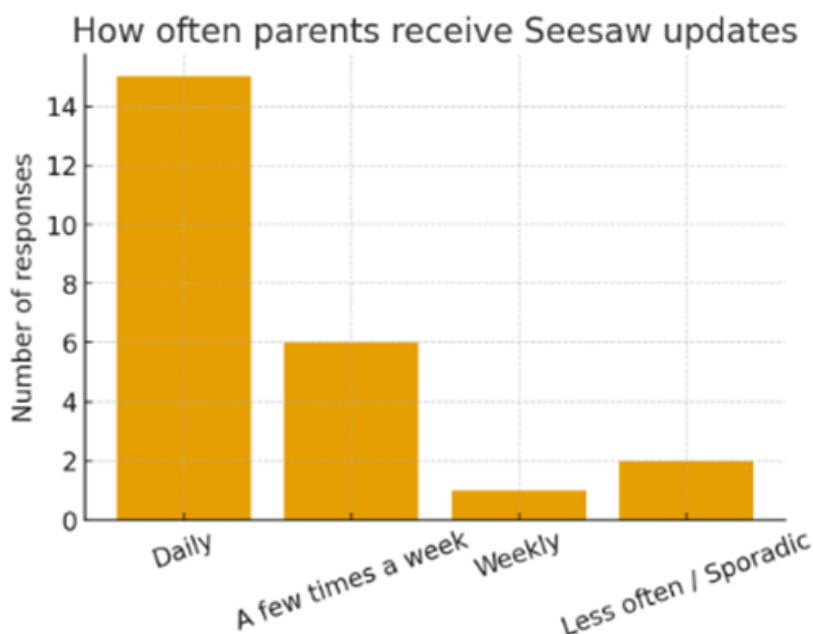


Summary of strengths & challenges

Reflection:

Seesaw is most effective when it delivers personalised, consistent, and meaningful updates. Generic or excessive content reduces its value. A standardised approach across staff is needed to ensure all families benefit equally.

"Tailored information to my child helps me encourage their learning at home"



"Laminated tick sheet can be confusing. For example there is an option for morning and afternoon feelings (angry, sad or happy.) Yesterday had angry circled for morning but then the highlight comment was "A good start to the day." This surely contradicts that she was angry"

"I get completely overwhelmed with the amount of info that is shared on seesaw. Its such a difficult app to navigate so its hard to find things. I wish they would stop sharing every single resource available on seesaw"

"Daily sheets has been great to keep on top of information throughout the day"

"What kind of day my child has had, whether there have been any issues or challenges and positive updates"

"With my child being non verbal I find all information useful"

Communication about learning



Confidence Gaps:



"More detail on the activities of the day, ie rather than say 'topic' or 'choosing' include what the topic is and activity the child chose so we can then discuss with them"

- Parents often do not feel confident about what their child is learning or how progress is being measured.
- Some reports and parents' evenings are not seen as detailed enough to provide real insight into learning journeys
- Many parents only learn about projects once they are completed, limiting their ability to support learning at home.

What Parents Want:

- Clearer updates on learning goals (e.g. literacy, numeracy, life skills).
- Structured communication on progress and skills development.
- Regular TAC (Team Around the Child) meetings where needed.

Reflection:

Daily updates meet the need for "how was my child's day," and these should be standard, but learning/progress communication lacks structure and visibility.

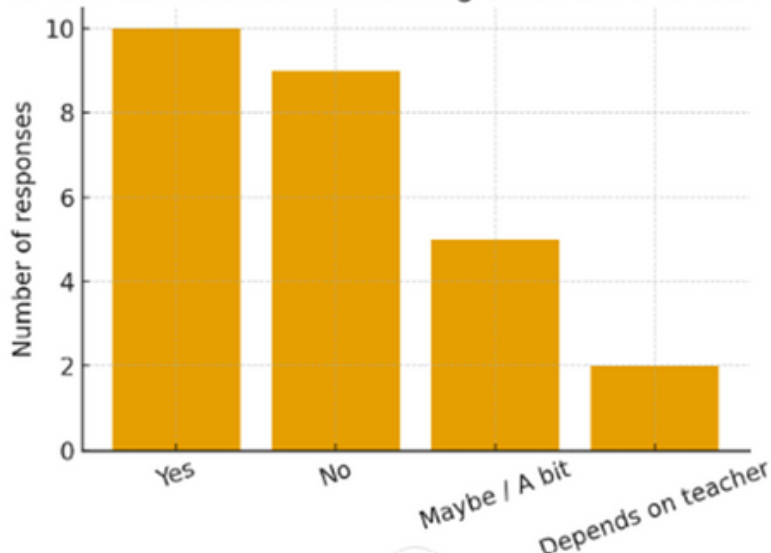
"Too variable from class to class. Last year we received daily updates of the day, notes of what she ate and photos of her doing activities. This year we don't get that. It should be broadly the same over all classes"

"It would be helpful at the start of each learning block to be provided with feedback as to what targets my child is working towards and then throughout the period how they are getting on"

Communication about learning



Parent confidence in knowing what child is learning

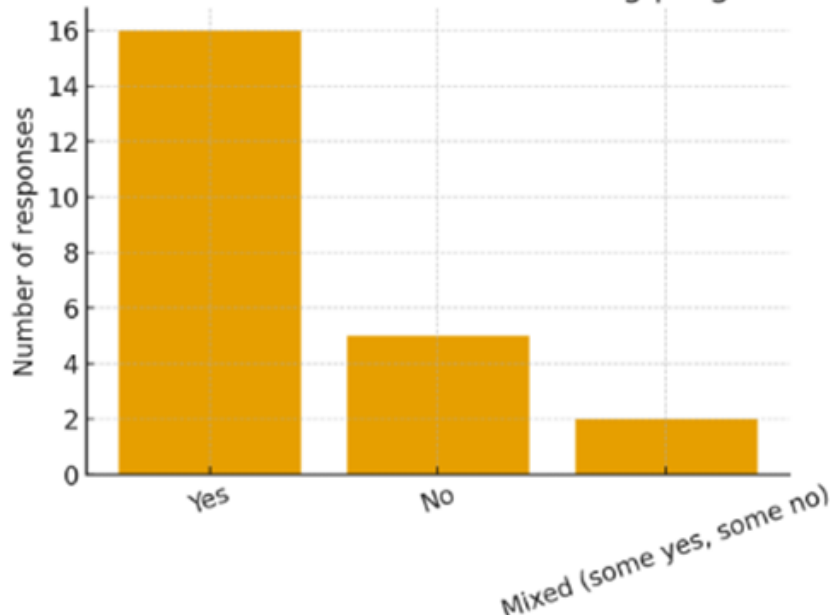


"Again depends on teacher"

"I don't really know what they are learning until a full project is finished and it's up on seesaw"

"We receive excellent communication from the teacher via seesaw and other methods if required"

Parent confidence child is making progress



"I have absolutely zero idea what my son is learning. Even reports home don't go into this detail and parents evening discussion may cover it. But I don't have a clue how my sons learning is structured or how he is advancing"

"I would like to be able to save photos from Seesaw but the school has the privacy settings set so you can't do this. This can be changed. I think this would be nice as you have to screenshot and there's other parts all over the photo. I'd just like to reiterate how valuable this is, especially when your child can't communicate for themselves or has very limited communication skills. Seeing an insight into their school day is the most important thing for me"

General school communication



Preferred Methods: Seesaw is the most popular, but parents want a blend of communication methods:

- Seesaw → for daily personalised updates.
- Email → for bulletins, events, and resources.
- Phone → for urgent or sensitive issues.

Consistency:

- Families report large variations between staff and classes.
- A clear baseline standard for communication is strongly requested.

Notice for Events:

- Parents sometimes receive information too late (e.g., the day before trips).
- A weekly bulletin with advance reminders would reduce stress and last-minute pressures.

Challenges:

- Inconsistent standards across staff.
- Lack of notice for events/trips — sometimes only a day before.
- Parents of new pupils felt underinformed about school basics (e.g., times, routines, services).

Reflection:

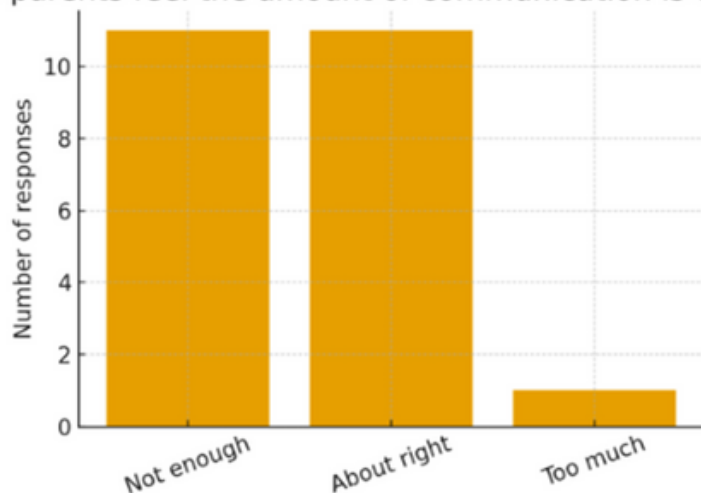
Generally good, but highly variable depending on the teacher. This can cause confusion and stress for families when teachers change.

To avoid inconsistency, should there be a standard communication protocol that all teachers should follow as a minimum?

General school communication

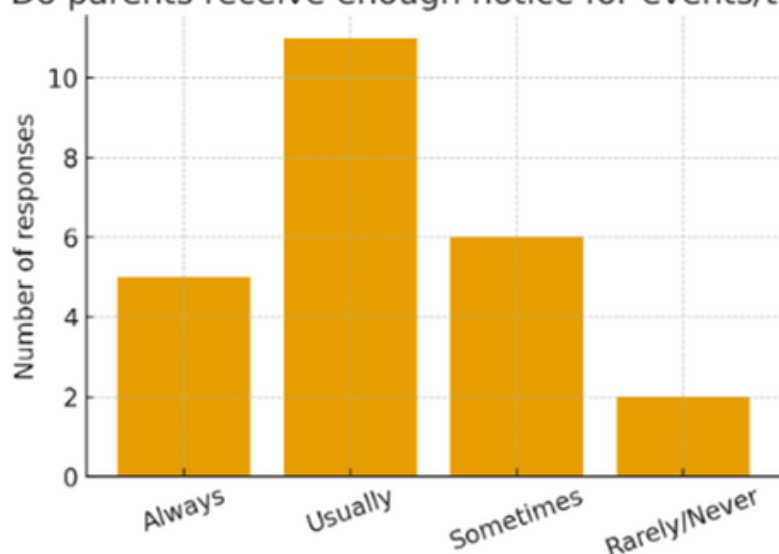


Do parents feel the amount of communication is enough?



"Need for consistency across all staff for all pupils. With such small numbers and multiple adults in classes, I think it's manageable to expect to receive info every day with a photo"

Do parents receive enough notice for events/trips?



"All child's teachers have been great with communication and updates"

"Seesaw could be a brilliant tool if it was used consistently in every classroom"

"We had a change of teacher last term, but they didn't send a message or introduce themselves. To me, that's a basic thing to do"

"Some things have been short notice but still I can make it work"

"Assigned people to my child but then they are reassigned or off then it's confusing who is covering so again it would be easier if this was all kept on Seesaw to keep it clear"

"Not always quick enough"

Wider communication with external services



Experiences

- Mixed effectiveness reported: some very positive, others highlighted delays (e.g., CAMHS referrals missed, transport issues).
- Frustration when parents have to chase updates themselves.
- Positive examples where school coordinated effectively with services, especially for children with complex needs.

Reflection:

Reliability and follow-through with external services has on occasion been inconsistent, leading to stress and gaps in support. Good practice exists, how can we ensure this is the norm and avoid parents and carers feeling like they are “nagging” or having to “chase” the school?

“Again depends on the teacher. But I do feel this can vary. I think it should be something the school inform parents consistently”

Accessibility & inclusion



- Most feel communication is accessible, but some want simpler/plain English explanations (parents may not understand certain acronyms used)
- Reminders of calendar events requested (annual calendars not always practical, we have a LOT to remember in life!)
- Parents of non-verbal children emphasise that communication from school is their only insight into the child's daily experience.

Reflection:

Communication format is broadly accessible but must remain simple, frequent, and inclusive of families with higher support needs.

"There needs to be a consistency of communication that is replicated by teachers. A standard that all teachers abide by and if a teacher does more then, great but no expectation. It's awful as a parent worrying about who the teacher is going to be and if they will be good at communicating with parents. This should NOT be a worry we have when we have so much else in life to worry about. It's an ASN school, I should receive a daily update about my child's day as standard, from what I hear, there is so much inconsistency amongst teachers. This isn't good enough "

"It would be helpful to have certain things explained in 'plain English'

What parents value the most



"Staff are very reactive which is reassuring"

- Daily, personal updates about their child's day (photos, activities, mood, eating, successes/challenges).
- Reassurance that staff are responsive and care about the child.
- Insights that allow them to talk meaningfully with their child about school life.
- For families with non-verbal children, this communication is described as "vital" and "the only way we know how their day has been."

"I am happy with the level of communication I receive so far but realise it varies from teacher to teacher in relation to specific children. I feel the school should establish with all class teachers, a minimum amount of daily or weekly info whether that be the daily communication diary and then a collection of more detailed photos at the end of the week or the communication diary page and then a specific minimum amount of daily photos per day, however if the teacher wants to and has time to send more, as a parent this would be welcome especially in the cases of the non verbal or less able to communicate children"

"It's fine but the various methods can be stressful at times, especially when at work and notifications are coming through, and you assume it's urgent and it's not. Emails with generic info could be scheduled to go out at night time for example, as when it's during the day it's difficult to keep on top of"

Areas for improvement



- Consistency: Establish a minimum standard of communication across all classes and staff.
- Learning and Progress: Provide clearer updates on learning targets and achievements, not just daily routines.
- Advance Notice: Ensure families receive timely communication about trips, events, and requests.
- Information Management: Use Seesaw for personalised updates, but move generic/admin information into a weekly bulletin or email.
- External Services: Strengthen follow-up and reliability of communication with transport and external agencies.
- Staff Introductions: Provide names/photos of all staff supporting a child at the start of term and if changes are made throughout the school term

"I feel a paper copy of a staff list both for individual classes (names and photos) and the whole school at the start of term would be useful including specialist roles (so we know who to go to with specific issues). As parents who often don't transport children to school, it's hard to get to know staff better and put names to faces. I have asked my child's teacher to name adults in any photos she sends on seesaw so I get used to the faces of the people working with my child and can talk to him about them. I feel this is an important and simple detail to add to any pictures"

"The school cares. They are so keen to share any relevant info they receive, and that's great; however, giving lots of info doesn't mean its good communication."

Recommendations



- Introduce a communication policy that sets expectations for:
 - Daily updates (short summary + photo/caption).
 - Weekly learning overview.
 - Consistency across staff.
- Develop a weekly school bulletin (via email) for events, dates, and resources within communities.
- Provide clearer learning communication, such as topic outlines or targets at the start of each block.
- School to consider better coordination of multiple posts on Seesaw
- Improve service coordination by ensuring referrals, therapy updates, and transport changes are always communicated to parents promptly.
- Introduce staff welcome sheets (names, photos, and roles) at the start of the year and when any changes arise
- Ensure the communication needs of parents are identified, adhered to and travel to each teacher - parents should not have to keep repeating their needs

"It's so important that the school empathises with parents and carers in terms of communication and how difficult it is for us to have children who are vulnerable and can't communicate with us about their day"

"Communication with the school has had me in tears, completely stressed. Getting little to nothing has left me unsure and anxious"

"I value knowing how her day has been. Simple things like what she enjoyed, was she happy, did she eat. It is difficult not to know what has happened to your child all day"

Conclusion



The survey demonstrates that parents deeply value communication with the school, particularly personalised Seesaw updates about their child's daily experiences.

However, significant gaps remain in consistency, learning visibility, and external coordination.

By setting clear communication standards, providing structured learning updates, and improving advance notice, the school can build stronger trust and support with families.

We are grateful to the Carrongrange Parent Council for gathering, interpreting and collating this information.

