

PARENT COMMUNICATION · ALL GRADES

Achievement Note

Specific praise, sent home

Why these matter so much

Most parents only hear from school when something's gone wrong. The phone calls, the notes home, the meetings — usually triggered by a problem. A specific positive note reverses this. It's often the single most powerful thing a teacher can do for the parent-school relationship — particularly for families who've had difficult relationships with schools previously. Aim to send one home for every child at least once a half-term. Track who you've done so no child is missed.

Template — Quick note

Hi [parent name], Quick note from school today. [Child] [SPECIFIC achievement — e.g. 'wrote a beautiful piece of writing about their grandparent today,' 'helped a new child find their way at break,' 'persisted with a tricky maths problem until they cracked it']. I wanted you to know because [why it matters specifically — e.g. 'this is the most independent writing they've done all term,' 'this is exactly the kind of kindness we want to celebrate,' 'they've been working on persistence and it's paying off']. Thanks for all you do at home — it shows. [Name]



Template — Friday afternoon round of three

Pick three children at the end of each week. Send one message to each: Child 1: [Name] — focus:

_____ Child 2: [Name] — focus: _____ Child 3: [Name] — focus:

_____ 3 messages x Friday afternoons x 12 weeks per term = every child reached, twice a term, every term, every year.

What makes a good achievement note

Specific behaviour 'Was kind today' is too vague. 'Sat with Sam at lunch when no-one else would' is real.	Names the impact Why does it matter? Tie it to growth, character, effort, or what you've been working on.
Quick — under 100 words These don't need to be long. Short, warm, specific.	From the heart, not formula Even with a template, the WORDS should feel like you. Edit until it's yours.
Sent same day or next day Praise loses power over time. Don't save up for end-of-term.	Even for difficult children — especially for them The child who's been on your watchlist all term needs these MORE, not less. Look for the moment. Send the note.

Tracking

Keep a simple register at the back of your planner — a list of children with a column for each half-term. Tick when you've sent a note. Aim for at least one tick per half-term per child. This isn't bureaucratic — it's making sure no child slips through. The quiet, well-behaved children often get fewest notes, because they don't trigger interventions. They deserve them too.

