

PARENT COMMUNICATION · ALL GRADES

Behavior Note Home

Difficult conversations, on the page

Why these are hard

Telling a parent their child has misbehaved is delicate. Get it wrong and you've damaged the relationship for the year. Get it right and you've made a partner who'll back you up at home. The key principles: • Inform, don't accuse • Specific, not generalising • Lead with what you've already done • Invite partnership, don't demand support • End on a forward-looking note

Template 1 — Single incident, low-stakes

Subject: [Child]'s day today Hi [parent name], Quick note to keep you in the loop. [Child] had a tricky moment today. What happened: [Specific facts. 'During maths, [child] got frustrated with a question and threw their pencil. They then refused to start the work for about 10 minutes.'] What I did: [Calm intervention. 'I sat with them, gave them a minute to calm down, and then we worked through the question together. They finished the work after that.'] How [child] is now: [Honest. 'They're absolutely fine — happily playing at break. We've talked about what to do next time.'] Why I'm telling you: [Honest. 'Just so you know, in case anything comes up at home tonight. No need to come down hard on them — we've handled it at school.'] Let me know if you have any questions. Warm regards, [Name]



Template 2 — Pattern of concern

Subject: A check-in about [child] Hi [parent name], I'm writing because I'd like us to talk about how [child] has been at school recently. The pattern: [Specific. 'Over the last fortnight, [child] has been finding break and lunch quite difficult. There have been three falling-outs with friends, and yesterday they came back to class very upset.'] What we've tried: [Specific. 'I've talked with [child] about strategies. We've put them with a buddy at break. The lunchtime supervisors are keeping a friendly eye out.'] What I'd like: [Honest. 'I'd love to hear what things look like at home — are they themselves at the moment? Has anything changed? I'm wondering if there's more going on.'] Can we have a quick call or chat at pickup this week? I just want to make sure we're working together. Warm regards, [Name]

Template 3 — Serious incident

Subject: An incident today involving [child] Dear [parent name], I'm writing because we had a more serious incident at school today involving [child]. I want you to hear from us before [child] does. What happened: [Specific facts. 'During break, [child] hit another child. The other child was upset but not hurt.'] What happened next: [What you did. 'I sat with [child] and we talked through what happened. They've apologised to the other child and family. They've also lost their break tomorrow as a consequence.'] What we think might be going on: [If you know. Or, 'We're trying to understand what triggered it.' Honest, not speculative.] Next steps: [What you'll do. 'I'd like to have a brief meeting this week to discuss how we can support [child] going forward.'] This isn't a formal disciplinary matter at this stage. We're sharing because we want to work with you on this. When would suit for a brief meeting — Tuesday after school, or Thursday morning? With care, [Name] [Phone if appropriate]

What to AVOID

1. EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE in the email itself. 'It's a disgrace,' 'I'm appalled' — never. Calm and factual, however serious.
2. LISTING EVERY PAST INFRACTION. Stay focused on the current event. If there's a pattern, name it briefly — don't itemise.
3. DEMANDING parents discipline at home. 'You need to talk to them,' 'You need to make sure...' — bossy and counterproductive.
4. SAYING 'I'M DISAPPOINTED.' Personal disappointment frames the relationship around your feelings. Stick to facts.
5. EMAILING IN ANGER. Wait until you've cooled down. Re-read before sending. Sleep on it if possible.
6. SENDING SERIOUS MESSAGES BY EMAIL ONLY. For



serious incidents, phone first. Email follows up. Email alone for big things often goes wrong.

What to ALWAYS include

1. SPECIFIC FACTS. Not 'has been disruptive' — 'shouted out three times during the maths lesson.'
2. WHAT YOU DID. Parents need to know the school is responding, not just observing.
3. AN INVITATION. To meet, talk, share information. Avoid one-way messages on big issues.
4. WARMTH at the start AND end. The middle can be hard — frame it kindly.

