

Personal contact with parents

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One of the most important ways of building a relationship of **trust** and **respect** with parents is to have regular, personal contact. This can be face-to-face, on the telephone, or in writing, but it must be unique to them and their child. Here are some tips to help you communicate effectively and make the most of your dialogue.



Top tips for face-to-face personal contact with parents:

- **Smile and make eye contact:** this shows sincerity in what you are saying.
- **Avoid closed body language** and turning away: crossed arms and turning away suggest you are feeling defensive.
- **Listen:** effective communication is just as much about listening as it is about talking. Make sure parents feel confident talking to you and that you are engaged in what they are saying.



Communicating with parents who don't speak the local language:

- You may need a translator
- Consider using visual cues in written communication
- Use contextual aids like pictures when showing student work
- Do not use the child as a translator



Find our Home-School Link resources from articles and quizzes to top tips and videos at:
www.macmillanyounglearners.com/home-school-link

Top tips for writing to parents:

- **Local language:** Communicate in your local language as parents most likely do not speak English.
- **Two-way communication:** Invite parents to respond by providing a reply slip or requesting a reply if writing by email.
- **Parent's literacy skills:** if a parent has poor literacy skills, would your message be better conveyed orally? Avoid cursive script.
- **Clear and simple:** make sure your point is clear and does not get lost but remain friendly in the tone of your writing.
- **Course resources:** Make use of course resources in the local language.

Top tips for telephone personal contact:

- **Background noise:** choose a quiet location to make your call so that you can give the call your full attention
- **Be prepared:** Think about the main things you want to say and have them noted down in front of you
- **Avoid negative language:** Using neutral or positive language will keep the parent engaged in what you are saying
- **Listen:** Listening is extremely important to building a good relationship with parents.
- **Repeat:** If you have any doubt that the main points of your call have not been clearly heard, summarise them at the end of the call.

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