

FAQs

A guide for school
app administrators

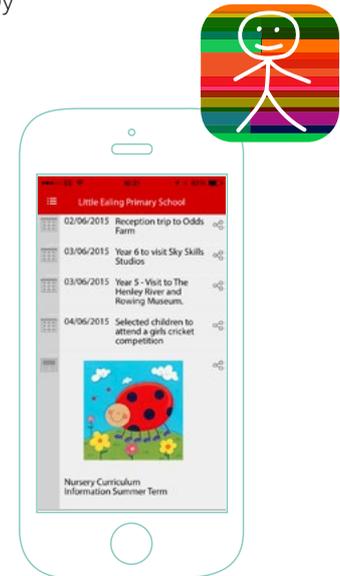


Introduction

mySchoolApp is a simple and cost-effective way to engage with today's 'mobile' parents and carers who run their lives from their phones. It helps you communicate with them in a way that fits in with their lives – and in a way that's easy for you to manage.

And if you are able to reduce your use of text messaging by using the app instead, it could save money too.

This guide will explain the functions of mySchoolApp and hopefully answer any questions you may have.



The mySchoolApp portal

How do I login to the portal

Enter admin.myschoolapp.co.uk into your web browser. You will need your username and password supplied with the original set up instructions.

How many people can have access to the portal?

There is a single login (username and password) but this can be used by as many members of staff as you choose.

How can I remove an individual's access to the portal?

You will need to have the password changed. Email support@myschoolapp.co.uk to request a change of password.

Where can I access the portal?

Almost anywhere. If you have web access and an internet browser, you're ready to go. The interface has been designed to work with most devices (phone, iPad or similar tablet) but a desktop or laptop will probably be best.

How do I upload app content via the portal?

It's really simple and all the different sections work in much the same way.

Let's take News for example: click on the News button and then the **CREATE NEW** button. This will open up a new page which will enable you to add a title, date and time. You can then enter a heading, copy for the story and an image. You can even add a URL to link the story to an existing web page for social media sharing. Simply click on the **CREATE** button and your new story appears on the app instantly.

Sometimes it's easier to watch somebody rather than read instructions, so we've created some simple video guides to show you how you add app content. Click the buttons on the right to watch on YouTube

“Showing your news as individual stories on the app will be easier for the parents to read than trying to zoom in to a pdf newsletter.”



Can I add a PDF or web link to a News story?

If you currently publish your school newsletter as a PDF or would like to show a school menu, for example, this can be linked to display in the app. Notes to help you add a PDF or web link are displayed on the right hand side of the portal. As PDFs are sometimes not very easy to read on a small screen we recommend that most school news is added to the app as individual stories.

Can I edit an item once it's created?

Yes, simply click on the item in the list, make the required changes and click the **UPDATE** button.

Can I delete an existing item?

Yes, simply click on the item in the list and click the **DELETE** button.

How do I add albums and images to the gallery?

Select Image Gallery in the navigation tabs. If this is your first album click **CREATE NEW**. Enter an album name (best to keep it short so it fits mobile screens). Click **CREATE**. Now add some pictures, click **NEW IMAGE** and select an image on your device. mySchoolApp will optimise the image for use on mobile devices but if you select a large image it could take a long time to upload depending on the speed of your connection.

Why are my pictures upside down on the app?

Pictures appearing sideways or upside down are generally caused by tablets and phones being held the wrong way up when taking the photo. The phone or tablet will correct the orientation, but our system is not smart enough yet, to know which way's up! A bit of trial and error or transfer the images to your PC to check before upload should get everything looking the right way up.

Another way to fix this issue is to use a free web-based rotation service such as [Lunapic](#)

“Splitting the Gallery into smaller albums will make it faster for app users to view the pictures and use less of their mobile data.”



Can I add a description to pictures?

A caption can be added to each image. There is a maximum of 140 characters. Captions are optional.

mySchoolApp is crashing on my phone, every time I try to access an album in the gallery?

It is most likely you have an image which has not been uploaded correctly. Check that Album in the Admin portal. All images correctly uploaded will have a small thumbnail displayed. If there are any empty picture boxes, simply delete them and this will generally fix the issue. If you continue to have problems, contact us at <mailto:support@myschoolapp.co.uk>

Optional functions

There are five menu items which are optional

Function	Default state
Absence notification	Active
School policies	Active
Gallery	Active
Prospectus	Inactive
Documents	Inactive

If you would like a change to these optional features, contact us at support@myschoolapp.co.uk.

Features that are deactivated will not be visible to users in the app menu.

mySchoolApp now offers translations as an option. The content you add to the app will be available to users in over 70 languages. If you feel this feature would be useful to your EAL parents contact us at support@myschoolapp.co.uk to have it activated

mySchoolApp for your parents

How do parents download mySchoolApp?

mySchoolApp works on smartphones and tablet devices running iOS or Android, and can be downloaded from the Apple App Store (for iOS – [click here](#)) and Google Play (for Android – [click here](#)).

How do we let parents know that our school is now using mySchoolApp?

Obviously the more parents you are able to get using mySchoolApp the easier it will be to keep them updated.

We prepare a pdf for you to distribute to parents, announcing that you are now using mySchoolApp and how to get it on their phones.

In addition, schools can have up to 200 A5 leaflets sent free of charge, for distribution to parents. These are ideal for children to take home. To request copies email support@myschoolapp.co.uk

Please email support@myschoolapp.co.uk to request a copy of our parents on-boarding pdf which has loads of ideas to help get parents using your app.



App protection

Why do parents have to sign in?

We ask that all mySchoolApp users sign in with their name, email address and phone number. This information is available to the school when a parent or carer sends an email or completes an absence notification.

Why do parents need a PIN?

The PIN function exists to provide security, ensuring only the parent/ carer can submit absence notifications via the app

What if parents forget their PIN?

If they go to main app menu and go to Settings, click 'Forgotten PIN' and it will be sent to their registered email address

Can I see who has downloaded mySchoolApp and logged into my school?

Yes, there is a view users tab available in the web portal. This will give you the total number of users registered to your school and their contact details. In addition your portal reports the total number of app users logged into your school at the foot of the page on the portal dashboard, which may be a useful figure to report

Can I limit who can log in to our school on the app?

myschoolApp in its standard form is open to all. Parents, carers, wider family members and prospective parents too, can see what's happening at your school, in much the same way as they could if they visited your school website.

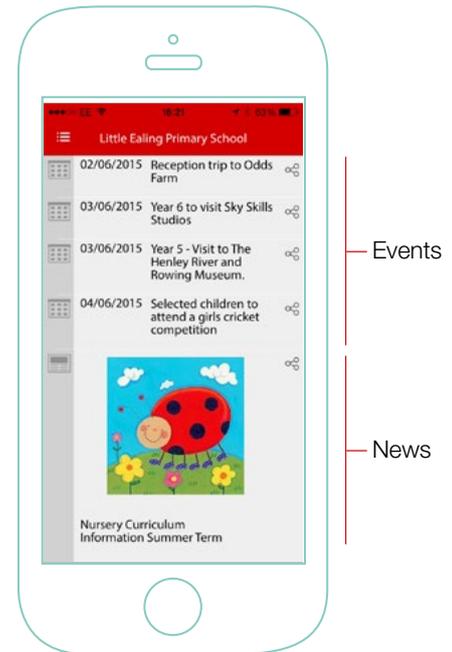
On special request we can add a password login to the app. This would mean only users who know your password would be able to see the school's content on the app. Please contact us at support@myschoolapp.co.uk to find out more.

App content

What is on the Home screen of mySchoolApp?

The home screen is automatically generated and comprises up to four upcoming events in your school calendar and the latest news item. We believe this information about your school will be the most useful to parents and the first thing they see when the app is opened. Updating your news stories regularly ensures parents will see a different story each time they view the app, which sends a positive message out that there's lots going on at your school.

Where possible it is best to add relevant images to news stories as a good picture will encourage parents to read the story. If you don't have an image a default 'school news' image will be added automatically.



Push notifications

What are push notes?

Push notifications are direct messages which enable your school to notify app users of new information or events without the need for them to actually open the application, similar to how a text message will make a sound and pop up on their screen. This is a great way for your school to communicate to app users free of charge.

What if the push notes are not relevant to everyone?

You can create push notification groups in the Note groups screen. App users only opt in to the groups which are relevant to them. You may consider creating a group for each year, team, club, etc. An 'all groups' category is available by default, so that you can inform all app users of information that impacts the whole school in one hit, a closure due to snow, for example.

“Keep staff members up-to-date, for free, using our Private group function. See the next page for all the info ”



Can I send private messages?

Groups created on mySchoolApp are public by default, but it is possible to mark these as Private which then require users to enter a password to be able to opt in to that group. Once a group is marked private you will be required to create an access password. Issue this to the users that you wish to be able to join the private group.

Can I see a history of push notes sent?

Yes, a log of all Push notes, together with the recipient group and date sent is available to view in the Note History tab in the portal.

But what about parents?

We haven't forgotten them. We know it's easy to dismiss a note and then need a reminder of what was written. The app menu now includes Message History. Within this section all message received will be logged for future reference.

School policies

How do I set up school policies on mySchoolApp?

School policies on the app can be a summary of some of the key points (e.g. uniform, behavior, etc.), or it is possible to display full policy documents in pdf format, that are hosted on your school website.

How do I link a policy available on my school website?

Click **CREATE NEW** and enter the name of the policy. In Overview you can enter a brief summary. The Description html field is where you enter the main content, which can be formatted using the toolbar. To link a web-hosted pdf, enter some text (e.g. Click here to read the policy), highlight this text and click the link icon  in the toolbar. If you have already copied the url (web address) for the pdf you want to link to, then paste this into the url field in the pop up box. Click OK to close the box and then click **CREATE**. You can check on the app immediately.

Should you choose not to want html or display linked pdfs, use Overview for the main text.

Documents

How can I make other files available on the app?

We've created a section on the app called Documents just for this purpose. It's intended to be as flexible as possible enabling schools to list and organise files in the way that suits them. Folders could include; Letters, School Trip info, Menus or Homework topics, the choice is yours.

The documents you display on the app will need to be hosted on the web. The best way is to upload pdfs to your school website and link to them there.

How do I add a folder and document to our app?

Click **CREATE NEW** and enter the name of a new folder. To add your first Document click **NEW FILE** and enter the Name and the url (website address) of the file you want to display.

Click **UPDATE**. You can check on the app immediately.

Surveys

How can I survey our app users?

Our recommended method is to use [Google Forms](#) to build your survey for free. Once you are happy with the Questions and answer options, click SEND and copy the link in the pop up window.



How do I add our survey to the app?

You could either add the survey as a news item or make it available in Documents.

To run as a news story, write a headline, some introductory text explaining why you are running the survey and paste the link to the survey into the **webpage link**.

To add your survey to the Documents section of the app, follow the instructions on the previous page of this guide, pasting the link to the survey into the URL field.