

Communication Policy

This procedure is applicable to: all Department for Education employees at Paringa Park Primary School.

Document control

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Revision Record

Date	Version	Revision description

1. Title

Paringa Park Primary School Communication Policy.

2. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

1. Establish clear expectations for staff and parents in the use of electronic methods of communication as a school/class and as an individual. This includes email, Seesaw, Facebook and Sentral.
2. Acknowledge the potential benefits of open and easily accessed communication via electronic methods, and to also understand the possible short comings.
3. Clearly articulate the school's commitment to the positive use of electronic communication.
4. Implement a policy which ensures a safe workplace for staff and supports them to effectively balance their work and home life.

3. Rationale

Effective communication between schools, families and the community forms the foundation for developing and maintaining partnerships.

Paringa Park Primary School is committed to open, honest and timely communication in a respectful and constructive manner. We believe that this strengthens relationships, builds positive partnerships and enhances the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our children.

4. Procedure detail

Electronic communication is an environmentally friendly way of a communication that can save time when used effectively. It is acknowledged that it is a convenience for many parents and provides an avenue for communication outside of normal school hours. As a school community we also highly value face to face and telephone communication. These forms of communication are preferred in many situations.

Expectations of staff and parents

When communicating electronically, staff and parents are expected to adhere to the following etiquette:

- a) Electronic communication is best help brief and informative. Issues that require a deeper level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone. Ensure that all communication is respectful, accurate and inquiring and not personal in nature.
- b) Ensure the communication is a genuine exchange of information and ideas about the child's wellbeing/or learning.
- c) Staff and families are not expected to respond to electronic communication that is contentious or requires ongoing dialogue. A face-to-face meeting should be arranged in this circumstance.

Expectations of parents

- a) Only send non-vital messages electronically. For example, do not send a message saying that your child is not to go to OSHC that day as the teacher is unlikely to see the message during the day or the teacher may not be in class that day.
- b) Responses from staff will be given within 48 hours, Monday-Friday.

- c) Formal requests about your child’s academic progress, learning expectations or behavioural and social issues are only addressed over the phone or in person through parent interviews or student led conferences.
- d) Depending on the nature of the message, staff members will determine how best to contact parents: by electronic message, through a communication book, by phone, or to schedule a personal meeting.

Expectations of staff

Ensure communication is positive, accurate, meaningful and respectful to nurture a shared belief of expectations for all children. Use language that is clear and accessible to families and the community.

- a) Staff will aim to reply to a parent communication within 48 hours, Monday-Friday.
- b) When a message is received from a parent that requires significant time to gather information and reply properly, the staff member should respond to acknowledge receipt of the communication and indicate when an informed response might be expected.
- c) Staff may choose to respond to a work related message at a time of their choosing. This may be outside of school hours. However, there is no expectation or obligation for staff to read, Seesaw messages, read or send emails outside of their school hours.
- d) Electronic communication should not be used to discuss a sensitive issue which has not been raised by the parent or had not been previously discussed with the parent.
- e) When on extended leave staff will inform parents of the relevant dates.

Inappropriate electronic communication

If parents communicate inappropriately to any staff members, matters are deferred to the line manager. For teachers, this is the Senior Leader or Principal and for leaders defer to the Education Director, for further action.

5. Roles & responsibilities

Party/parties	Roles and responsibilities
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate implementation of policy and procedure
Site leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of the policy and procedure. • Provide information in other languages/modes to meet the needs of families. • Support staff in appropriate responses to parents (i.e. electronic communication, attending face to face meetings at families requests). • Refer any inappropriate communication from parents (i.e. personally attacking a staff member) and refer to DfE legal as necessary. • Reply to parent/community within 48 hours Monday-Friday.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reply to the parent community within 48 hours, Monday-Friday. • Respond to parents with a timeline if you need an extended time line to gather information/respond. • Inform parents when you are taking extended leave.
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues that require a deeper level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone. • Ensure that all communication is respectful, accurate and inquiring and not personal in nature. • Ensure that communication is a genuine exchange of information and ideas about the child’s wellbeing/or learning. • Expect a reply to electronic communication within 48 hours Monday-Friday.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed as required when any changes to the Department for Education policies relevant to this procedure are made.

7. Definitions and abbreviations

DfE – Department for Education.

8. Associated documents

Raising a Complaint with DECD - <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/feedback-and-complaints/raising-complaint-department-education>

Parent complaints and grievance procedures - <http://www.paringpkps.sa.edu.au/school-policy-2/>

9. References

[Social media for schools and preschools policy](#)

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/operations-and-management/communications/social-media-and-web/cybersafety/school-resources>

Please refer to our code of conduct policy