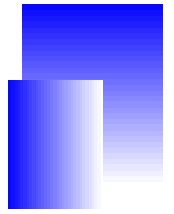




Blanchetown Primary School

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Be Respectful, Be Honest, Be Kind, Be the Best You Can Be

Communication Policy

including Grievance Procedure

Rationale

A positive school culture of trust and care is built upon the effective partnership between home and school. Critical to this partnership is a commitment to open, honest and timely communication with shared expectations and responsibilities. In promoting respectful and constructive communication as a key element of conflict management, we strengthen this partnership further to value each other's contributions and work effectively together for the betterment of our students' wellbeing and learning outcomes.

Objectives

This Communication Policy has been developed to:

- ☑ Clearly articulate the School's commitment to communication as the basis for a positive partnership between home and school
- ☑ Acknowledge the benefits and shortcomings of contemporary electronic communication methods and establish clear expectations for both home and school in relation to their use
- ☑ Provide clear expectations and instructions for communication between carers, the school and staff at Blanchetown Primary School.
- ☑ Promote efficient means of communication between stakeholders which maintains safe workplace expectations and supports staff to effectively balance work and home life.
- ☑ Provide a clear process for the expression of grievances.

Implementation

Blanchetown Primary School, in our commitment to maintain effective communication with stakeholders, currently use a variety of strategies to support clear and timely communication. While email and other electronic means of communication are both efficient and environmentally friendly, and can be a most convenient method for parents/carers unable to attend the site during regular school hours, we value face-to-face and telephone conversations to maintain the personal element of the home-school relationship.

Current methods of effective communication include:

Staff to Staff:

- Calendar, reset room whiteboard,
- Weekly staff and/or PLC meetings
- Weekly email/emails
- Meeting Minutes
- Newsletter and notes home
- Microsoft Teams

School to Students:

- Classroom notices/whiteboards
- Newsletter
- Face-to-face messages
- Learning feedback

School to Parents/Carers:

- Interviews, traffic lights and semester written reports
- SeeSaw
- Classroom notices
- Displays and posters
- Newsletter and associated flyers
- Blanchetown Primary School Facebook Page
- Website
- Text from school mobile
- Email
- Phone calls
- Student diaries year 3-6, reading journals
- Face-to-face meetings, informal and formal

School to Community:

- Newsletter
- Blanchetown Primary School Facebook Page
- Front office posters
- Website
- Governing Council members



1. Responsibilities of all staff, parents and carers

When communicating in relation to school and/or student matters, it is an expectation that all members of staff and parents/caregivers will:

- Maintain respectful and constructive communication that describes the concern, communicates the facts and is focused on understanding the problem and finding a solution.
- Keep electronic communication brief and informative.
- Address issues that require a level of detailed discussion in person
- Respect the confidentiality of messages containing personal or sensitive information; and do not forward or pass on this information to a third party without permission.
- The sharing of any electronic content to anyone else from devices or platforms is unacceptable.

2. Expectations of staff - general

When communicating with parents/caregivers, we will:

- Communication with families will be between 8.30am – 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.
- Aim to reply to parent communication within 24 hours.
- Address sensitive issues or matters in person at a mutually agreed time; and never raise or discuss matters of this nature in electronic communication.
- Notify parents/caregivers of any dates of extended leave, where direct communication will not be available.
- Not respond to offensive or abusive messages; and forward any such messages immediately to the Principal.

3. Expectations of staff – specific forums

• NEWSLETTER:

Use the newsletter as the primary method of communication for whole of school relevance, published in Weeks 3, 6 and 9 of each term, posted on the School's website and distributed via the email distribution list.

• SEESAW:

Use the school SeeSaw app for any short notices between newsletter publications, reminders or class/individual parent/carer correspondence, as required.

- Teachers will check SeeSaw daily, at a time most convenient to their routine
- Currently our school's Play Centre Coordinator is posting weekly as she has the opportunity

• FACEBOOK PAGE

Use the Facebook page for community notices

• EMAIL

The school will hold an email distribution list, telephone directory and postal address log of all parents/carers which

will be used primarily for whole-school communication, particularly of large documents or Department-wide correspondence. This forum will largely be used by the Principal and administrative/finance staff to communicate with parents, as required.

4. Expectations of parents and carers

When communicating about school matters, we will:

- Communicate in person, email, approved school channels and platforms, and phone (including the approved school mobile phone, as required)
- Contact the Front Office for urgent matters or matters that require an immediate response; and direct administrative correspondence to the school's email address:
dl.0571.info@schools.sa.edu.au
- Keep the school administration and class teacher up-to-date with current contact details, including phone, email addresses and people who have authority to collect students
- Convey messages with clear language, honesty and respect, upholding the school values and expected conduct at all times
- Arrange a time to meet with staff face-to-face to discuss sensitive or complex issues (a request via email briefly outlining your concerns and to arrange a meeting is appropriate prior to a deeper discussion)
- Understand staff must prioritise teaching and building a positive learning environment during school hours, and will attend to emails and phone messages at a convenient time during the school day (8.30-4.30)
- Consider school hours when expecting a response and understand that depending on the nature of the message, the staff member will determine the best method of reply and respond accordingly (ideally within 24 hours, as required by this policy)
- Read the newsletter and notes sent home including via See Saw or text
- Check children's bags or ask for any correspondence from school.

5. Responsibilities of students

In line with the school values, students will communicate with peers, staff and their family in relation to school and learning, in a manner that is timely, clear, respectful and honest. They will:

- Convey information accurately, through the telling of facts
- Pass school correspondence to their parents/carers on the day of issue (flyers, notes, newsletters)
- Use communication channels and devices for the intended purpose, and as permitted by the school policies
- Report any worries, concerns or incidents to an adult at school as soon as possible throughout the school day, particularly, in order to seek support to manage grievances



6. Grievance Procedure

At Blanchetown Primary School, we welcome feedback from parents/carers. We understand that there are times when concerns or complaints may be raised. This procedure is designed to assist in resolving any concerns or complaints.

At Blanchetown Primary School:

- All Blanchetown staff will respect the right of parents/carers to make a complaint.
- All Blanchetown staff will manage complaints in a respectful, confidential, impartial and timely manner.
- All participants in a concern or complaint process will be treated fairly and with mutual respect.

Contact the Classroom Teacher or Staff Member Involved

Make an appointment with the classroom teacher to discuss a concern or complaint.

The classroom teacher will:

- Listen to the complaint
- Identify and discuss possible solutions and timelines to resolve the concern or complaint
- Follow up on actions and ensure that the parent/carer is satisfied with the outcome

If not resolved



Contact the Principal, Delegated Leader or Manager

If a concern or complaint is unresolved, please make an appointment to discuss this with the Principal.

The Principal will:

- Investigate the concern or complaint and gather relevant information from the staff, students and parents involved.
- Determine the most appropriate way to fairly and promptly solve the concern or complaint.
- Document the process and outcome.
- Communicate the outcome to all parties concerned within 15 days of receipt of the complaint.

If not resolved



Contact the Customer Feedback Unit

Phone: 1800 677 435 or contact CFU online

If not resolved



SA Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 182 150

Policy Review

The school council and staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Communication Policy. Staff informally review/update annually and track recommendations and/or suggestions; with a formal review in collaboration with Governing Council and the community every 3 years. The Parent Survey feedback, when conducted, is also used to inform this policy, as relevant.

Date policy last ratified:

Date of next policy:

Relevant resources

Department for Education complaint management procedure and associated resources:

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/departments/feedback-and-complaints/raising-complaint-department>

