

Koorana Primary School

Communication Policy



Communication Policy

As a parent or carer, you play a vital role in your child's learning. Building a positive relationship between home and school plays an important part in the education of your child. Effective communication is the key to the success of this relationship. At Koorana Primary School we foster a culture that promotes open and respectful communication and supports collaboration between staff, students and families.

Our school is committed to responding promptly and helpfully to your enquiries, concerns, suggestions and compliments. Our school is also able to provide information about support services for children and families, special programs and the Department of Education's policies and procedures.

In order to build trust between home and school, it is important that every staff member and parent demonstrates a high standard of personal behaviour and models our school values of: Respect, Honesty, Trust, Citizenship and Excellence.

A child is not necessarily being dishonest when their story conflicts with another or when the teacher's perspective does not match what you have been told at home. Children see the world through their own limited experiences, which colours their perceptions. Adult perceptions are balanced with greater life experiences. Listen to your child as they tell you their 'reality', but remember that a different 'reality' may possibly exist elsewhere. Open and honest discussion with school staff is essential in these situations.

School Values

Safe:

We provide a secure and nurturing environment where students can thrive academically and socially, fostering trust, well-being, and a sense of belonging within our school community. Safe encompasses physical safety, emotional well-being, and a sense of security.

Motivated to Achieve:

Embodies our commitment to inspiring and empowering students to pursue their goals with enthusiasm, determination, and a strong work ethic, fostering a culture of excellence and personal growth.

Respect:

We accept the importance of treating others, ideas, and our environment with kindness and consideration. We promote a harmonious, inclusive, and supportive school community where diversity and culture areas celebrated, and everyone's voice is heard and valued.

Trust:

We are fair, trustworthy, reliable, and courageous when dealing with others and ourselves. We create a strong sense of community where students and staff can depend on one another, fostering the importance of reliability, honesty, and integrity.



What parents can expect

- A safe and inclusive environment for all members of our community;
- Respect and confidentiality when discussing concerns;
- Regular communication from the school, including electronic newsletters and Dojo notices via the App;
- Communication that is appropriate, fair, easy to read and in a timely manner;
- Notification of school events and important updates;
- Notification of any significant or ongoing matter concerning your child;
- Opportunities to meet with staff by appointment;
- Flexible communication e.g. email access to teacher if unable to attend an appointment;
- Access to affiliated services, e.g. school psychology service, school chaplaincy service;
- Opportunities to provide feedback through surveys;
- Written reports about your child's progress and achievement each Semester;
- A timely response to your communication, including an acknowledgement within two working days.

Our staff will find a time to talk with you when they can give you their full attention. Often the best way to achieve this is to schedule an appointment. While staff are in class or carrying out other duties, they may not be able to speak with you immediately. Our staff are not expected to return calls or respond to emails during evenings and weekends or provide private phone numbers.

Our expectations of parents

- Use appropriate and respectful language with all students, staff and families whilst on school grounds;
- Help all students to feel safe by modelling positive and respectful behaviour towards others;
- Show awareness that a child's perception may be different from another child or an adult due to developmental maturity;
- Understand that children may and do behave differently at home and school;
- Model positive behaviour when using social media;
- Raise concerns regarding other students in school with school staff.

Social Media

Social media platforms are increasingly being used by adults and children to engage in inappropriate behaviour. Koorana Primary School considers the use of social media being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of our children and school community. Inappropriate content about our school, staff members or students that displays incorrect information, misrepresents the school, displays objectionable content, incites violence or threatens the safety of students or staff will not be tolerated and may be escalated to the eSafety Commissioner.

The School does have an active Facebook page, which is regularly updated with our celebrations and reminders.



School Board

The School Board oversees the school's strategic direction and governance of the school. Queries about the strategic direction of the school are best addressed through contact with a member of the Board. The Board meet once each term and the members are listed on the school website. Parents wishing to contact the Board should do so via the school office. The Board communicate with the community through the school's communication platforms. Such communication may include:

- The Annual Report – placed on the website in Term 1 each year;
- The Business Plan – formulated every three years;
- Scheduled meetings and minutes.

Parents and Citizens (P&C) Association

If you have an interest in P&C matters, such as fundraising or social activities, we encourage you to attend a P&C meeting or contact a current P&C member. Volunteers from the P&C provide vital support to the school through fundraising and promoting a positive image of the school in the wider community. They also assist in the running of a number of school events such as sports carnivals and social events for both students and families.

Class Dojo

Connect is the Department of Education's online platform for communication between staff, students and parents and our main form of communication. All parents are encouraged to join Connect in order to receive notices and view weekly updates from classroom and specialist teachers. This may take the form of a message, photos of classroom activities or examples of your child's work. Parents can also use Connect to communicate directly with class teachers or to comment on notices relevant to their child's learning experiences. Parents needing support to access Connect should see office staff.

SMS (Message U)

SMS is used to notify parents of whole school events, updates and reminders. This is also used for emergency updates such as school closures. Parents will receive a notification if their child is absent without an explanation and can use this service to contact the school office. It is imperative that your mobile phone number is up to date with the school.

Website www.kooranaps.wa.edu.au

Parents are encouraged to check our website regularly to access school information including policies, calendar dates, newsletters.

Letters

Hard copies are only provided for excursions, consent and payment forms. Parents requiring hard copies of other sources of information need to make a request at the school office.

Where to start:

Before contacting your school with an enquiry or concern you may want to:
talk with family and friends to clarify your enquiry/concern;
write down your enquiry/concern;
make a list of all relevant information specific to your enquiry/concern;
take a support person with you if you feel nervous about talking about your enquiry/concern.
The next step is to make an appointment with the most appropriate person at our school.
Alternatively, you can write to the school. Enquiries/concerns received in writing are responded to in writing. The nature of your enquiry will determine who the most appropriate person is for you to speak to at the school.

Communicate with your child's teacher regarding:

- Academic, social or emotional progress or concerns;
- General classroom and playground behaviour;
- Social or emotional wellbeing;
- Attendance;
- Assessments and reporting;
- Medical issues that change or arise;
- Changes to family circumstances;
- Absences.

In your discussion with the teacher, give all the relevant information and discuss all possible outcomes for addressing your enquiry/concern. This will increase the likelihood of agreeing on an option that can be achieved with input from you, the teacher and your child.

Communicate with the Principal/Deputy Principal regarding:

- Matters relating to access or custody for your child;
- Matters requesting information from the school (e.g. subpoenas);
- Dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school including the conduct of a teacher or another member of the school staff;
- Conflict with other families, that is impacting on your child's wellbeing or education;
- An enquiry/concern that you were unable to resolve with the teacher.

The Principal/Deputy Principal will need time to discuss your enquiry concern with all relevant parties but you can contact the school for progress updates. Your enquiry will be managed according to Department of Education policy and procedures.

Communicate with School Office staff regarding:

- Changes in contact details;
- Administration of medications at school;
- Absences, including planned absences (Please note there is an approval process for any vacations planned during the school term);
- Collection arrangements - if someone different will be collecting your child.

Complaints Handling

It is important the correct procedures are followed in times of anxiety or concern to ensure that all parties are heard and for harmonious solutions to be reached. Seeking information as early as possible can solve many problems. Staff at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness. If you need assistance to resolve a concern or complaint, school office staff can help you to obtain information about school policies and procedures, direct letters of enquiry or register a concern with the school.

You should provide the following information when making a complaint:

- your name and contact details;
- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint;
- the nature of the complaint; and
- what you consider is needed to resolve the matter.

School Level Resolution

Stage 1: Discussion with staff member

Contact the class teacher or other relevant staff member to discuss your complaint. You can make an appointment through the school office. The staff will work with you to resolve the problem. Try to stay calm. Even if you don't feel it, being calm will help to get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you. You can have a friend or adviser present during any meeting or discussion with school staff.

Stage 2: Review or investigation at the school level

If the concern is not resolved, the Principal or Deputy Principal will work with you and the staff member to resolve the problem. You may wish to formalise your complaint. To do this, you may write to the Principal who will acknowledge the complaint with a written reply as soon as possible, even if a resolution is not available at this stage. In all cases, you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

The Principal or Deputy Principal will consider the issue and identify what action is to be taken and by when, and will clarify the process if a formal complaint is to proceed. The Principal may seek the support of the Director of Education or other relevant regional staff.

You should be aware that when a complaint is made in writing about the conduct of an individual staff member, that staff member will receive documentation of the substance of the complaint and, in most cases, the name of the complainant.

Complaints will not be progressed should it be judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged to not warrant further action and you will be advised of this decision.

Regional Level Resolution

Stage 3: Review or investigation at the regional level

You may contact the South Metropolitan Education Regional Office if a resolution is not reached at the school level, or if there is a valid reason for not raising your concern with the school directly. Such complaints may be redirected to the local level if deemed appropriate. School office staff can provide parents with the required contact details.


Central Resolution

Stage 4: Consideration by the Director General

The next level for consideration of an unresolved concern is to write to the Director General of the Department of Education. You may lodge a written description of your concern and the steps you have taken to achieve an outcome. The Director General may appoint someone to review your concern.

Stage 5: Independent Review

Your final recourse for your unresolved concern is an independent review by the State Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's approach is independent and impartial while observing procedural fairness and strict confidentiality at all times.





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