



Glenelg Primary School

Communication Policy

Rationale

Glenelg Primary School is committed to open, honest and timely communication that is respectful and constructive. We believe that this will strengthen relationships, build positive partnerships, and enhance the well-being and learning opportunities of our students.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

1. Establish clear expectations for staff and parents about communication at Glenelg Primary School.
2. Acknowledge the potential benefits of open and easily accessed communication via electronic methods and also understand the possible shortcomings.
3. Clearly articulate the school's commitment to the positive use of communication.
4. Implement a policy that ensures a safe workplace for staff and supports them to effectively balance their work and home life.

Procedures for Implementation

Electronic communication is an environmentally friendly way of communication that can save time when used effectively. It is acknowledged that it is a convenience for working parents and provides an avenue for communication outside of regular 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

Diaries will continue to be used daily as a communication tool between home and school for Years 3-6.

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

- a) Electronic communication works best when it is positive. Avoid sending negative or confrontational messages. Anything said electronically should always be something that could/would be said in person to the recipient.
- b) Electronic communication should always be respectful and constructive. If it relates to a concern or problem, it should be focused on understanding the problem and finding a solution.
- c) Electronic communication is best kept brief and informative. Issues requiring a deeper detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone.

- d) Make sure the purpose of your message is clear. The purpose needs to be stipulated – e.g. this email is for information..... this email requires action by.....
- e) The tone or intent of electronic communication can be easily misunderstood, especially when sarcasm or humour is involved. Please be conscious of this and request a phone or face-to-face meeting if you have a concern.
- f) Group messages have the potential to waste the time of many, so please ensure they are sent just to people for whom they are relevant.
- g) When messaging a group, staff and parents must ensure they do not disclose the email addresses of others without permission to do so.
- h) Personal information about a third party (staff, student, or parent) cannot be discussed electronically. Similarly, messages containing personal or sensitive information should not be passed on to a third party without the person's permission.
- i) Staff and parents are not expected to respond to contentious electronic communication that requires ongoing dialogue. A face-to-face meeting should be arranged in this circumstance.

Expectations of parents

- a) Please 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 very unlikely to see the message during the day, and/or the teacher may not be at work that day.
- b) Please keep all contacts professional.
- c) Remember to respect staff personal time, including weekends, holidays, sick days, etc.
- d) Parents should not send messages and expect an immediate response. In most circumstances, staff will aim to respond within two school / working days (24 hours - excluding weekends and holidays).
- e) Please don't seek to discuss in detail your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioural and social issues via electronic communication. These are best addressed over the phone or in person.
- f) Please remember that electronic messages are not necessarily confidential and can be subject to FOI (Freedom of Information) regulations. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or personal contact.
- g) It is the responsibility of every parent to keep the school administration up-to-date with current email addresses, phone numbers, and street addresses.
- h) It is expected that parents keep themselves well informed of school information via the school newsletter, emails, Community Portal and FROG-GO.
- i) Messages that are intended for the office staff should be sent directly to the school's email address: dl.1017info@schools.sa.edu.au
- j) Depending on the nature of the message, you may not receive an electronic reply at all as staff members will determine how best to contact parents: by electronic message, by phone, or to schedule a face-to-face meeting.
- k) Parents can access the Community Portal or FROG-GO App for academic reports and other school information.

Expectations of Staff

- a) Staff will aim to reply to a parent communication within two working days.
- 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 teachers to read or send emails outside of their school hours.
- d) Electronic communication should not be used to discuss a sensitive issue that has not been raised by the parent or previously discussed with the parent.
- e) Staff have been advised not to respond to offensive or abusive messages and should forward them to leadership instead.
- f) When on extended leave, teaching staff will inform parents of the relevant dates.
- g) Teachers develop a one-page overview of planned learning in each subject area for each term; this is provided to parents electronically (via FROG-GO) by the end of Week Two of each term.