



**Flinders Park Primary School**

# **Communication Policy**

## **2024**

Draft Development	September 2023
Staff Review	February 2024
School board Review	February and March 2024
School Board Endorsement	18 March 2024
Review Date	2026

## ***Preamble***

At Flinders Park Primary School, we are committed to providing quality education to ensure our students have success for today and are prepared for tomorrow. Our aim is that all students learn within a safe, inclusive and caring learning environment. We value working together in partnership with parents and families to achieve positive student learning outcomes. Effective two-way communication is integral to this partnership.

## ***Policy Statement***

Communication will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner to inform and communicate with our school community. All communications will be underpinned by considerations of appropriate privacy and confidentiality principles.

## ***Guidelines***

Parents should be comfortable contacting staff members and should feel that they are being listened to. Parental concerns should be addressed in a timely and professional manner.

Flinders Park Primary School uses various forms of communication. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the forms of communication and their uses. These guidelines outline methods of communication that Flinders Park Primary School expects all staff and parents/carers to use when communicating.

### ***What parents can expect***

**Connect:** Connect is a learning, support and communication platform developed by the Department of Education WA for staff, students and parents in public schools. **Connect is the preferred communication platform at Flinders Park for whole school and class communication.** Full details are available on the school website: <https://www.flindersparkps.wa.edu.au/page/47/Connect>

**Website:** The Flinders Park Primary School website has additional information for parents. Newsletters are available, plus an up-to-date calendar of school events. The website also contains access to documents such as the Annual Report and the Business Plan

**Newsletter:** published three times a term and distributed to families by a CONNECT message. The newsletter is posted on the school's website and back issues are also available.

**Email:** Staff and parents/guardians may use email to make contact regarding students. Parents and guardians need to be aware that the core work of teachers is teaching, and they are unlikely to reply to emails while they are teaching. Email is an important form of communication to parents/guardians so please ensure the school is kept up to date with your email contact details.

**Phone calls:** Flinders Park Primary School will contact parents/guardians by phone in the case of accident or emergency. Sometimes, phone calls will be made regarding less urgent matters.

**SMS:** Will be used for notification of unexplained absences, emergencies, incident notification, delays and cancellations.

**Facebook:** Facebook posts will promote school events and celebrate achievements.

**Face-to-face:** Opportunities for face to face communication includes Term 1 classroom meetings, Term 3 Open Night, school tours and information sessions. Appointments may be made for face-to-face meetings with staff about specific issues.

**Assemblies:** Usually held fortnightly. Classroom Items are presented and Merit Certificates awarded. Past and future events are also discussed.

**Student Reports:** Issued twice yearly via Connect. Semester 1 reports are issued at the end of Term Two and Semester 2 reports are issued at the end of Term Four.

**Paper:** Letters are used to inform parents and guardians about some planned events. Any event requiring a signed permission slip will be sent on paper.

**IMPORTANT: Urgent correspondence should be communicated through the office.** The core business of teachers is to teach students, so they often don't have an opportunity to check their email until late in the day.

Where possible, parent communications will be acknowledged within one working day and responded to in full within three working days. A longer time frame may be given as needed. Staff may not respond within this timeframe if they are away or the school is closed for school holidays. Staff are encouraged to use out of office messaging on their email.

Many of the teachers at Flinders Park Primary School will exceed these expectations, for example by using Connect to share examples of day-to-day learning. However, the expectations above are the minimum expectations for all staff members.

### **What parents cannot expect**

- School staff returning calls or emails after work hours;
- Messages to be answered in the evenings, weekends or school holidays; or
- Access to teachers' private phone numbers or emails.

### **How and who should I communicate with?**

#### **When should you contact your *child's teacher*?**

- Changes in family circumstances;
- Medical issues that change or arise. The teacher will let you know if this also needs to be communicated to the school office;
- Safety issues or changes in behaviour at home;
- If you have concerns about your child's academic or social progress;
- If your child is experiencing emotional issues that may relate to school, such as not wanting to come to school;
- When homework takes much more time than expected, or your child is unable to do most of the homework independently; or
- If your child has head lice or a contagious disease.

#### **When you have last minute information for the teacher:**

- Send a note with your child; or
- Call the office and leave a message for the teacher.

#### **Communication that interferes with teaching and learning**

- Speaking to the teacher disrespectfully or angrily, especially in front of your child or other students;
- 'Door Stop' Meetings when other students are in the room. The teacher has duty of care to any student in the room and can't step outside, making privacy difficult. Please don't interrupt a teacher when they are teaching.
- Using social media to make negative comments about the school or to contact staff members. We welcome feedback at Flinders Park Primary School, but request that it be made through the appropriate channels; and
- Talking to other parents rather than discussing issues directly with staff members. Remember that you are the model of how you want your child to communicate.

#### **What information should be communicated to the *school office*?**

- Absence due to sickness and planned absences (such as medical appointments);
- Any issues related to custody or access;
- When you can't keep a scheduled appointment;
- Changes in address or contact details; and
- While the school will not endorse holidays during school term, advance notification will be appreciated.

#### **When is a face-to-face meeting appropriate?**

Electronic communication, such as email, is highly convenient and can be used for short, non-urgent and positive forms of communication.

However, electronic communication is not appropriate for more complex or emotional situations. In these cases, parents should request a face-to-face meeting so that your issues can be given the time and attention that they deserve. If in doubt, please schedule a meeting.

#### **When should I contact the Deputy Principal or Principal?**

For most discussions, the classroom teacher will be parents' first point of contact. However, where conversations involve conflict, other families or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school, a member of the school leadership

team should be involved. Either a staff member or a parent may request the involvement of the school leadership team at any time. Flinders Park Primary school currently has two Deputy Principals. One works mostly in Kindergarten – Year 2. One works mostly with Years 3-6. Ask at the front office which Deputy Principal is the appropriate contact for you issue.

### **Respect is important**

To increase mutual respect, remember:

- Teachers will make mistakes; they're human, too.
- Teachers have their own families and lives; please respect their privacy.
- We're all on the same team - your child's support team! Let's work together.
- Use age-appropriate language around children during drop-off and pick-up times;
- Recognise that we won't always agree, but we will listen.
- Speak positively in front of your child.
- Please understand that speaking and writing to staff members disrespectfully is not acceptable. Disrespectful communication will be referred to the Principal who will follow the Department of Education guidelines contained in "Connect and Respect".

### **Guidelines for contact if you have concerns that haven't been resolved**

We will do our best to ensure that your child's educational needs are being met. We aim to create a supportive, motivating and safe learning environment. However, if you feel that a concern regarding your child's progress or learning environment has not been resolved to your satisfaction, we'd like the opportunity to investigate further to ensure that we are meeting and supporting your child's learning needs and goals.

If you have any concerns that haven't been resolved by the teacher, we request that you contact the school office to discuss the matter with the school leadership team.

### **Issues arising between students and families**

Parents should refrain from approaching the children of other families or their parents with a school related or non-school related issue on the school grounds.

These matters must be addressed to the Deputy Principal (in the first instance) or Principal and not be discussed with others.

### **Communication Strategy with the Wider Community**

Flinders Park Primary School primarily uses a variety of means to communicate with the wider community. Primarily, we use our website and Facebook to promote the achievements of our school and promote a positive public image that inspires confidence. We also use banners, brochures, leaflets and information packs.

Flinders Park Primary school also submits items to the Department of Education for promotion and endeavours to use local newspapers to communicate with the wider community. Articles are submitted to external agencies to promote the school's activities and to highlight the benefits of attending Flinders Park Primary School.

Communication on behalf of the school with any external bodies, including the media, must be approved by the Principal.

### **CONCLUSION**

Flinders Park Primary School community believes that the strong relationships formed with the parents/carers of students are essential for every child's success. By working together in active partnership with each other, we provide students with the best environment for success for today and preparation for tomorrow.

## Communication Mode Guideline - Parents

Communication Type/Mode	What information is here?	Frequency/Description/Details	Audience	Staff responsible
CONNECT	<b>This is our primary method of communication.</b>	As needed	School Community	All staff
CONNECT - School Space	Updates and reminders for parents regarding important dates for the whole school or year levels.	As needed	School Community	School Admin Lead Teachers
CONNECT – Class Space	Class specific messages. These may be about class specific events, updates, learning activities or requests for assistance.	At least 3 times a term	Parents Students (older grades)	Individual class teachers
CONNECT – your child	Reports	Every Semester Reports remain available for the duration of a child's attendance at <b>any</b> government school. Parents are encouraged to download reports for individual archive.	Parents	Admin team
Website	Comprehensive information about our school School Board Annual Report Business Plan Enrolment information And more...	24/7 <a href="http://flindersparkps.wa.edu.au">Flinders Park Primary School (flindersparkps.wa.edu.au)</a>	All staff, parents, guardians, wider community	School Office Staff
Newsletter	Key information and upcoming dates Celebrations and innovations Stories/Achievements Significant events Staffing changes	3 per term Key information for parents  Distributed via – CONNECT and the website	School Community	School Staff
Schools Online	School details, Annual reports, generalised student results and details of enrolment local-intake area.	24/7 <a href="http://Schools Online Department of Education Western Australia (det.wa.edu.au)">Schools Online Department of Education Western Australia (det.wa.edu.au)</a>	School community, Wider community	Admin Team
Email	Teacher – Parent communication Communication with Office Staff Informing parents of awards or merit certificates	As required <a href="mailto:flinderspark.ps@education.wa.edu.au">flinderspark.ps@education.wa.edu.au</a>	Parents and guardians	Email Author
Facebook Pages	Flinders Park PS Celebrations of school events Celebrations of achievements	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/flindersparkprimaryschoolalbany">https://www.facebook.com/flindersparkprimaryschoolalbany</a>	School community, Wider community	Marketing Manager Principal
	Flinders Park PS P & C This page run and maintained by the Flinders Park P&C. Event management Promotions and Fundraisers	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/FlindersParkPC">https://www.facebook.com/FlindersParkPC</a>	School community, Wider community	P & C President
Parent Social Media Groups	Various	Some classes and year groups have social media support groups set up by parents. Flinders Park Primary PS supports parents supporting each other in a <b>positive</b> way. Important points to note: These support groups are not official Flinders Park PS communication. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators of these groups should notify the Principal of their existence, make these groups PRIVATE and make guidelines for use clear and obvious to users.</li> <li>• Guidelines should include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No negative comments to be posted about staff members.</li> <li>○ Issues should be raised directly with the teacher or school and not posted for comment on social media groups.</li> <li>○ Any information posted should be consistent with information circulated by Flinders Park Primary PS.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
SMS	Unexplained absences School emergency notification	Mass communication for Incident Notification, delays, cancellations	Parents and guardians	School Office Staff

Paper	Planned events – Letters to inform and permission slips	As required – usually only when written signature is required or the message is very important. Billing reminders, NAPLAN results and enrolment Hard copy. All paper notes need to be authorised by the Pirncipal. Electronic messaging is preferred to support our sustainability focus.	Parents and guardians	Admin Team
Face to Face	Term 1 Classroom Meeting Term 3 Open Night School tours Kindergarten Information sessions Individual meetings with teachers	Some events are held regularly Some events are held as needed	School community, Wider community	Teachers School Admin Team
Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each class presents an item and runs the assembly</li> <li>Merit certificates awarded</li> </ul>	Each class (PP-6) will have 1 assembly per year. Kindergarten classes attend assemblies (from term 2) but are not required to host an assembly	School community and families,	Classes School Admin Team
Canteen	Hunger Busters Canteen is run by the P&C. Place your child's lunch order online.	Menu and Online ordering link available on school website	Canteen staff	
Phone Call	Child specific information Accident/emergency	As required 08 98925200	Parents and guardians	School Office Team Teachers