Communication Policy

Wellard Village
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wellard Village Primary School Communication Policy

Purpose

This Communication policy is to inform the Wellard Village community of how we will effectively communicate with parents, carers, and the wider school network.

At WVPS, we believe in developing and maintaining positive relationships and strong partnerships with our school community and working collaboratively with staff and families. Effective communication is the key to ensuring all stakeholders are informed, and active participants in the educational journey. At WVPS we believe that parents/carers form a crucial component of the three-way partnership that maximises student learning and enhances the school experience. Building a positive relationship between home and school plays an integral role in the education of your child.

Communication Processes

At WVPS, effective communication is a priority, and we value sharing necessary information with our community to inform effective decision-making. WVPS is committed to using communication processes that aim to build a positive learning environment for students, staff, and parents/carers.

School Communication with parents:

- **Website:** Our website will be the main place to find information out about our school. This includes policies, enrolments, Business Plan and Annual Reports, parent handbooks, term planners, upcoming events, and practical information for parents/carers.
- **Newsletter:** Our newsletter will be published twice a term and sent via email to families.
- **Compass:** This is our main platform for communication between home and school. Parents may receive notifications about school events, excursions, and school updates. It is also used to communicate absences, with parents able to submit and explain student absences directly through the app.
- **Seesaw:** The main purpose of Seesaw is to document the educational learning journey in each classroom.
- **QKR:** QKR will be our platform for all school payments for voluntary contributions, incursions, excursions, swimming, school photos and interschool events. Hard copy notes will be sent home with each event.
- **School email:** Wellardvillage.PS@education.wa.edu.au is used for communicating essential information with parents/carers and wider community.

Urgent contact with Parents/Carers during the day:

Parents or carers may need to be contacted during the school day for a range of reasons, such as emergency situations. It is therefore important that contact information is kept up to date with the school office.
If we are unable to contact the main carer/s in an emergency or urgent situation we will attempt to call the other contacts provided. If no one is able to be contacted, the school will be required to contact the police and/or Child Protection and Family Support Services.

Teacher Communication with parents/carers:

- **Classroom Information Packs- Term One:** a parent/carer information package will be sent parents/carers at the beginning of the year key information to a successful year and how the class will operate.
- **Three-way interviews- Term One:** our school will close for a full a day in Term One, to allow you, your child, and the teacher to meet. This will be student led and the child will share their progress and then as a collective you will plan some future learning goals.
- **Learning Journey- Term Three:** our school will be open for an afternoon where you can come and experience all our classes and specialist classes. This will be a chance for children to showcase what they have learnt over the year.
- **Parent-Teacher interviews- Term Four:** our school will close for a full a day in Term Four, to allow you and your child's teacher to meet. The focus of this meeting will be on progress and goals for the next year.

- **Work Sample Folders- each term:** your child's work sample folder will come home at the end of each term. This is a chance for you to review your child's progress throughout the year. The folder will need to be returned to the classroom teacher at the beginning of each term in week one.
- **Parent/Carer- Teacher meetings for students with learning adjustments:** teachers will contact individual parents/carers if they require a meeting to discuss student learning as well as students who are placed on an Individual Education Plan.
- **Seesaw:** the main purpose of Seesaw is to document your child's learning journey. Staff will regularly post classroom updates, sharing learning intentions for students as well as individual student work and photographs. This provides parents/carers with immediate insight into their child's learning.

Professional Communication Practices

When communicating with parents/carers, staff members:

- Approach discussion in an open, courteous, and respectful manner.
- Listen attentively to the concerns of parents/carers, seeking clarification where necessary.
- Present their own or the school's point of view in professional and objective terms.
- Seek support from Administration or colleagues if needed.
- Take into consideration cultural and personal sensitivities and protocols when dealing with the school community.
- Make available materials and information for a parent/carer who lives apart from the child/ren upon request.

<u>Parent Communication with the school</u>

What to communicate with the front office team:

- Planned and unexpected absences (via Compass).
- Any issues related to custody or access/ changes in family circumstances.
- Change in address or contact details (via email).
- Medical issues that change or arise.
- Administration of medication (prescription only).
- If your child has a communicable disease (head lice, chicken pox, etc.).
- Requests for appointments with the Administration Team.
- Changes to drop off and pick up arrangements need to be phoned through prior to 2.40pm, to ensure we can get the message to your child. We highly encourage you to communicate to your child drop off and pick up arrangements, and what to do when you are not where they expect you to be. We encourage a designated meeting spot, to assist late changes.

Students are required to sign mobile phones and other communication devices in at the school office each morning. If parents need to communicate any information to their child/ren during the school day, this should come through the office.

What to communicate with classroom teachers:

- When you have child related good news to share.
- Safety issues or changes in behaviours at home.
- If you have concerns with your child's academic or social progress.
- When you can't keep a scheduled appointment.
- Positive feedback to the teacher- this is always welcomed.

Parents/carers can email a teacher directly or message via Compass to request a parent/carer meeting to discuss any of the above.

During instructional time, staff do not regularly check their emails. Staff usually check before school, whilst on DOTT, or after school and take these opportunities to communicate with families. If you have any urgent messages for your child, these are best phoned through to the office.

Electronic communication, such as an 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/carers should request a face-to-face interview so that your issues can be given the time and attention that they deserve. If in doubt, schedule a meeting.

What parents cannot expect

- School staff returning calls after work hours (4pm) or during school vacation periods.
- Emails to be answered after work hours (4pm) or during school vacation periods.
- Access to teacher's private phone numbers or email addresses.
- Contact through social media.
- Academic discussion with teachers about your child during class learning time, i.e. after 8:30am and before 2:50pm, unless an interview has been prearranged.

Dealing with Issues

There may be times, despite ongoing communication, where members of the school community are unsure, disagree or believe there is a problem or issue concerning their child. Parents/carers should not wait for a small issue to grow into a large one:

- If the matter involves your child or is an issue of everyday class operation, parents need to make an appointment to see their classroom teacher, detailing the reasons for the appointment. The classroom teacher should be the first point of contact.
- If the matter involves operations beyond the classroom or concerns that are not easily resolved, an appointment should be made with an Associate Principal.
- If a resolution is not reached, please contact the front office team to make an appointment with the Principal, who will work with the relevant parties to resolve the problem.

All WVPS staff have the right to work in an environment free from aggression, abuse or intimidation. Our *Connect and Respect* (see appendix) expectations apply to all interactions, whether in person, by phone, email or online. Parents and carers are expected to treat staff with courtesy and respect as they carry out their duties.

Parents and carers must also not approach or communicate with students other than their own to address concerns or incidents. Any issues involving another student should be referred to school staff to manage through the appropriate processes.

Any aggressive, threatening or abusive behaviour from adults towards staff or students will not be tolerated and may result in a **School Prohibition Order** being issued.

Feedback to the School

We value our school community and welcome feedback. The Wellard Village PS – Community Feedback Form is available via the link: https://forms.office.com/r/MZ33bpgg22 or using the below QR code:

Department of Education
GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Shaping the future

Connect and Respect

Every student, staff member, parent or carer has the right to feel safe and be safe in our schools.

We all share a responsibility for providing a safe, supportive and productive environment, free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence.

What we can all expect:

mutual respect

good behaviour

open communication

respect for each other's time

We will not tolerate:

offensive, insulting or aggressive language

malicious or judgemental gossip

using social media disrespectfully

any form of violence

Shared and respectful expectations and values will enable us to work together in the best interests of our children.

Department of Education
GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Shaping the future

Connect and Respect Expectations

Our schools are committed to providing quality education to all students in a safe, inclusive and caring learning environment. We value working together with parents and families as critical partners in student learning outcomes.

Schools draw on the diversity and strengths of local communities to create opportunities to work collaboratively and set directions for students. Building mutually respectful relationships with each local community is fundamental to this.

A school community contains a wide variety of individuals and groups who strive to work together to educate students to become confident, well-educated young people; prepared to lead happy, successful lives and make contributions to local and global communities.

School staff will engage with families to understand the interests, personalities and needs of their children. All students need access to a quality education within safe and secure learning environments, and with the right supports to progress and achieve.

There may be times during your child's schooling when additional support is needed, or issues arise. Your school will support you and your child to productively resolve these issues and we encourage you to raise concerns as early as possible.

Shared and respectful expectations and values will enable us to work together in the best interests of our children.

What parents and carers can expect from our schools

Communication between you and your school is an important part of your child's education. School communities thrive on open communication wherein staff, students, parents and carers have opportunities to share good news, discuss issues and maintain an open dialogue.

Schools are made up of hard-working and dedicated professionals who will listen, care and respond to your concerns and work with you to resolve complaints. We have found over time even the most challenging of circumstances can be worked through. You can expect some of the following from your school:

- regular communication through school approved channels
- reports on your child's progress and achievement
- celebration of your child's achievements
- notification of any serious single issue or ongoing issues concerning your child
- scheduled opportunities to meet with the classroom teacher
- other opportunities to meet with the teacher, by appointment
- updates about important developments in your child's class
- notifications or invitations to school events
- opportunities to provide respectful and productive feedback.

All students need access to a quality education within safe and secure learning environments.

What parents and carers should not expect from our schools

Our staff have families and personal lives too, and like all professionals, work at their best when they have a quality work-life balance. Parents and carers should not expect:

- school staff to return calls after work hours
- emails to be answered in the evenings or weekends
- access to teachers' private phone numbers or emails
- staff to meet with parents and carers, without an appointment, during a school day
- to be allowed on a school site if you have harassed or been aggressive towards school staff.

You should contact your child's school if:

- you have concerns about your child's academic or social progress
- medical issues arise or diagnosis changes
- there are changes in family circumstances
- there are safety issues or changes in behaviour at home
- social issues arise that could impact the safety and welfare of students at the school
- you want to make or reschedule an appointment.

Communication that interferes with teaching and learning

- speaking to staff disrespectfully or aggressively, especially in front of your child or other students
- expecting to meet with staff during the school day without an appointment
- visiting the classroom during the teacher's preparation time before school
- using social media platforms inappropriately and disrespectfully
- malicious or judgmental gossip
- By everyone playing a part in providing safe, positive learning environments and opportunities for our students, we enable them to be the best they can be.

Communication methods

Electronic communication, such as email, is appropriate for short, non-urgent and positive forms of communication. It is not appropriate for more complex or emotional situations. In these cases, parents should request a face-to-face meeting so that issues can be given the time and attention they deserve. If in doubt, speak to your school.

Concerns and complaints

Contact your school as early as possible if you have concerns. If you are not sure who to speak to, you can start with your child's teacher. For some matters, it may be appropriate to talk directly to your child's year coordinator, school administration staff or principal.

If you have approached your child's school but haven't been able to resolve the issue, refer to our complaints process to explore your options education.wa.edu.au/complaints.

Shared and respectful expectations and values will enable us to work together in the best interests of our children.