



# Communication Policy

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*Revision Due: January 2024*

# Communication Policy

## Foreword

Staff, students, parents and the West Byford Primary School community aspire to develop a culture consistent with the school's TRACK agreement. We believe that parents 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 is vital to each child's education.

Parents and carers should be comfortable contacting all staff members and should feel that they are being heard. We are committed to responding promptly and helpfully to all enquiries, concerns, suggestions and compliments with open and honest communication.

The term 'parent' is used interchangeably with carer or the person responsible for the child.

## Communication Methods

The following outlines the methods of communication that West Byford Primary School expects all staff to use when communicating with parents. It also outlines the appropriate and effective ways for parents to communicate with the school.

### 1. ClassDojo [www.classdojo.com](http://www.classdojo.com)

ClassDojo brings school communities together with one place for teachers and families to connect, communicate, and share learning experiences. In addition, all parents are connected to the School Story and their child's Class Story.

### 2. School Website [www.westbyfordprimaryschool.wa.edu.au](http://www.westbyfordprimaryschool.wa.edu.au)

The school website contains important information regarding school operations and policies.

### 3. Outreach+

An automated Short Message Service (SMS) system used by the Department of Education.

### 4. Principal's Pen

A summary of school topics written by the Principal and uploaded to ClassDojo as needed.

### 5. Microsoft Forms Links

All events or tasks that require permission will have an electronic form created on Microsoft Forms (excluding In-Term Swimming), and notifications through ClassDojo, Outreach+ and the website will occur.

### 6. Paper Forms

Where an electronic form cannot be used, paper forms will be sent home with students, and a notification will be placed on ClassDojo.

### 7. Email

Teachers are welcome to provide their direct email addresses if necessary. The school's email address is [westbyford.ps@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:westbyford.ps@education.wa.edu.au).

### 8. Phone

The school can be reached on 9526 6550. Only for all urgent matters or in exceptional circumstances.



## Communication Expectations – Parents/Carers

### What parents can expect:

- Regular communication from the school;
  - For example:
    - Class teacher introductions at the state of the year and any changes throughout the year;
    - Principal's Pen;
    - Class events;
    - School events; and,
    - Whole-school notifications.
- Invitations to attend year-based parent/carer information sessions;
- Invitations to attend school events, including assemblies, morning teas, and carnivals;
- Notification of any serious single concerns or ongoing concerns regarding your child;
- Opportunities to provide feedback (through confidential surveys); and,
- Parent communications acknowledged and responded to within three working days.

### What parents cannot expect:

- Staff returning calls, messages and emails outside of business hours, including during evenings, weekends or vacation periods;
- Access to teachers' private phone numbers or emails; or,
- Staff to listen or respond to disrespectful or aggressive communication from parents.

### Examples of when parents should contact their child's teacher:

- If there are concerns about your child's progress within the classroom or subject;
- Queries regarding any classroom activity; and,
- When they can't keep a scheduled appointment.

### Examples of when parents should contact the Front Office in the first instance:

- Absence notification;
- Queries regarding whole-year activities, such as excursions or incursions; and,
- Queries regarding whole-school activities.

### When a face-to-face meeting is appropriate:

- For complex issues:
  - Electronic communications, such as ClassDojo private messages and emails, are highly convenient and can be used for short, non-urgent and positive forms of communication.
  - Electronic communication is inappropriate for more complex or emotional situations.
  - Please request a face-to-face meeting so that any issues or concerns can be given the time and attention they deserve.
  - It is not appropriate to discuss these issues at pick-up or drop-off times.
  - Appointments are to be made directly with the teacher.



## Communication Expectations – Staff

### **Communication is professional at all times.**

- When communicating with parents, staff members will:
  - Approach the discussion in an open, courteous, and respectful manner.
  - Listen attentively to the concerns of parents, seeking clarification where necessary.
  - Present their own or the school's point of view professionally and objectively.
  - Seek support from their Line Manager if needed.
  - Take into consideration cultural or personal sensitivities and protocols when dealing with the school community.
  - Make available materials and information for a parent who lives apart from their child upon request unless court orders prevent this.

### **School staff prioritise meeting promptly with parents to resolve issues, ensuring appropriate feedback on steps taken by the school.**

- While some matters may be addressed immediately, it is desirable to arrange meetings to address issues at a time and place that is mutually convenient and conducive to a positive outcome.
- Unless unusual circumstances apply, staff will arrange meetings with parents in a timely manner.
- Case conferences are held where appropriate, and notes are recorded and distributed to all participants.

### **All written communication from the school is professional and timely.**

- Where possible, at least two weeks' notice is provided for school events that affect parents or require payment or permission to be granted.
- All written communication is edited to ensure clarity, correct information, spelling, and grammar.
- A copy of all notes that affect more than one class (excluding assemblies) is provided to the Front Office for editing and distribution following approval by the Lin Manager and Event Coordinator.
- Written communication is jargon-free, clear and succinct.
- Major incidents occurring in the classroom or playground are recorded on the Student Information System.



## Resolving Issues or Concerns

West Byford Primary School strives to create a culture where communication between school and home is comprehensive, regular, and helpful, but sometimes issues arise. We recognise that parents and staff want the best for each student and welcome contact from parents when there is an issue.

For most discussions, the classroom teacher will be the parent's first point of contact. However, where conversations involve attendance issues, conflict, other families, or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school, members of the school's Leadership Team (Principal or Deputy Principal) may become involved.

We believe there is a difference between a concern and a complaint. We consider an issue or a concern to be a serious matter but something that can be resolved with assistance from the classroom or specialist teacher through an informal approach. On the other hand, a complaint is a much more serious matter that will be treated as an expression of dissatisfaction and will follow a more detailed resolution process.

It is expected that both parties show mutual respect. Remember, teachers and support staff, like all people, can occasionally make a mistake. However, we are all on the same team – your child's support team.

### School Resolution Hierarchy

1. First Point of Contact: Classroom or Specialist Teacher.
2. Second Point of Contact if the complaint or concern requires further support or is not satisfactorily addressed: Deputy Principal for the year group.
  - a. Note: Year group Deputy Principal will be listed on the 'Staff' tab on the school website.
3. Third Point of Contact if the complaint or concern requires further support or is not satisfactorily addressed: Principal.
4. Fourth Point of Contact if the complaint or concern is not satisfactorily addressed: South Metropolitan Regional Education Office.



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## How West Byford Primary School Will Communicate with Parents

	Website	ClassDojo	Microsoft Forms	Outreach+	Email	Phone
Excursions	X	X	X	X		
In-school activities (requiring permission or payment)	X	X	X	X		
In-school activities (not requiring permission or payment)	X	X				
School Reports					X	
Classroom Notices		X				
Attendance Information				X	X	
News (Principal's Pen)		X				
School and Student Achievements		X				
Last-minute notifications (eg cancellations)		X				
Calendar	X	X				
Notice of School Events	X	X				
Invitations to Whole-School Events	X	X				
Invitation to Class Events		X				
Incidents (eg injury/accident)						X
Behaviour Notification				X		
Uniform Pass				X		
P&C Notifications		X				



# Communication Policy

## How Parents Will Communicate with West Byford

	Website	ClassDojo	Microsoft Forms	Outreach+	Email	Phone
Notify the reason for your child’s absence	X			X	X	X
Notify changes to family circumstances, custody or access					X	
Provide permission to attend an event			X			
When you can’t keep a scheduled appointment		X (directly to the staff member)			X (directly to the staff member)	
Book an appointment with a staff member		X			X	
Notify of a change in contact details					X	
Notify of a change in medical details					X (additional forms may need to be completed)	

