

Paddington Public School
Communication Policy



Parent Teacher communication

Developing productive partnerships between the home and the school is vital in achieving the best possible educational opportunities for your child. A productive partnership is enhanced through good communication and mutual support.

Meet the Teacher

A Meet the Teacher session is held in Week 4 or 5 of Term 1 each year. Parents are invited to meet their child's teacher and learn how the class operates, including classroom expectations, homework, routines and procedures.

Student Progress Meetings

A system of continuous assessment is used to monitor each child's progress. Written reports are issued at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. Parent/Teacher interviews will be conducted at the end of Term 1. Parents are able to book school interviews using the school's booking system. Details are provided to families closer to the date of interviews.

Student Reports

Reports are issued to parents at the end of each Semester. Students are reported on against the relevant achievement standards for each learning area of the NSW Curriculum.

A level of achievement is awarded on a five-point scale, A to E or equivalent.

Students on an individual learning plan are assessed and reported against the learning expectation identified in their Individual Curriculum Plan (ICP).

Each report also includes an overview of the student's social development, commitment to learning and a self-assessment of progress in meeting their own learning goals.

Communication with Teachers

Teachers are available throughout the year for informal meetings and these are to be arranged at times that are suitable to all parties. Please contact your class teacher through the office to arrange a convenient time. For additional information please refer to the sections around teacher and parent communication further in this document.

Curriculum Celebration Days

Twice a year at the end of the term parents are invited to visit classrooms for Curriculum sharing and celebration of learning days. This is a time where parents can witness the incredible learning that happens every day within our classrooms. More information regarding Curriculum Celebration Days is sent to parents closer to the date.

Communication Plan

At Paddington Public School we believe close links between the classroom and the home are vital in ensuring all students achieve to their maximum potential.

Statement of Purpose

At Paddington Public School we believe close links between the classroom and the home are vital in ensuring all students achieve to their maximum potential. The school develops and implements strategies to provide all students with quality education and opportunities to achieve their personal best.

Paddington Public School believes that effective parent engagement is beneficial to successful student learning and wellbeing outcomes. The school is focused on ensuring a meaningful partnership between parents, teachers and school leaders with shared goals regarding maximising outcomes for students.

A significant contributor to a high level of parent engagement and resulting satisfaction with the outcomes for students lies in the way in which the school communicates with parents, staff and the broader community.

This communications policy shows how effective communications can:

- create valuable engagement with parents and the broader community
- contribute to strong relationships between staff, students and parents
- demonstrate the success of our work and that of our students
- ensure that the school is open and transparent in its communication
- build trust, confidence and positive connections.

Vision and Values

Our vision is embedded in everything we do.

At Paddington Public School every student is known, valued and cared for with their individual potential realised.

We develop all students as confident and capable learners able to design, research, troubleshoot and evaluate their learning for themselves and collaboratively, for academic progress, social success and wellbeing.

At Paddington Public School, our core values convey the beliefs that positively influence behaviour and the way we interact with individuals, groups and community. Through our values, we strive for:

- Independent, resilient students who are empowered to take risks
- Committed, effective teachers who understand their students and community and successfully enact the curriculum
- Leaders with integrity who spend time actively listening, communicating and supporting our community
- An engaged and active community who feel welcome and informed

Rationale

We aim to have clear, effective and positive communication to ensure every student is succeeding through:

- building and strengthening partnerships based on mutual respect, dialogue and courtesy
- establishing positive lines of communication between home and school, utilising a broad range of contemporary communication channels
- clear, concise, and cohesive communication managed in a timely manner across all channels, establishing collaborative opportunities for parents to share their opinions and needs and to participate in their child's education
- ensuring a solution focused approach to problems that are raised
- managing confidential information in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations
- acknowledging rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders

Objectives

- Promote the school's vision, values and achievements.
- Ensure parents and staff are fully informed about classroom requirements, events and whole school activities in a timely way.
- Provide parents with the avenue to communicate their concerns with teachers with a clear path to take these further if needed.
- Respond quickly to all requests for information, appointments and when concerns are raised, by acknowledging within one working day and responding within two working days.

Principles

While communication processes will vary in different situations, the ultimate purpose is to ensure a clear and transparent message leading to a shared understanding of expectations.

All communications will be:

- Professional
- Relevant
- Timely
- Consistent
- Accurate

Communication Pathways

(A) School communication to parents/caregivers - **General Information**

Channel	Items	Audience	Lead responsibility
Third Party Portal / App provider - Schoolbytes (Roll out March 2024) Until the roll out occurs these items are managed directly by the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Calendar ● Newsletter once a fortnight ● Absences ● Reports ● Resources including policies ● Daily updates ● Payments ● Parent/Teacher interview bookings 	Parents/Carers Staff Broader community	School administration
P&C News	Newsletter – when required. Class Representatives	Parents/Carers	P&C Executive
Meet the Teacher	Overview of school information presented in Week 5 Term 1 of every year.	Parents/Carers	Teachers
Website	General school information	Parents/Carers	School administration
Kindergarten Orientation	Walk and Talk Tours Term 2 – 3 each year. Kindergarten student transition days and parent information session – Term 4 Kindergarten Handbook	Prospective parents/carers	Kindergarten team, school administration and principal
School Assemblies (Term 1, 2024 the roof restoration of block c has impacted the format of our assemblies.)	Once per fortnight K-6	Students	Teachers

Tell Them from Me Annual Surveys	Students, teachers and parents provide their feedback in annual surveys	Students Teachers Parents/Carers	Leadership Team
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Window into life at Paddington Public School Celebration of school events and achievements 	Parents Students Paddington Public School Staff	School administration and principal

(B) School communication to parents/caregivers regarding - student centred matters

Channel	Details	Response expectations
Email	School administration to utilise school email address as preferred channel. Advise important reminders regarding planned programs and calendar items.	Information on emerging matters will be provided to parents/carers within an appropriate time frame.
Phone	School administration to utilise phone communication if this is considered the most appropriate method of managing the matter OR in the case of an emergency	Information on emerging matters will be provided to parents/carers within an appropriate time frame.
Text Message School bytes - March 2024	Advise important reminders or last-minute changes in programs, calendar events or excursion updates etc.	School administration manager using Sentral messaging system to send a message giving necessary updates as required.
School bytes - March 2024 Currently available and managed by office staff	Permission notes	Latest notifications and permission forms available.
Face to face meeting	School administration to utilise face to face meeting if this is considered the most appropriate method of	Information on emerging matters will be provided to parents/carers within two

	managing the emerging matter.	working days.
Newsletter School bytes TBC	Window into your child's learning	Whole class focus, shared twice per term.

(C) Class teacher communication to Parents/Carers- specific to their class

Channel	Details	Response Expectations
Email	Teacher to advise parent /carers of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging problems with students Other relevant matters End of year award nominations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within two days for emerging problems As the needs arise.
Phone contact	Teachers to utilise phone communication if this is considered the most appropriate method of managing the emerging matter	Within two days
Face to face meeting	Teacher to request appointment via email to parent if a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate method of managing the emerging or ongoing matter	Within two days
Meet the Teacher	Provided in Week 5 Term 1 by classroom teachers.	Annual
Parent/Teacher Interviews	Held at the end of Term 1 each year. Parents can book a 10 minute meeting time via the school booking system to meet their child's class teacher.	Dates and booking details are advertised in the school newsletter
Student Reports	Completed by class teachers twice a year.	Reports published on School bytes site - on the last Thursday of Term 2 and Term 4.
Student Portfolios	Once per term	Shared with families.

School Celebrations/Special Activities	Included on school calendar. Announced in school newsletter. School bytes - parent portal to replace See saw app. – Date TBC	
Curriculum Expo Days – Open Classrooms	Open classroom events completed twice per term. These open sessions will be scheduled towards the end of term 2 and 3 depending on school calendar. Purpose is for students to have an authentic audience to share and celebrate their learning with.	Dates advertised in school newsletter

(D) School communication to parents/caregivers - Parent committees

Committee	Details	Audience	Lead responsibility
P&C	Meets each term online and in the school community room. Time is advised closer to the date. Information provided in school newsletter when applicable. Class representatives to share information where applicable. Sub-committees as required.	Parents/Carers Broader community	P&C Executive
Volunteers	Parent volunteers	Parents/Carers	Teachers

(E) Parent/Carers communication to teachers regarding student and classroom centred requests and information

Teachers are setting up for the day or on duty from 8.30am and then teaching between 9.00am and 3.00pm, therefore may not have the time to contact parents during the day, as their first priority is to our students.

Channel	Details	Response expectations
Email	Contact teacher via the school email outlining information required, or details of the issue or concern relating to the student or classroom. Providing details is not compulsory. Parents may prefer to simply request contact from the teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response from teacher within two working days. • If the matter is complex, a full response may take longer. Parent will be advised if this is the case. • Teachers are not expected to respond during evenings, weekends or holidays.
Phone	Contact school administration and leave a message for teacher, giving brief details of issue or concern or of this is personal please just request contact from the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to message within two working days • Teachers are not expected to respond during evenings, weekends or holidays
Face to face meeting	Parent/Carer to request appointment via email to the teacher using the Paddington Public School email address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to request within two working days • Teachers are not expected to respond during evenings, weekends or holidays

(F) Parent/Carer communication to leadership team

Parents are encouraged to communicate or make an appointment with the appropriate member of the Leadership Team to assist with questions, concerns and significant issues. The avenues to follow before contacting the Leadership Team are outlined in the table on the next page, titled Communication for a specific purpose – first contacts.

Once these avenues have been explored, if there is a need to refer the matter to the Leadership Team contact the member of the team who is line manager for the year level by email or phoning the office. Response will be provided within two working days. Members of the Leadership Team are not expected to respond during evenings, weekends or holidays. If a concern is of high importance or an emergency, please notify the office staff of this at

the time of contact, so that they may alert the leadership team of the need for immediate action.

If a parent wishes to discuss an issue that they consider may affect the whole school, or relates to a school policy matter, contact the principal via the school office, or by email.

Communication for a specific purpose – first contacts

If a matter is deemed to require additional support, then class teachers will refer the matter onto their supervisors/ Assistant Principal / Learning and Support Team and/or the Principal.

Matter	Contact
Academic performance	Class teacher
Behaviour including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual class or playground behaviours • Change in attitude to school • Issues with other students 	Class teacher
Emotional and health and wellbeing concerns including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special needs • Change in emotional state 	Class teacher
Student absence	Parents provide written notice of absence. This will be through the School bytes parent portal. Until the portal is accessible which is anticipated to be term 2, 2024, parents are to notify absences via the school email address. If your child is late or being collected early, please sign them in and out at the school office.

Communicating with our schools

NSW Public Schools work to create positive environments for students, staff and the entire school community that support student learning. We strive to ensure that every student is known, valued and cared for.

Parents and carers play an important role in the school community. The best education happens when students, parents and schools work together. The School Community Charter informs parents and carers on how to engage with NSW public schools. Please see the link below if you would like to read The School Community Charter.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/media/documents/school-community-charter.pdf>

Parents and carers can expect:

- to be welcomed into our schools to work in partnership to promote student learning
- communication from teaching staff will be timely, polite, informative and solution focussed.
- professional relationships with school staff will be based on transparency, honesty and mutual respect.
- to be treated fairly. Tolerance and understanding are promoted as we respect diversity.

Our staff will find a time to talk to you when they can give you their full attention. Please remember that while our staff are in class or dealing with other matters, they may not be available to answer your questions immediately.

Our schools and communities will make sure that written communication is appropriate, fair and easy to read. We encourage you to use email and social media appropriately to connect with your school and stay up-to-date with events in the school community.

Respectful communication is a right.

In all workplaces, people have the right to feel respected. Unacceptable and offensive behaviour has no place in our school communities.

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and the community in our schools, steps will be taken to address unacceptable behaviour. This may include restricting contact with the school community or, in more serious cases, referral to NSW Police.

Unacceptable behaviour in our schools

Unacceptable behaviour may include but is not limited to:

- Aggressive or intimidating actions, such as violence, threatening gestures or physical proximity.
- Aggressive or intimidating language, including the use of obscenities, making sexist, racist or derogatory comments or using a rude tone.
- Treating members of the school community differently due to aspects such as their religion or disability.
- Inappropriate communication

Making a complaint about NSW public schools

If you are not satisfied that your concerns are being met, then please contact the our school Director on 9582 5800, or go to the 'Making a complaint about NSW public schools - guide for parents & carers' using the link below.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/complaints-compliments-and-suggestions/guide-for-parents-carers-and-students>

Email Protocols for Teacher and Parent Communication

Email may be a fast and convenient way for you to send messages but this is not the case for our teachers. Teachers often don't get to emails at all during the day and so an immediate reply is not possible.

Depending on the nature of the email, you may not receive an email reply at all, since the staff member will determine how best to contact you: by email, phone call or to schedule a personal conference.

To use email effectively in a school setting, we have developed the following guidelines for Parents/Carers:

Email is appropriate for:

- Brief enquiries about general school matters
- School related issues only
- To pass on relevant information to the appropriate personnel e.g. minor issue
- As a communication tool between teachers and parents.
- When agreed between the teacher and the parent (following a face-to-face contact) email may be used as a form of regular communication about a student's day at school in place of a communication book.

Email is not ideal for:

- Your child's academic progress. This is best addressed through a telephone conversation or a personal conference with your child's teacher.
- Use as a tool for in depth discussion but can be used to raise a topic to be discussed at a face-to-face meeting
- Sending non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use email to inform the school that your child is to meet you somewhere when the day ends. Instead,

use the telephone to contact the office to be sure that the message is received and clearly understood.

When sending email:

- Identify yourself in the subject line of your email and if appropriate, the name of your child.
- It should be sent to the school email address paddington-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au and the subject line should address the intended recipient.
- Ensure emails are respectfully written, as meaning can be misinterpreted. It is important to reflect upon the tone, timing and content of an email message before it is sent.
- Acknowledgement of emails received by staff should be given within 2 working days, between the hours of 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday.
- We ask that parents not email teachers on the weekend or during holiday periods.

School Policy states that individual teacher emails will not be given out. Families are asked to only contact staff at the school via the Paddington Public School email address; paddington-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Please remember that emails written in haste or in anger rarely help to sort out issues or problems. An emotionally charged email will almost always have the opposite effect. Too often, harshly written and 'angry' emails result in later regret and time taken away from teachers to focus on the teaching and learning of our students. The rules for civility in e-mail are the same as in face-to-face meetings. Convey a positive tone in your e-mails which can set the stage for a cordial working relationship with teachers and other school personnel. Never say anything by e-mail that you wouldn't want published. Any inappropriate or offensive language or comments deemed to be defamatory will be sent on to the appropriate authorities. This will not be tolerated.

Communicating on social media or a mobile messaging app

WhatsApp

Class WhatsApp groups are a very useful and efficient way of communicating to the whole class. The messages in the class WhatsApp group come from parents in their personal capacity or sent on behalf of the P&C. The school neither sends nor monitors messages on WhatsApp.

The school would appreciate if parents would note the following guidelines when using class WhatsApp groups:

- The group should never be used as a platform to air views, express issues or grievances regarding teaching methods, a particular teacher, child or parent in the class, or the school in general. Please deal with the school principal or teacher if you have a concern.

- The group should remain solution focussed and seek clarification from the school when an item of discrepancy occurs, rather than criticising. Comments made before seeking clarity or understanding often escalates reactions and may not be helpful.
- The school has a strict child protection policy on photographs and videos. Please do not circulate any of these in which a pupil appears unless the image has already appeared on the school website, or you have received permission of the students' parents to do so.
- The group is not a political platform to air views or opinions on current affairs.
- All communication in a WhatsApp Contact Group is considered private and should not be disseminated outside that group by any individual without permission.
- Use the group as an effective way to organise playdates, share questions about homework or remind each other of upcoming events.

School Facebook and/or Instagram

The purpose of these social media tools is for the school to provide families with a window into their child's learning. Items appearing on these pages may include photographs of events, projects, student work samples or videos.

The school Facebook page is public. It is used to promote our school and celebrate our progress to the wider community.

The school would appreciate if parents would note the following guidelines when using Facebook or Instagram:

- Be respectful, positive and appropriate in comments. Please be considerate of the content in comments or messages before posting them.
- Messages should be centred around education. That is messages should support student learning and achievement.
- Messages should be relevant to the topic presented.