



# Communication Policy

**Including:**  
***Communication Charter***  
***Procedures***

<b>Ratified by:</b>	<b>Date available</b>	<b>Date approved</b>
Leadership Team	7 June 2021	10 June 2021
Staff	10 June 2021	22 July 2021
School Board	17 June 2021	5 August 2021
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>2023</b>	

## **PREAMBLE**

Kardinya Primary School values positive relationships and recognises that our communication is of vital importance in strengthening and maintaining these positive relationships.

At Kardinya Primary School we encourage open communication where staff, students and parents/carers share good news, discuss issues and maintain an ongoing positive dialogue. Our intention is to work in partnership with families to support inclusivity, the health and wellbeing of all parties and promote respectful relationships.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Communication will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner to inform and communicate with:

- Our school community;
- Outside organisations and departments;
- Between school staff; and
- With other members of the Department of Education

## **COMMUNICATION CHARTER**

At Kardinya Primary School, we believe that education is a partnership between our team of professional educators and a child's most important teachers — their parents. When parents and school staff share information, model respect and give consistent messages, children are inspired to grow, learn and achieve to their full potential.

This charter outlines the standards that Kardinya Primary School expects when parents and school staff communicate. It also outlines the most appropriate and effective methods for parents to communicate with the school.

Respectful, open and timely communication is at the heart of the parent-school relationship. The protocols in this charter will ensure that all community members work together in a positive and respectful manner to ensure the growth and learning of all students.

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

- Regular communication from the school (such as Connect, Newsletters);
- Scheduled opportunities to meet with the classroom teacher (such as Term 1 Classroom Meetings and Open Night);
- Other opportunities to meet with teachers by appointment;
- Regular updates about important developments in the child's class (Teacher Connect Notices);
- Formal reports on their child's academic achievement at the end of each semester;
- Notification of unexplained absences, any serious single issue or ongoing issues concerning your child;
- Opportunities to provide feedback (such as the annual Parent Survey and other surveys on single topics).

All communication will be respectful.

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.

Parent communications will be acknowledged within one working day and responded to within three working days.

Many of the teachers at Kardinya 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 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;
- 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:**

- Speak to the teacher with any brief messages between 8:35 am and 8:50 am or briefly after school. Once the teacher has begun teaching, it is best to convey messages through the office. Sometimes teachers have meetings after school and may need to leave promptly;
- Send a note; or
- Call the office and leave a message for the teacher.

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

- Visiting the classroom during the teacher's preparation time before 8:35 am or during the school day without an appointment;
- Speaking to the teacher disrespectfully or angrily, especially in front of your child or other students;
- Using social media to make negative comments about the school or to contact staff members. We welcome feedback at Kardinya 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, schedule a meeting.

Generally speaking, it is more appropriate for your child not to be present when the discussion involves sensitive and complex matters. This enables all parties to speak freely and openly explore all possible solutions.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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**

Kardinya 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.

Kardinya Primary school also submits items to the Department of Education for promotion and also 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 Kardinya Primary School.

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

## **CONCLUSION**

Kardinya Primary School community believes that the strong relationships formed with the parents/carers of students is essential for every child's success. By working together in active partnership with each other we provide students with the best environment for ***Learning for Life***.

## 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 5 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 Minutes Policy documents Enrolment information And more...	24/7 <a href="https://kardinyaps.wa.edu.au/">https://kardinyaps.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	2- 3 per term Key information for parents  Distributed via – email and the website	School Community	School Staff
Schools Online	School details, Annual reports, generalised student results and details of enrolment local-intake area.	Ongoing	School community, Wider community	Admin Team
Email	Teacher – Parent communication Communication with Office Staff Informing parents of awards or merit certificates	As required	Parents and guardians	Email Author
Facebook Pages	Kardinya PS <a href="https://www.facebook.com/KardinyaPrimaryKpsParents/">https://www.facebook.com/KardinyaPrimaryKpsParents/</a>	Celebrations of school events Celebrations of achievements	School community, Wider community	Marketing Manager Principal
	Kardinya P & C <a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=p%26c%20kardinya%20primary%20school">https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=p%26c%20kardinya%20primary%20school</a>	This page run and maintained by the Kardinya P&C. Event management Promotions and Fundraisers	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. Kardinya PS supports parents supporting each other in a <b>positive</b> way. Important points to note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These support groups are not official Kardinya PS communication.</li> <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 teachers;</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 Kardinya 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 – only when written signature is required or message is very important. 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	Some events are held regularly Some events are held as needed	School community, Wider community	Teachers School Admin Team
Assemblies	Each class presents an item and runs the assembly Merit certificates awarded	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
Class DOJO	Communication avenue between home and school about student DOJOs and positive behaviour	As required Please note, this is NOT a primary communication method. Messages sent to teachers using the platform may not receive a response.	Students, parents, guardians.	Class teachers
Phone Call	Child specific information Accident/emergency	As required	Parents and guardians	School Office Team Teachers

## Communication Mode Guideline - Staff

Communication Type/Mode	What information is here?	Frequency/Description/Details	Audience	Staff responsible
Staff Bulletin	Celebrations Reminders Everything about the coming week that we know Julie's notes Deputy's notes	Weekly – usually distributed at the end of the week for the following week. Distribution – Email <b>REQUIRED READING FOR ALL STAFF</b>	Staff	School Admin Team
Drum	Daily summary Reminders Duty Student notices	Daily Distribution – Email <b>REQUIRED READING on days you are at school</b>	Staff	Deputy Principal Office Team

## Communication Procedures & Guidelines - Staff

Communication Type/Mode	Guidelines & Procedures	Frequency/Description	Audience
Connect – Whole School Messages	<p>Messages must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undergo a spell check;</li> <li>Be worded positively;</li> <li>be previewed to review formatting; and</li> <li>should have a logo</li> </ul> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule messages to be posted during school time if you are drafting them after hours;</li> <li>What year levels should receive each message and restrict them if the message is not for all year levels; and</li> <li>Be aware that students that log on to Connect can get these messages.</li> </ul>	As needed	As needed
Connect – Teacher messages	<p>Teachers are encouraged to collaborate when writing Connect messages.</p> <p>Messages must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undergo a spell check;</li> <li>Be worded positively; and</li> <li>be previewed to review formatting</li> </ul> <p>Please consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short, single issue messages are easier for parents to read;</li> <li>Long messages require parents to log on to read;</li> <li>Short messages are easy to read in their email;</li> <li>Consider adding photos;</li> <li>Celebrate what you are doing in class;</li> <li>Let parents know what is coming up in your class.</li> <li>Consider having a logo just for your class; and</li> <li>Don't post when you are tired, grumpy, etc...</li> </ul>	Minimum 5 per term. No maximum	Parents
Any communication with a School Logo	Any communication with a school logo must be authorised by the principal (except Connect messages)	As needed	Various
Paper notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All paper notes must be authorised by the principal.</li> <li>Excursion/Incursion notes are authorised as part of the excursion approval process;</li> <li>Paper notes must use the correct school letter head and logo; and</li> <li><b>A copy of every paper note MUST be given to the front office staff.</b></li> </ul>	Only when a signature is required or a message is of high importance	Parents
Letters to outside organisations	<p>Must be authorised by the Principal</p> <p>Present the principal with your draft letter for approval.</p>	As needed	Various
Emails to/from parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff should ensure emails are worded professionally and respectfully, with positive wording;</li> <li>Emails from parents should be acknowledged within 24 hours;</li> <li>If you need time to provide a full answer, let them know the expected time frame (3 days listed as expected);</li> <li>Any emails containing harassment or abuse should be forwarded to the Principal;</li> <li>Please CC or forward a copy of anything relevant to the Admin team;</li> <li>Teachers are encouraged to address 'tricky' issues in a face to face meeting rather than over email. Email should only be used for less complex issues;</li> <li>There is no requirement to answer emails received after hours, on weekends or during holidays; and</li> <li>Teachers are encouraged to use out-of-office notifications to advise when emails will be attended to.</li> </ul>	As required	Parents

Emails to / from outside organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff should ensure emails are worded professionally and respectfully, with positive wording;</li> <li>Staff should not represent their personal views as the view of the school;</li> <li>Please CC someone in the admin team or send a copy afterwards; and</li> <li>If in doubt, seek guidance from the Admin Team.</li> </ul>	As required	Various
All Staff Emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only send an email to All-staff when all staff need the information.</li> <li>All staff can be used if you are contacting all teachers or all EAs;</li> <li>If you are contacting a group of less than 10 staff, please use individual email addresses; and</li> <li>Be careful not to reply to all staff unless it is needed – this clogs up Inboxes!</li> </ul>	As needed	All staff
If you are CCd into an email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a general rule, staff should not reply to an email they are CCd into.</li> <li>The reply should come from the person the email was addressed to.</li> </ul>	As needed	All staff
Telephone calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff should conduct all telephone calls in a professional manner.</li> <li>Teachers are encouraged to log any telephone calls made to parents (date, parent name, topic).</li> <li>If a teacher makes / receives a telephone call from a parent that becomes abusive, please ask the parent to speak respectfully. If the parent continues to be abusive, inform the parent that you will be stopping the phone call and arranging a face to face meeting with the school admin present. Please make a written record of the detail of any abusive call and provide this to the school admin team;</li> <li>Teachers are encouraged to address 'tricky' issues in a face to face meeting rather than over the telephone. Calls should only be used for less complex issues.</li> </ul>	As needed	All staff
Face-to-Face meetings with Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers should conduct all face to face meetings with parents in a professional manner.</li> <li>Teachers should use the KPS Meeting template to record notes about every meeting. A copy should be provided to all parties in attendance (can be emailed afterwards if access to a photocopier is difficult) and a copy put in the child's file.</li> <li>Teachers are encouraged to address 'tricky' issues in a face to face meeting rather than over the telephone/email.</li> <li>Teachers can ask the Admin Team for support if needed;</li> <li>The interview room is a neutral space available for parent/teacher meetings. Please let the office know of your booking and write it in the diary.</li> <li>If a face-to-face meeting becomes abusive in any way, please remind all parties to speak respectfully. If the behaviour continues, let all parties know that the meeting would be best conducted with someone from the Admin Team present and terminate the meeting. Please make a written record of the meeting and provide this to the school admin team;</li> </ul>	As needed	Parents
Student emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers are encouraged to explicitly teach email protocols to all students from year 4-6 (BYOD years);</li> <li>Student emails to outside organisations should be reviewed by teachers before sending;</li> <li>Students should be informed that all emails using their EDU account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be used in a professional manner;</li> <li>Can be tracked and traced;</li> <li>Should only be used for educational (not private) use; and</li> <li>That any mis-use of school emails will be considered a serious breach of their school online agreement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	As needed	Various
Facebook Posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We use Facebook to promote our school, as a marketing tool;</li> <li>Staff are encouraged to add positive comments and 'like' posts on KPS Facebook posts;</li> <li>Staff are encouraged to 'share' KPS Facebook posts in situations where this will bring positive feedback for our school;</li> <li>Staff are asked not to share KPS Facebook posts to sites that may bring our school into disrepute; and</li> <li>Staff are discouraged from exchanging private messages with others on the KPS Facebook page – please use private messaging to do this</li> </ul>	As needed	Community
Personal Social Media accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff should ensure their privacy by regularly reviewing their privacy settings.</li> <li>Staff are prohibited from having students in their personal social media accounts (DoE Regulations).</li> <li>Staff are discouraged from having parents in their personal social media accounts. All contact with parents should be conducted in your professional capacity. When you are personal friends with parents, please ensure you have appropriate personal/professional boundaries in place.</li> <li>Staff are encouraged to complete the Accountable and Ethical Decision Making PL module for guidance on matters of personal/professional boundaries.</li> </ul>	Caution required	Personal