

FORRESTDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Forrestdale Primary School (FPS) is a positive environment where we enjoy celebrating students and their learning. It is also a positive environment for staff to work, and families to engage. This is achieved by all students, staff and families valuing and supporting each other's contributions.

- We are inclusive and we celebrate diversity.
- We form positive connections.
- We work together to create a friendly and safe school community.

At FPS, we strive to share and celebrate learning in a variety of ways; via our Website, Seesaw, in writing and/or verbally, and during assemblies. This Communications Policy allows us all to be aware of our communication expectations at FPS.

What Families can expect:

Regular communication from the school via the Website, Seesaw and/or our Facebook page. This is with an emphasis on succinct updates about important school events and the sharing of relevant information.

- Two newsletters each term; Week 5 and Week 10.
- Weekly posts from classes via Seesaw.
- Formal school reports in Term 2 and Term 4
- Timely notification from the teacher if a student is at educational risk.
- Parent information sessions at the beginning of the year
- Parent Open Night in Term 3 – celebrating learning.
- Opportunities to meet with your child's teacher by appointment.
- Occasional individual communications between teachers and parents/carers at point of need.
- Frequent individual communications between teachers, parents/carers and the student services team at point of need.

When should parents contact the school:

- If your child is absent – we require an absence reason from the carer prior to 9:30 am the same day of the absence. If we do not receive a reason, it is our policy to follow up with a phone call from the office.
- Absences can be communicated via SMS: 0438 957 694
- If family circumstances, address or contact details have changed.
- With any information about custody or access
- If your child has a contagious disease, or medical condition including head-lice.
- If you can't keep a scheduled appointment
- If you have concerns about your child's academic or social progress.

Please contact the school on 9397 8100 in these instances.

Our school philosophy is that our teaching staff greet our students each morning as they prepare for their learning each day. Please be mindful of this philosophy. Although it may be tempting to 'catch the teacher' in the morning or afternoon, we ask parents to allow teachers to use morning time to check in with their students and prepare for teaching and learning. Please also consider that staff need afternoon time to prepare for their upcoming school commitments, (i.e., staff, or planning meetings and/or lesson preparation).

Communications and habits that interfere with learning:

Families and staff both want the best outcomes and opportunities for the children at FPS. Amid this culture of care and dedication, there are some communications and habits that interfere with teaching and learning practices:

- Students frequently arriving to class after the bell has gone. This doesn't allow the child who is late to be ready for learning and disrupts the morning routines for other students and the teacher.
- Visiting the classroom during the teacher's preparation time before school or during the school day without an appointment. NB: anything that is being dropped off at school, during school hours, must be taken via the office – not directly to the classroom.
- Expecting an immediate meeting, or 'catching' staff to discuss important issues. Effective discussions require preparation to be efficient, productive, and focussed on the purpose. In this regard, when booking a meeting time, it is helpful to provide the reason/purpose for the request.
- Speaking to any staff disrespectfully or angrily, particularly in front of your child or students.
- Talking to other parents about perceived issues, rather than making an appointment to discuss the issue directly with staff members.
- Using social media to share negative comments about the school, students and/or staff. We value all feedback and ask that it is made through appropriate channels.

It is important to note that it is never acceptable to approach and/or reprimand someone else's child at school. This negative behaviour will result in a formal warning and may become a legal matter.

We are all important role-models to children, and positive interactions will encourage children to also communicate in a considerate and constructive manner.

Using Seesaw at Forrestdale Primary School

The main purpose for Seesaw is to celebrate student's learning, and for the school to provide quick updates to parents.

Seesaw Expectations for Students, Staff and Families

- Staff use Seesaw as a communication between home and school.
- Staff check and certify the images containing students in their class have permissions.
- Seesaw is a platform to share work and celebrate learning.
- It may be used to communicate homework.

- Families may use Seesaw to convey non-urgent messages to teachers.
- Staff may take up to two working days to respond to messages, NB some staff do not work full time therefore this will be based on their working hours.
- Staff are encouraged to adhere to Seesaw office hours.

Please do not expect the following from Seesaw:

- Daily, or frequent extensive information
- Updates relating to your child's achievement, progress, or behaviour; or any communications that require a case-conference, or meeting.
- Instant responses or messages.

Any information that requires an instant response must come via the Front Office.

Raising a Concern:

Understand the complaints process - Department of Education

If you have a concern, we ask that you act as soon as possible. Clarifying information early can solve many problems. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress, the homework set or the assessment procedures, contact the class teacher via Seesaw or email. Identify the problem clearly before sending a message or emailing. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the teacher. Decide and communicate whether the problem is a query, a concern, or a complaint. This will help in finding a solution.

If your concern requires a meeting with your child's teacher, make an appointment to speak with them. This can be requested via Seesaw or email, a note through your child, in person or arranged through the front office.

If your concern is regarding other family members, or students, it is important that you do not approach them. Serious action will be taken if an adult approaches a student on school grounds.

If your concern is about the conduct of a staff member, you may prefer to discuss the matter with a school administrator, either the associate principal or the principal. In this case you can make an appointment through the front office; 9397 8100 or via email

Forrestdale.PS@education.wa.edu.au

If you decide you would prefer to make your concern known in writing as opposed to discussing it in person, then you can address your concern to either your child's teacher, associate principal or to the principal. Please ensure you mark any correspondence as Private and Confidential.

If your concern involves the principal, then you may wish to raise this with the Regional Executive Director. You may phone, email, or write to the Regional Executive Director, South Metropolitan Education Region, 184 Hampton Road, Beaconsfield WA 6162 or post to PO Box 63 South Fremantle WA 6162.

At all levels of raising a concern at Forrestdale Primary School, we ask that you let us know the nature of your concern, and where possible, what you consider is needed to resolve your concern.

All parties are expected to attend any meetings with a willingness to discuss issues calmly and rationally. All parties are entitled to have a support person. All parties are expected to advise in advance if they are bringing a support person to the meeting prior to the meeting.

Staff Communication in School:

As employees of the DOE, it is important that all staff are aware that they must comply with the Education Department Staff Code of Conduct.

High performing teams thrive in psychologically safe workplaces. Working together in a psychologically safe workplace, requires that all staff T H I N K about how they communicate with each other.

(T: is it true, H: is it helpful, I: is it inspirational, N: is it necessary, K: is it kind?)

- Approach conflict as a collaborator, not an adversary, focusing on achieving mutually desirable outcomes.
- Speak human to human: understanding that our colleagues also have:
 - beliefs, perspectives, and opinions
 - hopes, anxieties. and vulnerabilities
 - friends and family members
 - wants and desires to be respected, appreciated, and feel competent.
 - desires for peace, joy. and happiness
- Anticipate reactions and plan countermoves to messages and communications, i.e., what are possible objections and how would I respond to this? Specifically, you might ask yourself: What is my main point? What are three ways my listeners are likely to respond? How will I respond to each of those scenarios?
- Replace blame with curiosity. i.e., state observations rather than problematic behaviours,
- Ask for feedback on delivery. i.e., what worked well, what didn't? How did it feel to hear this message/information? How could I have presented it more effectively?

Staff as Parents and members of our School Community:

Staff members who are parents of children attending the school are wonderful advocates. Staff who are parents are asked to reference the Parent Handbook, understanding the same conditions apply to all attending students.

Reviewed: FPS Board February 2024