



# **School Policy**

## **Community Communications**

**Approved By**    **School Board**

**Approval Date**    **February 2020**

**Last Reviewed**    **February 2020**



## Harmony Primary School Community Communications Policy

In accordance with the Department of Education's Communication Protocols, Harmony PS is committed to providing a safe, supportive and productive learning environment through positive relationships, working together and having effective communication between students, staff and parents/carers/guardians. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Department of Education's Communication Protocols document "School Communities Working Together".

### Harmony PS Stakeholders:

Internal stakeholders	External Stakeholders	
	External stakeholders include, but are not limited to those listed.	
	Local	Broad
Students	City of Cockburn	Relevant State and Federal government departments
Parents/guardians and families of students	Neighbouring schools (government and private)	Relevant politicians and community leaders
Staff (teaching and non-teaching)	Harvest Lakes Residents' Association Inc.	Education providers (incursions, excursions, sporting groups, therapy providers)
School Board	Neighbours	Community Sporting Associations
P&C	Users of Harmony PS Facilities	Tertiary institutions
Prospective Families	OSH Club	Media
Prospective Staff	Local Businesses	Outside Agencies

### Communication Process

Stakeholder Communication	Modes of Communication and Timeframe	
Teachers with parents/carers/guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emails - as required</li> <li>Face to face interviews – as required</li> <li>Connect notices – at least once a week</li> <li>Open Night – term 3 annually</li> <li>Information sessions – annually at beginning of Term 1, or as required. E.g. camp, Canberra</li> <li>Notes and Permission Slips - as required. E.g. excursions &amp; incursions</li> <li>Website - as required</li> <li>Reports – end of Semester 1 and 2</li> <li>Notice Board outside classroom in ECE - as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All school staff will respond to your communication within one working day</li> <li>Staff are not expected to read or respond to their emails on the weekend</li> <li>Bulk use of emails, when used by staff, will protect the privacy of parent email addresses by using the BCC Address Book</li> </ul>
Parents with Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect</li> <li>Emails</li> <li>Phone call</li> <li>Informal &amp; formal scheduled meetings</li> <li>SMS messages – reporting absences</li> <li>Written notes</li> <li>Verbal – face to face</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are required to inform the school of their child's absence and the reasons why. This can be via the class teacher- face to face, by email or written note; by SMS Messenger or Connect; or a phone call, email or face to face at the front office</li> <li>Parents should keep the relevant classroom teacher informed of anything that may impact on the child's emotional wellbeing at school. This allows the teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To organise a meeting with the classroom or specialist teacher a parent may:</li> </ul> <p>*Contact the school, either by phone or coming to the office personally, to arrange a suitable meeting time.</p> <p>*Contact the appropriate teacher in writing or via email, asking them to organise a suitable meeting time.</p> <p>*Speak briefly with the appropriate teacher, either before or after school hours (not at a time when they are teaching or on yard duty), and ask them to arrange a suitable meeting time.</p>	<p>to be proactive in observing and support the child through difficult situations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are encouraged to make direct contact with, and discuss, any concerns about their child's progress with the class teacher</li> <li>For quick matters, immediately before or after school are ideal times</li> <li>Any parent wishing to discuss a concern with the Principal or Deputy Principal regarding their child's teacher will in most cases needed to have addressed the concerns with the teacher first</li> </ul>
Parents with Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone call</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Arrange a meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All members of administration will respond to your communication within one working day</li> <li>Administration members will often share the responsibility of communicating with individual parents to enable the speediest response to a concern or query</li> </ul>
Parents/carers/guardian with front office staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face to face with office staff</li> <li>Phone</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Connect or SMS Messenger – for absences</li> </ul>	
Admin office staff with parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Facebook</li> <li>Web Page</li> <li>Newsletter</li> <li>SMS Messenger – for student absence inquiries &amp; urgent messages</li> </ul>	
P&C Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The P&amp;C communicates with the school community on events, projects and fundraising</li> <li>The primary mode of internal P&amp;C communication will be the P&amp;C meeting (held twice a term). The Principal will be invited to attend each P&amp;C meeting</li> <li>In addition to P&amp;C meetings, the President will be proactive in keeping the Principal informed and updated on P&amp;C issues and activities</li> <li>The P&amp;C will communicate, as needed, to ensure that its role and activities are understood by the school community</li> </ul>	
School Board Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The School Board communicates with the school community on strategic direction, overall school performance and school satisfaction</li> <li>School Board communications are limited to School Board business.</li> <li>The primary mode of internal School Board communication will be the Board meeting (held twice a term, or as required)</li> <li>In addition to Board meetings, the Chairman will be in regular contact with the Principal regarding School Board activities</li> <li>School Board communications with the school community will, at a minimum, be through the Business Plan, Annual Reports and the newsletter</li> <li>The School Board must communicate, as needed, to ensure that its role and activities are understood by the school community</li> <li>School Board communications to the school community must (except in exceptional cases) be authorised by the Principal prior to being sent.</li> <li>Bulk use of email information is discouraged. Newsletter, Facebook, Connect and</li> </ul>	

	Website formats should be used as first priority. Where email communication occurs, parent email addresses must always be kept private and confidential - use the BCC address box.
Parents to parents	Under no circumstances should a parent/carer/guardian approach another child whilst they are in the care of the school, to discuss or chastise them because of actions towards their own child/ren
<b>Concerns and Complaints</b>	
From time to time parents may encounter difficulties or concerns. When this occurs, parents are encouraged to endeavour to resolve the issue informally, initially with the classroom teacher. Please see information below for other communication options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmony PS will deal with all concerns and complaints and issues sensitively, promptly and confidentially. Matters will be investigated and dealt with in a timely manner</li> <li>• In working through any issues a resolution which treats all parties with dignity and respect will be sought. Issues and matters which have been raised will be kept in the strictest of confidence and not discussed with any other persons, excepting those directly involved</li> <li>• Anonymous complaints will be investigated at a preliminary issue for the purpose of identifying if there is any substance to the complaints. In the absence of clear evidence, anonymous complaints may not be further acted upon</li> <li>• Contact should be made with the Principal or a Deputy Principal if assistance is required in clarifying an issue of concern or for the making of a formal complaint</li> </ul>

**The following table is a quick reference for parents regarding the process of communicating with the school to discuss an issue or concern that may have arisen.**

<b>Context of Query/Concern</b>	<b>APPROPRIATE ACTION</b>
The academic progress of your own child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly contact the child's teacher either by note, email or by phone at an appropriate time, to discuss any issues</li> </ul>
The welfare of your own child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For minor issues, directly contact your child's teacher to clarify information.</li> <li>• For more serious concerns, contact the office. State the nature of your concern and arrange a suitable time to talk with the class teacher or appropriate staff member</li> </ul>
Actions of other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the class teacher for a classroom problem.</li> <li>• Contact the class teacher or a member of the administration for playground problem.</li> </ul>
School policy or practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the office. State the nature of your concern and/or feedback and make an appointment to see the principal and/or appropriate member of staff</li> </ul>
Actions of a staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where appropriate, contact the teacher directly for an appointment, otherwise contact a member of the administration</li> </ul>
When concern is not resolved to parent/carer/guardian's satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Regional Office on 93369563 to discuss your concern</li> </ul>