



# Flowerdale Primary School

## Small Schools Are Great Schools

### COMMUNICATION POLICY

#### Definition:

- This policy covers all communication between members of the school community and sets out basic expectations for respectful, caring and proactive relationships. It should be read in conjunction with other policies as mentioned in this document.

#### Rationale:

- All FDPS staff and school council members are committed to working with the school community to ensure communication within the school is effective and leads to positive outcomes. FDPS is committed to providing an inclusive, transparent and supportive environment which promotes open communication, respect, fairness and positive relationships. FDPS believes that the relationship between home and school is a very important part of ensuring that children are happy, secure and open to learning.

#### Aims:

##### To ensure:

- Effective communication between all members of the school community
- Processes are in place that enhance open, transparent and honest communication within the whole school community
- Confidential information is managed in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations
- Clear, positive, transparent and fair processes and policies are maintained which allow issues or concerns to be aired and resolved in a timely, effective and respectful manner
- A positive, productive and harmonious school environment is maintained, supported by effective, open, transparent and honest communications
- The whole of school is committed to the guiding principles of this policy as described within this document and that the whole of school actively participates and embrace's the spirit of this policy so as to ensure effective, transparent and honest communications

#### Implementation:

- Civil standards of conduct are important to the FDPS community and it is expected that there will be appropriate and respectful communication between all members of the school community. Communication should be constructive and solution driven. Appropriate communication involves calm, non-aggressive and non- threatening behavior. Swearing is not tolerated and matters of conflict must be discussed away from the earshot of children.
- FDPS staff have a right to work in an environment that does not cause them undue stress or harassment and upholding standards of communication between school community members is important in ensuring this is achieved at our school.

#### Process for Parents and Guardians contacting a Teacher

When a Parent or Guardian wishes to contact a Teacher to discuss matters relating to their child, contact should be made using one of the following approaches:

1. Contact the school, either by phone or by coming to the office personally, and ask the school administration officer to arrange for the Teacher to contact you, so as to arrange a suitable meeting

time. Teachers are not usually available to answer phone calls or come to the office during teaching time or whilst on yard duty.

2. Contact the appropriate teacher in writing or via email, asking them to contact you so as to arrange a suitable meeting time.
  3. 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 for a suitable meeting time.
- Out of hours contact with staff members is not allowed, unless there is an emergency situation. In an emergency contact can be made with the principal outside of school hours on the mobile number Ph. 0414 244798

### **Process for Parents contacting the Principal**

- When a Parent or Guardian has a concern or wishes to discuss an issue which is sensitive in nature, affects the whole school, their child's wellbeing or relates to a school operations, the Parent or Guardian is to contact staff using one of the approaches outlined above.
- In all cases if the matter is urgent and/or relates to the possible risk or harm to any member of the school community or the school itself, the Principal should be informed immediately and will take action as appropriate.
- FDPS will deal with all complaints and issues that may arise from within the school in a transparent and sensitive manner and where appropriate, with full confidentiality. Matters will be considered and dealt with in a timely manner, while treating all parties with dignity and respect.
- Anonymous complaints will not be accepted or acted upon (Refer to FDPS Community Grievance policy). However issues can be raised anonymously in order to avoid potential harm to the school community. Resolving matters of concern is best achieved through face-to-face contact with the appropriate person. Emails and letters should be brief, alerting the person to the issue, rather than be used as a forum for in depth discussion.
- Any correspondence received by the school will be kept secure in accordance with School governance, policy and procedures.

### **Issues arising between students and families**

- No Parent or Guardian should approach the children of other families with any grievance on or about the school grounds. Parents with a school related issue that they feel cannot be discussed in a respectful way should use the methods discussed in this policy (or the DCPS Grievance Policy) to bring the issues to the attention of the Principal.

### **Outgoing School communication**

- Events and activities will be formally communicated so the school community is made aware of them on a timely basis. These include:
- Staff changes – Where possible, within 1 week of the FDPS calling for applications or before a new staff member begins work
- Class structure changes – Where possible within 2 weeks of a decision to make class structure changes
- Curriculum changes – Where possible 2 weeks before curriculum changes are to be made
- Major policy changes – Where possible within 2 weeks of the change being approved
- School Council meeting highlights – Where possible within 2 weeks after the applicable school

council meeting

- School Assessment and Survey results – Where possible within 2 weeks of the school council review

### **Methods of communication between FDPS and parents**

Communication methods used will seek to ensure that all relevant school community members are informed. The following channels will be used as appropriate:

- Notice put up at school in a highly visible location
- Written notice sent home with students
- School website
- Flexi buzz phone app
- Notification in the school newsletter
- Principal or teachers speaking at assembly
- SMS
- Email



### **Communication between Parents and School Council**

If Parents have an issue or suggestion that they would like the School Council to consider relating to school governance, policy or finances, the following channels can be used:

- Written letter to the President of the School Council or School Council member and left at the front office or sent by email. Email addresses are provided on the school directory or at the front desk
- Informally contact a School Council member to provide feedback that can be taken to the School Council for discussion

Parents are able to attend School Council meetings but are not able to participate in the decision making process. Parents may be asked to leave when confidential or sensitive information is required to be discussed.

### **School Community feedback**

- FDPS Staff or School Council Members may seek informal feedback from the school community regarding proposed changes, opinions on school performance and the like. Both the Staff and School Council of FDPS value the input, feedback and constructive criticism of the school community and feedback will be considered and relayed back to the school community where appropriate.

### **Communication outside of the School Community**

- Matters relating to the operations of FDPS should not be discussed outside our school community unless they contribute positively to the reputation that our school holds in the wider community.
- Our school community and therefore our children are best served by positive and constructive reinforcement of our values and culture.
- All current FDPS families and staff are custodians of our school, for the current students and the future families that will also embrace our school, it's values and culture.

### **Evaluation:**

This policy was last ratified by School Council in **July 2017**