



Melaleuca Park
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Communication Policy

Including Grievance Procedure

Rationale

At Melaleuca Park we focus on building effective partnerships between school and families to provide support to our whole school community. Essential to this partnership is a commitment to open, honest, transparent and timely communication that is the responsibility of all members of the school community. By promoting respectful and constructive communication as a key element of conflict management, the partnership will be further strengthened as we value each other's contributions and work effectively together to improve student social/emotional, wellbeing and academic growth for our students.

Objectives

The Communication Policy has been developed to:

- Clearly explain the school's commitment to communication to families as the basis for a positive partnership between the school and home.
- Acknowledge the positives and negatives of modern/contemporary electronic communication methods and establish clear expectations for staff, students and families in relation to their use.
- Provide clear expectations and instructions for communication;
 - Staff to staff
 - Staff to parents/caregivers
 - Parents/caregivers to staff
 - School to the community
- Support effective communication between all members of the Melaleuca Park Primary School which maintains safe workplace expectations and supports staff to effectively balance work and home life.
- Provide a clear process for the expression of grievances.

Types of communication

Melaleuca Park Primary currently uses a variety of strategies to communicate with members of the school community. While email and other electronic means of communication are both efficient and environmentally friendly and can be the most convenient way for parents/caregivers to contact the site during school hours, we value face to face and telephone conversations to maintain the personal element of the home-school relationship.

Current methods of communication include:

Staff to staff:



Phone

08 87251404



Postal Address

PO Box 8180
Mount Gambier East 5291



Address

61 Boandik Terrace
Mount Gambier SA 5290



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- Microsoft Teams including year planning calendar and whole school chat group
- Sentral
- Weekly teacher staff meetings
- Fortnightly SSO staff meetings
- Internal email
- Minutes of meetings (Sentral)
- Weekly staff newsletter
- Text/SMS/messenger

School to students

- SeeSaw
- Newsletters
- Morning circle time notices
- Face to face messages

School to parents/caregivers

- 3 way interviews
- Mid and end of year reports
- SeeSaw
- Newsletter
- Facebook
- Website
- Text/SMS
- Email
- Phone calls
- Face to face meetings (formal and informal)

School to community

- Front office displays and posters
- Newsletter
- Website
- Facebook
- Governing council meetings

Responsibilities of all staff, parents and caregivers

When communication in relation to school and/or student matters, it is an expectation that all staff members and parents/caregivers will:



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- Maintain respectful and constructive communication that describes the concern, communicates the facts and is focused on understanding the problem and finding a solution.
- Keep electronic communication brief and informative.
- address issues that require a level of detailed discussion in person or over the phone.
- Respect the confidentiality of messages containing personal or sensitive information; and do not forward or pass on this information to a third party without permission.
- Refrain from connecting via social media in relation to the matter, to maintain the appropriate professional relationship.
- Remember that electronic messages are subject to Freedom of Information regulations.

Expectation of staff in responding to and sending communications

- Send or respond to work related messages at a time of convenience throughout the school day and use personal discretion if it is out of school hours (8.30am-4.30pm, Monday to Friday)
- Reply to parent communication within 24 hours.
- Acknowledge receipt of parent communication as soon as practicable within school hours and if time is required to gather information and provide a suitable reply, indicate when an informed response will be provided.
- Address sensitive issues or matters in person at a mutually agreed time; and never raise or discuss matters of this nature in electronic communication.
- Notify parents/caregivers of any dates of extended leave, where direct communication will not be available.
- Not respond to offensive or abusive messages and forward any such messages to the Principal.

Expectations of staff in specific forums

- Mobile phones
 - As it is mandatory for all primary aged students not to have phones in class, staff are required to model the appropriate use of mobile devices. Staff should refrain from using mobile devices for any other purpose while on duty other than for emergency communication and accessing staff notices through teams from the front office.
- Newsletter
 - Use the school newsletter as the primary method of communication for activities relevant to the whole school. The newsletter will be published on the school's website and distributed via the email distribution list.
 - Teachers will submit any articles of student learning to the Administration manager.
- SeeSaw
 - Use the class Seesaw for any short notices between whole site newsletter, reminders or class or individual parent correspondence as required.
 - Teachers to check SeeSaw daily at a time that is convenient to their routine.
- Facebook



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- Use Facebook as a forum for celebration, sharing and promotion of school events by forwarding information to the Administration manager for posting.
- Email
 - The school will hold an email distribution list, telephone and postal address details of all parents/caregivers which will be used for whole school communication, particularly of large documents or Department system wide correspondence. This will largely be used by the Principal and administrative/finance staff to communicate with parents/caregivers as required.

Expectations of parents and caregivers

When communicating about school matters, parents and caregivers will:

- Communicate in person, via email, phone, Principal's approved mobile or approved school platforms.
- Contact the Front Office for urgent matters or matters that require an immediate response and direct administrative correspondence to the school's email address; dl.1020.info@schools.sa.edu.au
- Keep the school administration informed of current contact details including phone and email address.
- Convey messages with clear language, honesty and respect, upholding the school values of Be Kind, Work Hard, Dream Big at all times.
- Arrange a time to meet with staff face-to-face to discuss sensitive or complex issues (a request via SeeSaw or email briefly outlining your concerns and to arrange a meeting is appropriate prior to discussion).
- Understand staff must prioritise teaching, learning and building a positive learning environment during school hours, and will attend to emails, SeeSaw and phone messages at a convenient time during the school day *8.30am – 4.30pm).
- Consider school hours when expecting a response and understand that depending on the nature of the message, the staff member will determine the best method of reply and respond accordingly (ideally within 24 hours, as required by this policy).
- Read the newsletter and check Seesaw and school website for upcoming events.

Responsibility of students

In line with school values, students will communicate with peers, staff and their family in a manner that is timely, clear, respectful and honest in relation to school and learning.

- Convey information accurately, using facts.
- Pass school correspondence to their parents/caregivers on the day of issue.
- Use communication channels and devices for the intended purpose, and as permitted school policies (eg ICT agreement, mobile phone policy).



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- Report any worries, incidents or concerns to an adult at school as soon as possible throughout the school day, particularly to seek support to manage grievances.

Grievance procedure for management of issues


In line with the Department for Education, Complaints Management Procedure, Melaleuca Park acknowledges that “teachers and support staff are often the first point of contact for a parent with a concern or complaint,” as such, staff will make every effort to resolve these matters where possible:


- Level 1: parents/caregivers raise any concern or complaint with their child’s teacher or staff member involved. Teachers acknowledge and aim to resolve the issue in line with the procedure. When the complaint is easily resolved over the phone or by front line staff, recording of the issue may be maintained at site level. Via EDSAS.
- Level 2a: parents raise any concerns or complaints about their child’s education that they feel unable to raise with their child’s teacher or staff member involved, with the Principal. The Principal acknowledges and aims to resolve the issue in partnership with the parents/student, in line with the procedure. This may require the involvement of the class or relevant teacher, as appropriate. The complaint received by the school and the decision or actions taken to address it are documented in minutes.
- Level 2b: when level 2a does not provide a satisfactory resolution, parents contact the local Education Director, Blue Lake Partnership.
- Level 3: when level 2 does not provide a satisfactory resolution, parents/caregivers elevate the complaint to the Customer Feedback Unit. Concern can also be lodged via the Feedback/Complaints line on the school’s website.
- Level 4: when neither level 1, 2 or 3 provide a satisfactory outcome, parents may contact and seek an independent review from the Ombudsman SA.




Policy ratified: Governing Council 4/12/23

Policy review: December 2025

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