

Policy Number	Ratification Date	Reviewed	Review Date
18	2017	April 2020	April 2023



COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Purpose

This policy explains how Elsternwick Primary School proposes to manage common enquiries from parents and carers.

Scope

This policy applies to school staff, and all parents and carers in our community.

Policy

Elsternwick Primary School understands the importance of providing helpful and timely responses to common enquiries from parents and carers. EPS encourages parents/carers to actively engage with the school. This relationship is vital to maintaining a positive and productive school community and is an important part of a student's learning and wellbeing.

EPS communicates day-to-day school information using the online school management system - Compass Education: <https://schools.compass.education/>. Login details are provided upon a student's commencement and details can be obtained at any time from the front office.

EPS will also use the schools fortnightly newsletter (shared via Compass) and school website (www.elsternwickps.vic.edu.au) to communicate to the wider community.

Additionally, teachers will communicate directly with parents/carers on an as need basis using telephone, email or parent/teacher interviews held each term.

To ensure that members of our school community are directed to the most appropriate person to assist them, the information below outlines key contacts for common queries:

Contact the school front office on (03) 8534 6100 or elsternwick.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au to:

- report any urgent issues relating to a student on a particular day
- parent/carer payments
- for enquiries regarding camps and excursions
- report a potential hazard or incident on the school site
- if you are unable to report a student absence using your Compass portal app
- make a complaint to the Principal/Assistant Principal
Please also refer to our Complaints policy, available at: <http://elsternwickps.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/EPS-Complaints-Policy.pdf>
- All other general enquiries

Please contact your classroom teacher or the Wellbeing Coordinator to discuss a student's academic progress, health or wellbeing. See appendix (a) for a full communication directory.

School staff will do their best to respond to general queries as soon as possible and ask that you allow them 2 – 3 working days to provide you with a detailed response. School staff will endeavour to respond to urgent matters within 24 hours where possible.

Requests for information

Parents and carers are generally entitled to information ordinarily provided to parents, including school reports and newsletters. Parents and carers seeking information that is not ordinarily provided to parents are encouraged to apply for access through the Freedom of Information process, or, if the information is sought for use in court proceedings, by issuing a subpoena.

Freedom of Information requests should be directed to:

Manager – Freedom of Information Unit
 Department of Education and Training
 2 Treasury Place
 EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002
 03 9637 3134
foi@edumail.vic.gov.au

Review cycle

This policy was last updated on April 2020 and is scheduled for view in April 2023.

APPENDIX (A)

COMMUNICATION DIRECTORY

Talking to...	Talking about...	For Example...	How to Communicate...	Response Time...
School Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School administration The School Office is often the first point of contact for a parents/carers. The School Office will channel requests, feedback and concerns to the right people for you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety & repair needing immediate attention School fees & payments Timetabling appointments for the Principal and AP Urgent messages for teachers and/or other staff General queries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone call Email In person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately or ASAP
School Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School wide issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grounds Health and safety Parent/Carer communication Polices or guidelines Finance or budgets Health and safety Outsourced programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone call/letter to the School Council President or other member of School Council Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged with proposed course of action at next school council meeting
Parents & Friends Association (P&F Assoc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions or comments regarding issues around P&F functioning as well as issues impacting on school community spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Fundraising Social events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion with Class Rep or P&F Executive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged by Year Level Rep or P&F Executive within 1-5 days and such matters normally discussed at termly P&F Executives meeting. Urgent issues will be address on a weekly basis.

<p>Class teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child's progress and/or happiness or the curriculum It is not appropriate to raise an issue face to face during school hours as this does not allow the teacher involved to give you their full attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home reading Not wanting to go to school Any positive feedback for the teacher Unhappy in class or at lunchtime Educational event info e.g Naplan/excursion Absence note Assisting in the classroom Organisational queries, such as lost property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email Make appointment time for phone call response If necessary arrange a face-to-face meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally acknowledged within 2 school days with proposed course of action
<p>Grade team leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child's progress and/or happiness or the curriculum due to seeing the issue as a team wide concern/query Students from several classes in the same grade are involved It is not appropriate to raise an issue face to face during school hours as this does not allow the teacher to give you their full attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent messages/expectations from teachers within the team Bullying issues across classes within the level Clarification of a learning unit Homework guidelines Positive feedback about teacher performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email Make appointment time for phone call response If necessary arrange a face-to-face meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally acknowledged within 2 school days with proposed course of action.
<p>Assistant Principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School wide issues Your child's progress or wellbeing because other channels (i.e. teacher, team leader) have been tried Child Safety Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Safety Act Complex student issues Cyber bullying and bullying issues Curriculum Student welfare issues such as accessing Speech Pathology or Psychology, if you have difficulty making payments Issues involving school staff School wide Behaviour Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email Phone front office and arrange a meeting time Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged within 1-5 school days depending on urgency of issue.
<p>Principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School wide issues Your child's progress or wellbeing because other channels (i.e. teacher, team leader & Assistant Principal) have been tried Parents/carers are encouraged to request a meeting to discuss more serious matters Child Safety Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Safety Act School safety issues such as parking School policy Very complex student issues School staff School management issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email Phone front office and arrange a meeting time Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged within 1-5 school days depending on urgency of issue.