



BANNISTER CREEK
Primary School

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Communication Policy

2021 - 2023



Overview

At Bannister Creek Primary School, we believe that consistent and effective communication is key in building and maintaining positive relationships with our school community. Student learning and engagement is maximised when all stakeholders are engaged in the education process and purposeful relationships are formed between school and home.

Bannister Creek Primary School uses various forms of communication to ensure our community is informed. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the main methods of communication and their uses. This policy outlines the streams of communication including expectations of staff and appropriate methods available for parents to communicate with the school.

Aim

We aim to:

- encourage positive partnerships between the school, families and wider community by ensuring all stakeholders are kept informed about matters relating to the operation of the school.
- Ensure processes are in place which allow for open and honest communication amongst stakeholders
- Ensure confidential information is managed in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations.
- Provide clear, positive and fair processes and guidelines that allow issues of concerns to be aired and resolved in a timely, effective and respectful manner.
- Provide an environment where all stakeholders feel confident voicing their opinions and concerns and have these acknowledged.

Communication Agreements

Communication Tools & Strategies

School → Community Communication		
Mechanism	Purpose	Frequency
Newsletters	To communicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principals address - Upcoming events - Community Notices - Award winners - Events - Achievements - Reminders - Updates from P&C and School Board 	Fortnightly
Assemblies	To communicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principals address - Upcoming events - Class items - Merit certificates - Aussie of the Month - Councillors address 	Fortnightly
Connect Notices	To communicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upcoming events - Notices 	Regularly (daily/weekly)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reminders - Newsletters - Student reports - Letters 	
Website	<p>To communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School overview (Vision and Values, services and facilities) - School Business Plan - Policies and Guidelines - Enrolment information - Canteen menu and ordering - Absentee information and reporting - Newsletters - Camp Australia information - Uniform information - Staff (names, placements, roles) - School Board and P&C updates - Baldja Waangkiny Aboriginal Parent Group information - Upcoming Events - Term Planner - Notices - Gallery - Contact Information 	Ongoing updates
Instagram	<p>To communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School events - Gallery showcase 	Ongoing updates
School Events	<p>To provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whole school messages - Opportunities for community engagement - Informal discussions 	Annually (Harmony Day, ANZAC Day, P4AC, etc)
School Open Nights	<p>To communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student progress - Student academic achievement - Classroom rules/expectations - Classroom events 	Bi-annually

School → Parent Communication		
Mechanism	Purpose	Frequency
Parent/Teacher meetings	<p>To communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child's progress and achievement - Concerns or issues - Social and emotional needs - Support plans/ IEP's 	1 x per term
Start of year Open Night	<p>To communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom expectations - introductions between teachers and families - homework policies and procedures - whole school operations 	Term 1



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- rules and behaviour management procedures- methods for communication	
Emails	Emails are used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- provide a record of conversations- inform parents of minor incidents/ occurrences- request parent meetings- respond to questions/ queries relating to child- follow up unexplained absences	As needed
Seesaw	Seesaw is used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- demonstrate individual student progress- provide regular updates and examples of student work- provide cohort messages from teachers- provide parents a snapshot of classroom work.	At least once a week
Phone Calls	Phone Calls are used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- inform parents about incidents that occur at school- arrange parent/teacher meetings- clarify or discuss issues- inquire about absentees	As needed
Informal Conversations	Informal Conversations are used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- briefly discuss child's progress- discuss minor issues or concerns- briefly provide feedback on learning- arrange parent meetings	As needed

Email Protocols for Teacher and Parent Communication

Protocols for Parent email use:

Emails are an easy and convenient way to send messages. However, teachers read emails at different times of the day which means replies may not be immediate. You may not receive an email reply at all as the staff member may be addressing requests or concerns. We have developed the following guidelines to assist you in using and receiving emails from the classroom teacher.

Email is appropriate for:

- brief enquiries relating to individual child
- organisation of parent teacher conferences
- to clarify absences
- to pass on relevant information regarding child
- reporting an absence or upcoming appointment for a child

Email is not appropriate for:

- enquiring regarding child's academic progress (best addressed in parent conference or phone conversation)
- in-depth discussion about child, however email can be used to raise a topic for a future meeting



- Submitting a child's homework (this is their responsibility)
- Sending non-vital messages (such as messages informing child where to get picked up – please contact office in this case)
- Threatening or offensive language
- Sensitive information about the child or an incident that has occurred – arrange a meeting with the teacher
- Personal sharing of information with the teacher (family issues, personal concerns)

When sending an email;

- Identify yourself in the subject line (and name of child)
- CC is used if you would like another recipient to be aware of your email
- BCC is used for privacy reasons
- Ensure emails are respectfully written as meaning can be misinterpreted
- Be aware that staff are given 3 working days to reply to emails
- Be aware that staff are only required to respond to emails when on site and are not required to reply when on approved leave or student vacation time.
- Staff are not required to respond to emails during weekends or school holiday periods.

Protocols for Staff email use:

The Department of Education provides email accounts for teachers to facilitate parent/teacher communication and internal, as well as system wide staff communication. The school maintains the right to block or access email messages held within department accounts.

Staff using email to correspond with parents must adhere to the following;

- Must use the school provided email account
- Emails must never be used to discuss contentious, emotional or highly confidential issues
- Staff maintain a professional tone, including an appropriate greeting and signature.

When sending an email:

- Emails should be short and directional in nature and only include facts
- Care should be given when using student names. Only refer to the child of that parent by name.
- Email messages should be consistent in tone, grammar, format and salutation
- Staff will CC in a member of administration to all emails that contain a complaint or dispute

Absences

Student absences are required to be reported directly to the school. Reporting can occur in a number of ways;

- Email the main school account
- Call the front office
- Email the classroom teacher
- SMS school phone
- Write a note for the teacher
- Website reporting
- Report via Connect



Issues and Complaints

When a parent or family member wishes to discuss an issue, concern or complaint regarding a situation, the procedure is to:

- Initially contact the classroom teacher to try and resolve at a classroom level.
- Contact the Principal or Deputy Principals to arrange a meeting.

When parents have a concern or wish to discuss an issue of a sensitive nature, they should make an appointment with the Principal or Deputy Principal by contacting the school office, either by phone or coming into the office, and asking the Office staff to arrange a meeting time.

In the case of urgent matters, the Principal should be informed immediately.