



Gardeners Road Public School



Communication Policy between Parents and the School

I. Objectives

Communication between parents and our school is an essential component of running and maintaining a successful school. We strive for transparent, positive and meaningful communication in everything we do. We encourage an exchange of ideas with all our stakeholders and understand that this notion is a key to positive and long-lasting growth. Our school aims to maintain an environment where people feel their views are valued and respected, and where they feel they have been heard.

II. Definitions

1. For the purpose of all these definitions, and where mentioned throughout this policy – the singular or plural versions of a word hold identical meaning (e.g. parent and parents).
2. 'Parent' is defined as a parent, caregiver or legal guardian.
3. 'School' is defined as Gardeners Road Public School.
4. 'Stakeholder' is defined as any person reasonably considered to have an interest or concern with school matters (e.g. student, classroom teacher, NSW Minister for Education).
5. 'Classroom Teacher' is defined as the main classroom teacher responsible for a student's education.
6. 'School Note' is defined as official written correspondence between the school and parents. It will always contain the school's logo and contact information.

III. General Communication

1. At the beginning of each academic year, parents will be given an opportunity to attend a meet-and-greet. The purpose of this is to provide parents with an opportunity to meet their child's teacher in a relaxed, informal setting and gain a brief snapshot of their child's upcoming academic year. Information regarding this event will be sent to parents in the form of a school note.
2. Students are issued with a school report twice a year. School reports contain assessments of student academic performance and comments relating to a number of key learning areas. Unless otherwise prearranged between the respective classroom teacher and parent, all school reports will be enclosed in a sealed envelope and given to students to take home.
3. Parents are given the opportunity to attend annual Parent-Teacher-Student Interviews. The purpose of these interviews is to discuss a student's progress and any academic concerns. Information regarding this event will be sent to parents in the form of a school note.
4. Teachers are available for additional meetings with parents throughout the academic year. Parents who wish to engage with a teacher for an additional meeting are required to schedule an appointment with school office staff either by phone, email or in person. The initial communication between parents and office staff should include availabilities and the general nature of the meeting.
5. The designated day which school notes are distributed is Thursday. From time to time, the school may send additional school notes on other days due to its pressing nature (e.g. Warning about Head Lice).
6. A minimum of two weeks notice in writing is provided for school events that affect parents or require them to make a monetary payment.
7. A school gazette is distributed fortnightly. The gazette contains information about upcoming events, up-to-date school matters, promotion material and messages from teachers. The gazette is primarily made available to parents via the school mobile phone application 'School Enews'. Parents can make arrangements via the school office to receive the gazette by another method (e.g. printed copy, email).

IV. Electronic Mail

1. Parents are provided with the email address of their child's classroom teacher.
2. Parents are advised not to use email as a way to communicate pressing matters and should only be used for professional purposes.
3. Teachers will reply to emails within 48 hours, however:

- a. Teachers who are not on school grounds at the time they receive an email will respond within 48 hours from the next time they are at school
 - b. Occasionally teachers may seek advice prior to replying to an email; delaying the response
4. Teachers may request a meeting with parents if an issue is too complex to resolve by email.

V. Other Electronic Forms

1. The school website (www.gardeners-p.schools.nsw.edu.au) is designed to share the school's overall mission and vision, as well as other important information, website links and documents.
2. The website is updated infrequently and should not be relied upon for the latest up-to-date information.
3. A mobile application called 'School Enews' is used to communicate the latest information (including The Gazette) to parents. It is also used to communicate last minute changes to school events, and as an additional way to make school notes available. The application can be downloaded onto your mobile device via your application store (e.g. App Store, Google Play).
4. It is important that all parents have access to 'School Enews'. Teachers from the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Team are available to assist parents with downloading and using the application. Parents who would like assistance are encouraged to make a request via the office staff.
5. The school Twitter (twitter.com/gardenersroad) is designed to promote the school, share our academic success with the community and other educational agencies, provide updates and messages to parents, and showcase the specific work being achieved by our teachers and students.
6. The school Twitter can be viewed using these methods:
 - a. Follow the Twitter handle: @GardenersRoad (this requires a Twitter account)
 - b. Go to the website: twitter.com/gardenersroad
 - c. Type the following keywords into a search engine: gardeners road twitter
7. The rules of consent with regard to publishing photos of students apply to Twitter, as they would for our website, gazette and any other means whereby it may be reasonable to suspect a member of the public can view such material. A copy of the most up-to-date 'Permission to Publish' records are kept by the ICT Coordinators and due vigilance is maintained whenever material is posted or uploaded.
8. In the event a photo is posted in error and reported to the school's ICT Coordinators – the photo will be immediately removed.

VI. Grievances

1. Parents who have a complaint or concern are encouraged to advise the school.
2. The first point of contact should be the classroom teacher.
3. Complaints or concerns should not be raised through the school's social media platforms.
4. Any parent making a complaint or raising a concern is expected to:
 - a. Do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
 - b. Provide complete and factual information; preferably in writing
 - c. Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
 - d. Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
 - e. Act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner