
BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

Kensington Primary School understands the importance of providing helpful and timely responses to common enquiries from parents and carers.

PURPOSE

This policy explains how Kensington Primary School will manage common enquiries from parents and carers.

GUIDELINES / IMPLEMENTATION

School staff will do their best to respond to general queries as soon as possible and ask that parents/carers allow 2 – 3 working days to provide a response. School staff will endeavour to respond to urgent matters within 24 hours where possible. Parents and carers should ring the school if the matter is urgent.

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.

Procedure for contacting the Office

- to report a student absence, please contact the school office on 9376 6013.
- for parent payments, please contact the office and ask for Business Manager, Patricia Santalucia.
- for all other enquiries, please contact our Office on 9376 6013 or email kensington.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Procedure for contacting a classroom teacher

Parents wishing to contact a member of staff to discuss matters relating to their child are asked to contact their child's teacher via kensington.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au to organise a meeting time, giving a brief outline of the issue. Contact can also be made by using one of the following approaches:

- Contact the school by phone to arrange a mutually suitable meeting time. Teachers are not available to answer phone calls or come to the office during teaching time or whilst on yard duty. Teachers are also not available during scheduled weekly after school staff meetings and professional development sessions.
- Contact the appropriate teacher in writing asking them to organise a suitable meeting time.

Procedure for contacting school leaders

If a parent or guardian has spoken with their child's classroom teacher and needs further support or clarification the following steps are to be taken:

- Contact the Principal, Assistant Principal or a relevant school leader, using one of the three approaches outlined above
- When parents have a concern or wish to discuss an issue relating to a member of staff or of a sensitive nature, they should make an appointment with the Principal by contacting the school office, either by phone, email or coming to the office personally, and asking an administration officer to arrange a suitable meeting time.

- In all cases if the matter is urgent and/ or relates to the possible risk or harm to a student, a member of staff or another member of the school community, the Principal should be informed immediately and the urgency of the matter conveyed. The Principal will determine who is the most appropriate person to deal with the issue and the process to work towards a resolution.
- Kensington Primary School will deal with all complaints and issues sensitively, promptly and confidentially. Matters will be investigated and dealt with in a timely manner. In working through any issues, a resolution which treats all parties with dignity and respect will be sought. Issues and matters which have been raised will be kept in the strictest of confidence and not discussed with any other persons, excepting those directly involved.
- Anonymous complaints will not be accepted or acted upon and nor will complaints being brought forward by a third person. We all need to be courageous when having challenging conversations.
- Resolving matters of concern are best achieved through face-to-face contact with the appropriate person. We encourage talking directly to the person face-to-face with the intention of developing an understanding of all perspectives. Emails and letters should be brief, alerting the person to the issue; they should not be used as a forum for in-depth discussion.
- Formal meetings will be minuted and all persons involved will receive a copy of the minutes. Any correspondence received by the school will be kept in a secure file.

Issues arising between students and families

No parent should approach the children of other families or their parents/carers with a school related or non-school related issue on the school grounds. Such matters must be addressed to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Forms of Communication to parents/carers

Information relating to the school is communicated through the following:

- Parent Information Handbook
- School Website
- Newsletter (fortnightly) and Office Update (fortnightly)
- Notes home
- Student Diaries
- Email, telephone and text messages sent to mobile phones
- Assembly (weekly)
- School Council meetings and sub committee meetings - dates published in School Calendar
- Notice boards
- Office Staff

RELEVANT RESOURCES (DET)

- DET School Policy Template Portal
- DET Parent Complaint Policy
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/community/policyparentsconcerns.pdf>

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's policy review cycle, in 2022.

This Policy was approved by School Council: May 28 2018.

