

SUNRIDGE CIRCLE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Communication Policy

INTRODUCTION

The use of a communications policy document within Sunridge Circle Primary School is essential to ensure efficient and effective communication between teachers and parents and to provide a clear framework for all stakeholders to work within.

Good communication between teachers and parents is imperative to the quality of education provided. Within the service of educating young people there are bound to be differing opinions between home and school. Where these are smoothly managed the process continues to grow in a positive manner. Where the relationship is damaged, due to intolerance, disrespect or other unacceptable behaviour, the growth of the child may be adversely affected.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all parents and teachers understand the procedure for communicating issues which affect the education of the children. The teachers have a need to communicate with the parents at regular intervals and the parents are invited to communicate with the teachers as and when it may be required.

ACCEPTABLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS:

- All legitimate and fair concerns need to be addressed between parents and teachers in the following manner:
 - a polite telephone call via the School office;
 - a polite letter or note in the learner's communication book or homework diary;
 - a pre-arranged meeting at the School; or
 - a message via the school dojo app.
 - Where confidential or sensitive information is communicated it must be sent in a sealed envelope to the recipient.
 - Interview requests via communication book or homework diary must be cordial and respectful without divulging information that could be harmful.
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- Telephonic contact via the School office is acceptable provided that parents understand that teachers cannot return calls immediately. Calls will be returned as soon as possible.
- The secretary in the front office will convey to the parents from the teachers the approximate expected time of the return call.
- The secretary in the front office will facilitate communications between parents but do not wish to be informed about the issue. Academic issues should never be discussed with the office staff.
- When dealing with an issue, the appropriate channels must be followed.

UNACCEPTABLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS:

- Communication which is demeaning and derogatory in nature.
- Notes on scrap paper will not be accepted nor responded to.
- Interviews will not be conducted in the classroom without a prior appointment.
- Rude remarks in the communication book or homework diary are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Sending sensitive messages in the communication book, homework diary or anywhere else where children are able to view the information is unacceptable.
- Whilst cell phones facilitate better communication between people they do invade privacy. Cell phones (whether an SMS or a call) should be used with discretion and for urgent issues only and should not be used during lessons.
- A parent should never contact a teacher on his/her cell phone or home telephone, and social media.
- Interviews will be arranged at times that suit both parties. Where either party is unable to attend the interview the other party needs to be notified timeously. Should the interview be missed an appropriate apology to the other party must be offered.

TEACHERS WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

- Listen
 - Remain calm and professional
 - Respect the parents and their concerns
 - Meet the needs of the child first
 - Never victimize a child after a meeting
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- Return calls asap
- Make themselves available
- Reply to messages in communication book or homework diary
- Respond to letters provided that the "Kiddie post" system works
- Provide professional follow up should it be required
- Keep appointments
- Use a sealed envelope for contentious/ sensitive replies to parents.

TEACHERS WILL NOT:

- Accept verbal abuse
- Discuss children or their parents in public areas
- Accept parent's excuses for the child's responsibility
- Be rude in response to parents
- Ignore messages (if they are received)
- Victimize children
- Ignore genuine concerns
- Tolerate classroom interruptions
- Wait more than 10 minutes from the allocated time for appointments
- Respond to anonymous letters but will pass them to HOD's for their information purposes only

PARENTS WILL ENDEAVOUR TO

- Recognize and respect the' professional status of teachers
 - Treat teachers and teachers' assistants with respect at all times, particularly in the presence of children
 - Communicate with teachers and teachers' assistants in a courteous and dignified manner
 - Avoid discussing their individual concerns with other parents or third parties;
 - Refrain from entering the teaching areas during school time, unless invited to do so for purposes of a pre-arranged meeting with a teacher. In all instances, a parent must first report to the school's reception.
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- Keep appointments

CHANNELS FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS:

1. Meet teacher to discuss matters irrespective of what the issue is (In difficult matters, the teacher may request the Grade Head to attend).
2. Grade Head
3. Relevant HOD depending on Phase child is in
4. Deputy Principal
5. Principal

If, in relation to a particular matter, a parent believes that it would be inappropriate to follow the aforesaid channels, the parent must discuss the matter with the Principal who will then decide on the process to be followed.

MINUTES

In every meeting a written minute will be kept of the meeting.

COMMUNICATION: DOJO

- Parents will endeavour not to send messages after 16:00 in the afternoon and before 07:15 in the morning unless there is a serious issue or emergency.
- Teachers will not respond to messages during their personal time as well as during teaching time.
- The school/ teachers will not post after 17:00 in the afternoons and before 07:15 in the morning.
- The school will limit number of posts and keep it to a minimum.
- The class teacher will not post when he/she is on leave of any kind and will not respond to parents. Communication if a teacher is not at school can be done directly to the office via the schools contact number.
- The class teacher will keep posts limited as to not over use the platform and lose its effect.
- Confidential matters must not be sent via Dojo.
- We will not post on weekends, unless there is an urgent reminder for something, this will not be before 10am and after 16:00 pm.

COMMUNICATION: WHATSAPP



- There are class groups with parents/ guardian contact numbers created. Only admins can send messages in the groups.
- Parents may not communicate learner matters via WhatsApp. Teachers do not check the phone and the WhatsApp is not monitored, which means messages are missed.
- The school is starting to move away from this forum completely as its very difficult and time consuming to manage. We urge all parents to join the class dojo.
- The principal and deputy principal does send messages via WhatsApp to report lateness.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STAFF:

- Any form of communication will always be done in the most respectful way. No tolerance for abusive and disrespectful language of any kind will be tolerated.
- WhatsApp groups are used as a means of communication. No offensive/ funny messages are allowed.
- Teachers must refrain from sending messages on weekends, before 7:15 in the morning and after 17:00 in the afternoon. When staff leave work, this becomes family time and so communication with regards to work related matters must wait.
- WhatsApp messages must remain confidential and nothing private or personal may be shared about other staff and learners/ parents.

POLICY APPROVAL

DESIGNATION		DATE
PRINCIPAL	<i>[Signature]</i>	2023/06/13
SGB CHAIR	<i>[Signature]</i>	2023/06/13
REVUE DATE	2026/06/13	

WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
 Sunridge Circle Primary School

13 JUN 2023

c/o Gie and Circle Road
 Table View

