Mukinbudin District High School

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Endorsed by School Board – 2nd December 2024

Purpose

Mukinbudin District High School's Communication Policy supports a positive learning environment through mutual respect and effective communication between students, staff, and parents. Following Department of Education protocols, the policy encourages productive school relationships to enhance student learning.

Effective communication is essential in providing students, teachers, parents and the community with the necessary information to make appropriate decisions. Mukinbudin District High School is committed to using communication processes and techniques that aim to build a positive learning environment for students, staff and parents in order to inspire and educate all students to succeed in becoming productive and valued citizens.

Our school aligns with the Department of Educations 'School Communities Working Together: Communication Protocols' document https://www.education.wa.edu.au/dl/q3vvkq see the excerpt below.

> *In Western Australia, parents/carers, school staff and students share responsibility for public schools providing safe, supportive and productive learning environments. We achieve this through our relationships, good communication and working together.*
>
> ***Creating positive environments***
>
> *Our public schools provide positive environments for students to learn and for staff to work. This is achieved by school staff, parent/carers and students:*
> - *valuing and supporting every member of the school community and appreciating their contributions*
> - *celebrating diversity and individuality; cooperation and acceptance are welcomed and encouraged*
> - *forming positive connections*
> - *creating friendly, supportive and cohesive communities.*
>
> ***Promoting respectful relationships***
>
> *Every student, staff member and parent/carer has the right to feel safe and be safe at school.*
> *This is achieved by:*
> - *teaching students about respect and appropriate relationships as part of the Western Australian Curriculum and students are expected to maintain positive behaviour in their school community.*
> - *principals working with their school community to create positive behaviour models and deal appropriately with students who violate the rights of other students and staff.*
> - *parents/carers encouraging, promoting and modelling good behaviour and respect for others at home, school and in their communities.*

We maintain high expectations of our staff in communicating with our parents, but also have high expectations in how our community interacts with our staff. This is important in ensuring positive, open and authentic communication that leads to a supportive, friendly and caring environment for our students.

The goals of this policy are to:

- provide a guide to ensure that issues are dealt with in a fair, consistent, and open manner.
- ensure that the rights of students, teachers and parents are respected and upheld.
- assist parents, carers and school staff in organising a time to communicate in a safe and confidential atmosphere.
- establish guidelines for parents to follow to help resolve concerns regarding social, emotional and educational matters.

Methods of Communication

Mukinbudin District High School prides itself on its communication strategy with parents. We use a variety of communication platforms and modes to ensure all members of our community receive important information about the school, in a timely manner. These communication methods are outlined below. Communication with teachers should take place during normal school hours (Monday to Friday, 8.25am – 3.30pm). Our staff are not expected to reply to parents outside of school hours. Parents should not be contacting staff on their personal mobiles or social media platforms. We appreciate your cooperation with this.

What parents can expect

- Regular communication from the school across a variety of platforms.
- Parent Interviews, classroom meetings, three-way student conferences.
- Other opportunities to meet with the teacher by appointment.
- Updates about important developments in the child's class (e.g., excursions. practicum teachers, large class project, assembly item etc.).
- Notification of any serious single issue or ongoing issues concerning your child.
- Opportunities to provide feedback (e.g., through confidential surveys, P&C, School Board).
- Parent communications acknowledged within two business days and responded to within an appropriate and timely manner.

Appropriate Communication with Staff

We encourage all parents to communicate with our staff, whether it be around your child's learning, information about the school, an event coming up, a question or concern you may have, or something else. This communication must be conducted in a polite, respectful and positive manner, which promotes a positive relationship between home and school. Communication that does not meet this expectation will be referred to the principal. The chain of communication must be adhered to when communicating with our staff to ensure information is directed to the right person, and that questions or concerns can be resolved in a timely manner.

When should parents contact their child's teacher? (Classroom, Specialist)

- Safety issues or changes in behaviour at home.
- If you have concerns about your child's academic or social progress.
- If you have concerns about your child's mental health.
- When you can't keep a scheduled appointment.
- If there is a sudden change in your child not wanting to attend school or being
- overly anxious about school attendance.
- When homework takes much more time than expected, or your child is unable to
- do most of the homework independently.
- If your child has head lice or any communicable disease. Please see https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Communicable-disease-guidelines

What information should be communicated to the school office?

- Absence due to sickness; Planned absences (e.g., medical appointments). Please note that there is an approval process through the principal for holidays planned during term time.
- Any issues related to custody or access.
- Changes in address or contact details.
- Changes to medical action plans.
- Other changes to original enrolment paperwork (e.g., address, phone numbers).
- When there are changes in family circumstances.

What parents cannot expect (although it may occur)

- School staff returning calls after work hours (including weekends).
- Emails to be answered in the evenings or weekends.
- Access to teachers' private phone numbers or emails.
- Unscheduled interviews to be able to occur.
- Information about other students at the school to be disclosed.
- School issues to be responded to via social media.

Electronic Communication

Electronic communication, such as email or messaging through Seesaw platform, is highly convenient and can be used for short, non- urgent and positive forms of communication. You will receive an acknowledgement of the communications within two business days, if a further response is required then this will be followed up with a response within five days from the staff member.

When a Face-to-Face Meeting is Best

Electronic communication is not appropriate for more complex or emotional situations. Similarly, if you have concerns for your child's academic progress. In these cases, parents should request a face-to-face interview so that your issues can be given the time and attention that they deserve. If in doubt, schedule a meeting.

When to Contact School Leadership

For most discussions, the classroom teacher will be parents' first point of contact. However, where conversations involve conflict, other families or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school, members of the school leadership team (Principal and Deputy Principals) must be involved. Either a staff member or a parent may request the involvement of a member from the school leadership team at any time.

Community-Based Engagement

P&C Association and School Board Meetings: Open meetings are held termly for the P&C and at least once per term for the School Board, with community input encouraged.

Local Newspaper (Muka Matters): The school newsletter is printed in the Muka Matters to keep the community informed of student activities and important dates.

Assemblies: These are held twice per term and are open to the whole community, this is where students are recognised for their achievements (based on the schools PBS CARE values) over the previous weeks and where our students get to showcase their talents during class performances. Reports on school events that have happened are delivered, and advertisement of upcoming events and information are presented.

COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Mukinbudin DHS has a variety of platforms that it uses to communicate to families and the wider community.
The purpose of this is to have an informed community and celebrate our school successes.

Facebook	**Compass** ***Admin***	**Seesaw** ***Whole School***	**Newsletter**	**Weekly Memo**	**Webpage –** (mukinbudindhs.wa.edu.au)
Tell stories, show off our partnerships and showcase significant events; i.e. NAIDOC, Science Week, Sporting events, etc This is for everyone. Publish newsletters, term planners and other notifications.	Send notices regarding upcoming events, track parent communication and absentee notifications, sick bay/ illness notifications, behaviour notifications (Red, Orange and Green).	Share class photos and build confidence in our parent base of our learning intents and programs. Through 'class' it also engages students in their learning. Publish newsletters. All online permission forms.	Pictures and key community messages for extended family/ friends (i.e. grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc) and community members. Minimum 2 per Term.	Operational information at the school/ staff level for the week.	Information repository especially for current parents, prospective staff and prospective parents. Includes school planning, behaviour management policy, meeting minutes, term planners etc.
Reach: Parents, friends and family not in Mukinbudin, prospective students and staff, community members not directly linked to the school.	**Reach:** Current parents. Specific classes and groups can be targeted.	**Reach:** Current parents. Specific students or class groups can be targeted. Can include extended family (i.e. grandparents).	**Reach:** Community in and around Mukinbudin. Link sent through Compass & Seesaw – available on website. Often parts sent to the 'Muka Matters'	**Reach:** Staff only.	**Reach:** Worldwide.
Showcase	**Inform**	**Share**	**Share**	**Staff Information**	**Reference**

One of our core business plan priorities is Home, School and Community partnerships. Our goal is to continue to have quality interactions to ensure all parents are kept well informed.

COMMUNICATION FLOW CHART

Speak with the Classroom Teacher

If you have concerns about what is happening in your child's classroom, in the first instance, contact your class teacher. This keeps the lines of communication open and maintains a positive relationship between caregivers and teaching staff.

Contact the class teacher through Seesaw, email or by leaving a phone message with office staff.

Speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal

If your question or concern has not been resolved, contact the school office and request and appointment or phone call with the Deputy or Principal. Your request will be referred to the appropriate person who will get in contact with you in a reasonable time frame.

Speak with Regional Office

If your question or concern has not been satisfactorily resolved, you can contact the Wheatbelt Education Regional Office.

Telephone: 9622 0200
wheatbelt.ero@education.wa.edu.au

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURES

Purpose

To ensure that complaints lodged at MDHS are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.
To promote the highest standard of professionalism in dealing with our community.

Policy

Staff at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness.

Where we cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant, Principal or District Director can forward written complaints to the Director General of the Department of Education and Training.

Making a Complaint

Complaints can be made:
verbally;
by letter; or
by email.

Help is available at the school to support complainants to formulate, write and lodge a complaint. Complaints can be lodged with the school using any of the contact methods listed above. Written complaints should be addressed “Private and Confidential, Principal, Mukinbudin District High School, White Street, Mukinbudin, WA 6479”.

Responsiveness

We will acknowledge complaints within five school days. We seek to resolve local complaints within 14 days. If because of the serious nature of the complaint, it is deemed necessary to forward it on to another section of the Department, we will do this without delay.

In all cases you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Enquiring on a complaints progress

You may enquire as to the progress of your complaint at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. At the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint, this person will be identified for you.

Outcome of a complaint

We will advise you verbally or in writing of the outcome of the complaint. The outcome of all written complaints will be provided to you in writing.

When a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint

If you are unsatisfied with our attempts to resolve your complaint, you may wish to express your concerns to the Director of Education—Wheatbelt. To do this contact:
Director of Education—Wheatbelt
Wheatbelt Education Regional Office
Phone: 96220200
Email: wheatbelt.ero@education.wa.edu.au

Rejecting a Complaint

Complaints judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged to not warrant further action, will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.