



STAFF EMAILING PROTOCOL

PURPOSE

At Westmeadows Primary School we are committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to communication being respectful, measured, sensitive and constructive. In adhering to these principles we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents and staff at the school, to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our children.

We acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents communicating via email, but also understand its shortcomings. This protocol is designed to establish clear expectations for both staff and parents/caregivers in the use of email as a communication tool.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All Westmeadows Primary School Staff

PROTOCOL

Guidelines

We acknowledge that email is very convenient for parents who may find it difficult to speak to school staff during regular work hours. However, our school community values a face to face meeting and phone conversations and understands that these forms of communication are preferred in many situations.

Implementation

Staff Expectations

When communicating via email, staff are expected to adhere the email protocols below:

1. Emails are at their best when they are brief and informative. Issues that require a level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone.
2. The academic progress, learning expectations or behavioural issues related to children will not be discussed via email. Email is for information, not conversations. Discussions of this nature should be conducted over the phone at an arranged time or in person.
3. Emails should always be respectful and constructive. If the email relates to a concern or problem, it needs to be focussed on understanding the problem and finding a solution.
4. The tone or intent of emails can easily be misunderstood, especially where humour or sarcasm are involved. Be conscious of this.
5. Avoid writing in capitals.
6. The DET email system is only to be used for school related matters. They are not to be used for jokes, chain letters or commercial solicitations.
7. Please remember that email is not necessarily confidential and can be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) regulations. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or face-to-face.

Staff should also consider the following:

1. Email must never be used to discuss contentious, emotional or highly confidential issues. These issues should be dealt with face-to-face or by phone.
2. Email messages to parents should be consistent with professional practices for other correspondence. This includes grammar, format and salutation.
3. Staff are not expected to respond to abusive or confrontational emails and will forward them to the assistant principal and/or principal.
4. When any doubt exists, or contents of an email may be deemed to be sensitive, staff must seek the approval of the contents from the Principal.

Acceptable Use of Parent Communication

E-mail should be used for:

- General information such as; class activities, curriculum, assignments, tests, deadlines and special events.
- To arrange for a meeting/telephone call regarding a student issue including a general description of the issue e.g. "I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss your daughter's attendance."
- Follow-up on an issue that has previously been discussed.
- On-going communication about a student (as agreed) instead of a Communication Book.

Unacceptable Use of Parent Communication

E-mail should not include:

- Any discussion related to other students.
- Personal information about other students.
- Specifics about a sensitive student issue which was not initiated by the parent or had not previously been discussed with the parent. (e.g. 'I am concerned that your daughter failed the last three tests and was not at school again today.')
- Any discussion related to other staff.
- Any sensitive student information that would normally be discussed face-to-face or by phone. (e.g. I am concerned that your daughter may have a learning disability).

Generic Email Response

If a teacher believes that a topic is too sensitive for an e-mail reply, here are some generic responses:

Thank you for your e-mail. Westmeadows Primary School does not use email to discuss sensitive and/or confidential student information. In order to best address your concerns and quickly answer your questions, please feel free to call me at (insert school phone number) and I will be happy to discuss this with you further. Thank you.

Thank you for your e-mail. I feel this concern is too sensitive for email. I would prefer to speak in person regarding this matter. I will call you on (state the date and time) to discuss this matter further. Thank you.

The school maintains email accounts for teachers to facilitate parent/teacher communication and internal staff communication. The school/DEECD reserves the right to block or filter email messages to staff that are not directly related to School/DEECD business or the School's educational mission.

Remember that email is a quick way to send a message, but it is not necessarily the best way to get a quick reply.



PARENT EMAILING PROTOCOL

PURPOSE

At Westmeadows Primary School we are committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to communication being respectful, measured, sensitive and constructive. In adhering to these principles we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents and staff at the school, to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our children.

We acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents communicating via email, but also understand its shortcomings. This protocol is designed to establish clear expectations for both staff and parents/caregivers in the use of email as a communication tool.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All Westmeadows Primary School Parents

PROTOCOL

Guidelines

We acknowledge that email is very convenient for parents who may find it difficult to speak to school staff during regular work hours. However, our school community values a face to face meeting and phone conversations and understands that these forms of communication are preferred in many situations.

Implementation

Parent Expectations

When communicating via email, parents are expected to adhere the email protocols below:

1. Emails are at their best when they are brief and informative. Issues that require a level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone.
2. The academic progress, learning expectations or behavioural issues related to children will not be discussed via email. Email is for information, not conversations. Discussions of this nature should be conducted over the phone at an arranged time or in person.
3. Emails should always be respectful and constructive. If the email relates to a concern or problem, it needs to be focussed on understanding the problem and finding a solution.
4. The tone or intent of emails can easily be misunderstood, especially where humour or sarcasm are involved. Be conscious of this.
5. Avoid writing in capitals.
6. The DET email system is only to be used for school related matters. They are not to be used for jokes, chain letters or commercial solicitations.
7. Please remember that email is not necessarily confidential and can be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) regulations. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or face-to-face.

Parents should also consider the following:

1. Only communicate non-urgent messages via email. Send only non-vital messages via this medium. E.g. do not use email to inform your teacher that your child is to wait for you at the office after school or meet you somewhere when the day ends. A teacher may not have time to read your message in a timely fashion.
2. When agreed between the teacher and the parent (following a face-to-face or phone conversation) email may be used as a form of regular communication about a student's day at school (in place of a communication book).
3. Emails that are sent to staff will only be responded to between the hours outlined in the Government School Agreement 2017 (Monday-Friday 8:50am – 4:45pm) and could take up to 48 hours depending on work load, weekends and school holidays.

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Remember that email is a quick way to send a message, but it is not necessarily the best way to get a quick reply.