

Effective Communication Guidelines 2023

The following guidelines have been devised to ensure that all communication with our school is respectful and productive. These guidelines have been developed in line with the *DOE School Community Charter*.

Throughout the year parents and carers may engage with the school to:

- Discuss the progress or wellbeing of their own child.
- Express concern about actions of other students.
- Enquire about school policy or practice.

It is necessary to have procedures that will clarify matters promptly and fairly to ensure a safe and respectful school environment. *The best outcomes are achieved when all members of the school community are working together.*

The guidelines aim to:

- Support student learning by strengthening school and community partnerships.
- Provide a clear communication guide that supports students, their parents and carers and all staff at Newcastle East Public School.
- Ensure that the rights of students, teachers, parents and the school community are respected and upheld and that concerns are managed in appropriate, confidential and fair manner.

Parents and carers can expect:

- To be welcomed into our school to work in partnership to promote student learning.
- Communication from school staff will be timely, polite and informative.
- Professional relationships with school staff are based on transparency, honesty and mutual respect.
- To be treated fairly. Tolerance and understanding are promoted as we respect diversity.

Unacceptable behaviour may include but is not limited to:

- Aggressive or intimidating actions, such as violence, threatening gestures or physical proximity.
- Aggressive or intimidating language, including the use of obscenities, making sexist, racist or derogatory comments or using a rude tone.
- Treating members of the school community differently due to aspects such as their religion or disability.
- Inappropriate and time-wasting communication.

When visiting our school please note the following:

- All visitors to the school including parents and carers should not attend classrooms without a prior appointment. Approaching teachers after the morning bell, on the way to class or during class is not appropriate due to teachers' duty of care for the supervision, safety and learning of their students. This also includes discussing private concerns with teachers at school events such as carnivals and excursions where teachers have full duty of care to students.
- Visitors to the school including parents and carers must treat all people associated with the school with respect and courtesy. This includes all students, parents and carers, teaching staff, administration and support staff, OOSH and P&C members.
- When bringing children in late or departing early, parents must attend the school office to sign their child in/out for the day.
- Lunch boxes, hats, jumpers and other items must be taken to the school office, not directly to classrooms. This keeps interruptions to a minimum and maximises class learning.
- All enquiries are to be directed to the school office. Email is the preferred method of contact with the school office: newcastle-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au. Our administrative staff team is small, and high volumes of phone calls and in-person enquiries can be challenging to manage.
- All parents and visitors must sign in at the school office when entering or remaining on school grounds during school hours. Parents and visitors must wear a visitor badge. This excludes attendance at organised school events such as athletics carnivals or excursions.
- No parent should directly approach another person's child about school related incidents or with personal information.

Use of the Inclosed Lands Act

In very rare cases, where people wishing to express their concerns do so in an aggressive, threatening or violent manner, the principal or nominee has the legal authority under the Inclosed Lands Act to

- direct the person to immediately leave the grounds.
- call the police to remove the person should he/she refuse.
- withdraw future permission (by letter) for the person to enter the grounds without permission of the principal.
- Seek further legal avenues.

This includes phone calls, emails made to or about staff or directed towards staff or the school

Complaints Handling Procedure

Our preference is to address and resolve complaints at the school level where possible. Complaints can be made in writing directly to the school, or via the complaints and compliments form, available on the Department of Education’s Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions webpage

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/complaints-compliments-and-suggestions>

The principal and Department of Education staff use the Department’s Complaints Handling Policy to manage complaints.

Communication Guide 2023

| Concern | Appropriate Action |
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| I need to enquire about the academic progress of my child | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the school office via email newcastlee-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au with the teachers name in the subject line. You can also mark an email ‘confidential’ in the subject line. The teacher will make contact with you to arrange a suitable time to discuss your concern. <i>Teachers are not able to discuss concerns confidentially during teaching time, or when they have duty of care of students, this includes playground duty, assemblies, excursions, and the end of day pick up.</i> • For matters which are unresolved or require further support, contact the school office to request an appointment with the Assistant Principal supervising your child’s year group. |
| I am concerned about the wellbeing of own child | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the school office via email with the teachers name in the subject line. This email will be forwarded to the teacher. • The teacher will make contact and will request that you make an appointment to discuss the matter in more detail. <i>Teachers are not able to discuss confidential and sensitive information/ concerns with parents during teaching time, or when they have duty of care of students, including playground duty and assemblies.</i> • For matters which are unresolved or require further support, contact the office to request an appointment with the Assistant Principal supervising your child’s year group. <p><i>Teachers have a duty of care to students between 8.15am-3.15pm. Please be aware of this when awaiting their response</i></p> |
| I wish to discuss the actions of other students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the school office via email with the teachers name in the subject line. The class teacher will check and clarify details of the matter and will make a time to share this information with you as soon as possible and will arrange a face-to-face meeting or phone conversation. <p><i>It is not appropriate or productive to directly approach another child about behavioural concerns</i></p> |
| I have a concern regarding school policy or practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email the school office. State the nature of your query. This information with school policy or practice will be passed on to the appropriate executive member. |
| I need to change my details or information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To convey information about change of address, telephone number, emergency contacts, custody details, health issues etc, email the school office or update via Sentral Parent Portal. Please update within 14 days. |

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| Student absences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All known absences and planned absences should be communicated to the school office promptly in writing • Respond to the daily SMS if your child is absent or late for school. |
| My child is on an excursion, and I need to contact them | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the school office via email or phone and they will contact the coordinating teacher • For longer excursions, a school mobile number will be provided which you can contact directly. |
| I would like to know more about my child's learning | <p>We appreciate how important it is for families to be involved with their child is learning at school. There are several ways you can keep informed on your child's learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining our school facebook page where student success, events and classroom learning are regularly recognised. Our school has a dedicated social media team who are committed to keeping our community updated and involved. • Weekly assemblies are a positive way to see the progress of students and be involved in our school community. These are held each Monday at 8.45am. • Meet the teacher evenings will inform parents and carers of topics covered and daily routines. • Parent teacher interviews are held in term 1 to discuss your child's progress. • Reports are provided to families twice per year with the option to meet with the teacher. • Make an appointment to speak with your child's classroom teacher if you require support. |

Newcastle East Public School looks forward to working in partnership with the wider school community and building respectful, collaborative and productive relationships which support teaching and learning outcomes.

Mick McCann
Principal

Guidelines created: 27th January 2023

Guidelines will be reviewed: July 2023

