



## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY / EXPECTATIONS

This document outlines the strategies and expectations for Communications between Jells Park PS (school and teachers) and parents/carers of students.

At Jells Park PS there are a number of different ways in which we communicate with the community throughout the year that are aimed at ensuring parents are connected to the school and can support their child's learning. This allows greater input from parents and exposure to the work, the curriculum and activities being done in school by students.

The following methods will be available to all parents:

### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SCHOOL

#### **SENTRAL:**

This platform has availability for the school to send out short messages (push notifications) for urgent messages and reminders via the app and is available on mobile phones and iPads. It also allows the school to send out longer messages to issue notices, with attachments, via the dedicated email system, either from individual teachers or from the school administration team.

SENTRAL will be the primary method of communications from the school to parents, particularly for access to the school calendar (dates of events). Please ensure you have this App downloaded and that your email address is correct.

#### **FACEBOOK:**

Jells Park PS has an 'official' Facebook page. This is used primarily to celebrate school activities and demonstrate achievements, however is also occasionally used as a reminder of upcoming events and occasions. It is **not** used for communicating important messages and is blocked from most return posts and messaging. Each level coordinator is asked to provide content when they have significant events of interest.

#### **WEBSITE:**

The website is the access point for information such as policies, contacts within the school and an overview of our platforms and activities. It also provides details on school enrolments for prospective families and links to suppliers and services.

#### **WEBSITE - Notices**

All notices or forms that are issued by the school will be linked on the website (Communications/Notices). It is mandatory for the school to have permissions and payments for all events (excursions/incursions/ camps, etc). We will continue to email the initial advice to parents and any subsequent reminders will reference that notices are available on the website.

## **NEWSLETTER**

The school distributes a fortnightly newsletter, usually at the end of every even numbered week. The newsletter is a useful source of information, particularly for dates and upcoming events, as well as reporting on the learning and extra-curricular activities of the school and students.

## **“GETTING TO KNOW” FORM (Appendix 1):**

The school will distribute a ‘Getting to Know your Child’ form at the start of the year and will ask that it be returned to the classroom teachers by the end of Week 2 of Term 1 each year.

This form provides an opportunity for parents to tell teachers a little bit about their child by sharing any relevant background information on:

- family circumstances
- medical or health issues
- social / relationship concerns
- academic strengths / concerns
- any other particular needs.

This information will be treated sensitively and with the utmost confidentiality. It allows teachers to better cater for the individual needs of each child, both socially and academically.

If further communications are needed for a specific purpose the teacher or parent can request a meeting. This may be most pertinent to Foundation parents who wish to communicate directly with the teachers.

## **STUDENT REPORTS:**

Written school reports will be issued twice a year and will contain the following:

- Overview of Progression Points (government required)
- School Activities
- Attendance
- Continuum Tracker (‘can do independently’ / ‘working towards’ statements)
- Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) grid (tick box)
- Specialist grids (tick boxes and/or comments)

Written reports will not contain personalised comment from teachers – these can be delivered directly to parents at interviews or agreed meetings.

## **CONTINUUM TRACKER:**

The ‘real-time’ Curriculum is opened for a 2 week period for parents to view at the end of each term (excepting Term 1 for Foundation). This allows parents access to detailed information about their their child’s progress against the learning descriptors linked to the English and Mathematics curriculum.

## **PARENT – TEACHER INTERVIEWS:**

Parent-Teacher interviews are offered twice a year, allowing an opportunity for parents to be engaged in their child’s learning. The timeline and intent for interviews is detailed following:

**Structure:**

Beginning Term 1	'Getting to know' Form issued and returned.
End Term 1	Parent-Teacher Interviews Addressing <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Wellbeing/Social</li><li>- Preliminary testing results</li><li>- Goals set for Literacy, Numeracy, Personal</li></ul>
End Term 2	Written Student Report (Academic Progression/Specialists/SEL)
End Term 3	Parent-Teacher Interviews Addressing <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Progress in Literacy, Numeracy, Personal</li><li>- Revisit goals for the rest of the year</li></ul>
End of Term 4	Written Student Report (Academic Progress/Specialists/SEL)

**CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT (Work Samples):**

The school will present 4 opportunities per year to showcase assessed student work that parents can view independently.

At the end of each term parents will be provided with one uploaded work item, corrected / assessed, for **Reading, Writing, Numeracy** and the **Inquiry Project**.

These work samples will be predetermined by the teachers and will be consistent across a year level, with the intention of showing student progress throughout the year.

Foundation – Level 2 will present their Work Samples in manual form (workbook), while Level 3 – Level 6 will present a digital log, accessible through the SENTRAL platform, via the Continuous Assessment feature.

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM TEACHERS

**WELCOME EMAIL (Week 1, Term 1):**

Teachers will provide a 'welcome' letter to all families at the start of the year. This letter will provide an introduction and the email contact details for your child's classroom teacher.

**INTRODUCTION POWERPOINT (By Week 3, Term 1):**

Each Year Level will provide parents with a Powerpoint presentation (or similar) that will provide information on a variety of Level relevant topics.

Information topics: Learning platforms and changes, other curriculum changes, SEL topics, Inquiry topics, ICAS dates, NAPLAN dates (Level 3 & 5), Homework, Camps, excursion/incursions, laptops (Level 4-6), Sport & extra-curricular events, other classroom needs.

**EMAIL:**

Teachers and parents can communicate with each other using their child's teacher dedicated email. These emails may come individually or may be part of a class or Level Distribution List.

This format is for teachers and parents to communicate directly about individual issues concerning students and/or provide updates & information to all families about relevant events, activities or issues.

Before sending out **bulk** emails teachers will liaise with their Level Coordinator to ensure that parents are not overloaded with repeated messages.

It is an expectation that teachers will open and read their emails once a day and respond to parents. Parents are encouraged to allow 48 hrs for a response before following up again with the teacher or school leadership.

**FORTNIGHTLY FOCUS** (Appendix 2):

All Levels are required to send out a 'Fortnightly Focus' email that provides a general update on the learning activities in class, as well as upcoming important dates and reminders.

These emails will be sent out fortnightly.

**VISITS:**

Parents are invited to make an appointment to see their child's teacher if they have any pressing concerns or issues. Please request a meeting by email, or through contacting the main office. If the matter is extremely urgent please come through the office and speak to one of the Principals.

Please **DO NOT** walk into the classroom during class time or expect time with a teacher while they are preparing class or taking class.

Most staff have after school expectations on Mondays & Wednesdays (up to 5.00pm). Ideal times for meetings with teachers are Tuesdays and Thursdays and meetings can be done by digital means (Webex) if required.

**WOOBOOKS HOME:**

Parents are able to request for Student classroom workbooks to be sent home. This is done with the express understanding that:

- they return the next school day,
- this is done only once per term (max),
- parents understand that not all work is fully corrected, as the context in which the work is done varies from lesson to lesson,
- Any issues are communicated directly with the teacher.

**CAMPS**

Communications from teachers while on camp with students will come predominantly through pictures on Facebook and/or short SMS messages with reminders and updates through SENTRAL.

Please understand that while on camp teachers are supervising and managing students and cannot be in regular contact with parents. Any major concerns should be directed to the Principals back at school.

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARENTS

### **'OPEN DOOR' POLICY:**

Jells Park PS welcomes parents to be part of the school community and to engage respectfully and courteously with teachers. Please do not hesitate to use the email system to ask questions, raise issues or request a meeting.

Doing this does come with some responsibility, and we request that parents take responsibility for:

- Advising the school of the correct email & phone number, and any changes,
- Following the 'Parent Code of Conduct' (Appendix 3)
- Following guidance on the 'Parent Helper' document
- Exercising caution on any comments and conversation had on Social Media, such as WhatsApp, etc.

#### **Reminder - Parent Communication**

Our school community is a strong one – which is always evident at our School Community events. We want parents to feel connected to the school and one another. Digital communication platforms, like WhatsApp, offer parents an easy and convenient means of keeping in touch with other school parents. Using these platforms to ask questions such as "When is the zoo excursion?" or "What time does school finish on the last day of term?" is a great use of the technology.

When discussions between parents about individual students, challenges or difficulties occur is when things can go awry. For such issues please communicate directly with your class teacher. Text messages are devoid of tone and context and this can lead to misunderstandings, confusion or miscommunication. What might have begun as a small issue can get blown out of proportion very quickly. When it comes to our children, parents are their number one supporters and your protective instinct can kick in if you perceive another parent is being critical of them. Messages sent in the heat of the moment can be problematic!!

Direct communication with school is important because it provides the opportunity for in-depth conversations where both parents and teachers can delve into specific concerns, brainstorm solutions, and develop strategies to support the child's learning and development. So next time you reach for your phone when you have a concern regarding your child, please consider calling or emailing your class teacher, as aside from you, they know your child best.

There is always a challenge for parents on when to communicate with teachers (when is 'no news is good news' not enough). There is no direct response to solve this dilemma. There is also clearly a balance between wanting to ask the question but not wanting to be overly pushy and repetitive.

From the school there are two perspectives:

- 1) Trust us – we have an experienced staff and leadership team, we know what we are doing and we have the best interests of your children at heart  
BUT...

- 2) If it is important for you to ask a question or query an action, please do not hesitate to approach the teacher or the leadership team – we do not want you overly worrying or getting agitated about something that could be easily answered or solved. If it is a serious problem, then we definitely want to know.

## **PARENT LIAISON**

The school will invite a parent in each class to act as a ‘Parent Liaison’. This is an informal role and responsibility may vary for Year Levels, but could include:

- Receiving additional messages and reminders for distribution to the class families,
- Being the contact for the little questions and information,
- Managing the digital communications (like WhatsApp) for the class parents,
- Other tasks on request.

The school office will have access to the Parent Liaison list and may send out whole school reminders on occasions.

## **COMMUNICATIONS SCHEDULE**

### **Term 1**

- Feb - Welcome Letter (with Contacts)
- Feb - “Getting to Know your Child” form sent home (about your child, interests, How they learn best, issues, expectations)
- Feb - Level Introduction Powerpoint
- Mar-Apr - Create Term 1 IEPs (Individual Education Plans) – for student where required
- Apr - Parent-Teacher Interviews (Pre Assessments, What teacher has seen, Where we are at, What we are working on)
- Apr - Continuum Tracker opened (except Foundation)

### **Term 2**

- April - Student Goal Setting in class
- June - Semester 1 Reports – Student Outcomes
- June - Continuum Tracker opened
- June - Review IEPs

### **Term 3**

- July - Student Goal Review & Setting
- Sept - Parent-Teacher Interviews (Growth, Successes, Areas of Concern)
- Sept - Continuum Tracker opened

Sept - Review IEPs

#### **Term 4**

Oct - Student Goal Review & Setting

Dec - Semester 2 Reports – Student Outcomes

Dec - Continuum Tracker opened

Dec - Review IEPs (set for next year)

#### **All Year –**

Fortnightly Focus

# Appendix 1:

*Jells Park Primary School*

## *Getting To Know Your Child*



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Wheelers Hill  
VICTORIA 3150  
03 9560 6494

www.jpss.vic.edu.au  
jells.park.ps@education.vic.gov.au

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Relationship to student:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please detail any academic strengths/concerns you believe your child demonstrates, for example in: Mathematics, English-Reading/Writing, Science.	Parent Comment:
2. Do you have any concerns regarding your child's social or personal development?	Parent Comment:
3. Do you wish to comment on any of your child's characteristics and how they relate to others at school, for example: 'special' friends, personality, traits, fears, special talents/abilities?	Parent Comment:
4. Please list any other relevant comments	Parent Comment:

Thank you for providing this information. All returned forms/responses will be treated with trust, sensitivity and confidentiality.



## Appendix 2:

# Fortnightly Focus



Year Level:

Date:

This week we will be focusing on the following learning areas:

**Reading:**

**Writing:**

**Numeracy:**

**Inquiry:**

**SEL / Wellbeing:**

**Other reminders and notices for our Year Level:**

Dates

Reminders

### **Appendix 3:**

Parent Code of Conduct – website link.

[Reports, Policies & Guidelines — Jells Park Primary School](#)