



# Family Communication

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## Policy

### RATIONALE

Parents play a critical role in the education of their children. It is widely accepted that education begins at birth (or before) with the parent in the home environment. The parent is the child's first and most influential teacher. The School is a natural extension of the home. Good and regular interaction between the staff and parent is important in ensuring the best environment and support for the child and the family.

### PURPOSE

The School recognises that the families are the child's first and most influential Educator. Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing.

We are committed to promoting a friendly, comfortable and cooperative relationship between parents/ guardians and staff. We encourage this by:

- Listening to parents/guardians. Fostering a spirit of co-operation between the parents/guardians of the children attending the centre, the staff and the Management Committee.
- Compliance with all funding and legislative requirements.
- Supporting an environment, which is sensitive to the cultural, language and social background of families.

### IMPLEMENTATION

Staff will use a variety of means to communicate with parents:

#### 1. Parent Handbook

Each parent has access to a handbook in hard copy or via the school's website ([www.farmhousemontessori.nsw.edu.au](http://www.farmhousemontessori.nsw.edu.au)) outlining the policies and procedures of the School and the staff involved, and other information regarding the School and child and family issues to assist the child attending.

#### 2. Newsletter

- A weekly whole school newsletter, outlining events and general activities of the School, songs, poems and other information about the classes as well as items of interest for families.
- Nth Head parents also have a fortnight hotsheet that is placed into their pigeon hole.

#### 3. Noticeboard & A Frame

- Each class at the North Balgowlah campus has a board outside their class to let parents know about events and things of interests for parents of the children in their class.
- A noticeboard is placed in the reception area to provide parents with information on general activities of the School, child development and other general issues.
- The North Head campus has an A Frame that is placed outside the front door every morning on this board is all current events that are going on at both campuses.

#### 4. Communication Book

- Each child at the North Head campus is allocated a Communication Book for the directresses and parents/carers to keep each other informed of any important information.

#### 5. Conferences

- At least twice per year, a formal conference time is organised with each child's

parents to discuss the child's progress and observations. These will usually occur in May and November.

- From time to time, the parent or the directress may ask for a conference to discuss an issue that has arisen. These are arranged at the convenience of both parties.

#### 6. Observation Days

- Pre-primary parents are invited to visit with their child and to observe the class day. These are organised through sign-up sheets.

#### 7. Accidents and Mishaps

- Minor scrapes and bruises will be handled at the School and a note given to the parents, on pickup, reporting on the injury. Other injuries will be reported to the parent by phone. Staff will complete an accident form, which is to be signed by the parent and placed in the child's personal file with a copy placed in the Injury Register.

#### 8. Parent Education

- Three to four times per year, education evenings will be provided to offer the opportunity for parents to learn more about the Montessori philosophy, activities in the School or other topics related to the child and the family.
- A parent library will be maintained in the Reception area of the North Balgowlah campus for parents to browse through or borrow from. This will include books and brochures on the Montessori Philosophy, child development, the family, health and safety and other issues considered relevant.

The School appreciates and respects the convenience of each family and their preference in communication. The School and the Educators will:

- offer mediums of communication such as email, verbal, communal signage in the School, newsletters, Day Book, Family Involvement Wall, sign-in sheets, Notice Board and notes sent home.
- Educators will ensure that the current program is displayed in the relevant room and that parents/guardians are informed of their location during their orientation.
- The School will survey each family to gain their preference of communication and implement. Example: email, SMS, verbal etc.

Families will be encouraged to be actively involved in:

- Policy review and development
- Goals and reflection of their child's learning
- Program inclusions such as cultural experiences and interest based topics
- Routine or procedure changes or inclusions

The School will value the input and feedback from families and endeavour to implement as much family involvement and ideas as possible. The expertise of families is recognised and we will actively encourage families to share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

- Educators and coordinators have access to space for private and confidential discussions with families and access to the School for families during the hours of operation.
- Information will be available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
- Educators will make themselves available for meetings with families to ensure that their needs are being address and met.
- Families will always have the Policy Manual available for their perusal and reviewal. Any comments will be noted and discussed.
- Each child's developmental records will be made available to their family and the opportunity for a confidential consultation with the child's Educator will be made available at the family's convenience.

- Families of the Nursery will have an individual communication book made for their child to strengthen the line of communication between the School and the family.
- All information shared is treated as strictly confidential.
- Families who require interpretive service will be supported by the School in making Policies and other information available in their preferred language.
- A Communication Book will be developed and supported by the School to support children who are using specialised professionals to create continuity between all involved.
- Families will be asked to update their personal information throughout the year to ensure that the School has the most recent details available.
- The School will continue developing strategies, which contribute to a partnership approach with parents to create a two-way process of knowledge and information sharing.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Informing a staff member of the child's arrival at the centre.
- Participating at the centre, this may include spending time at the centre, assisting with activities, excursions and special events.
- Offering suggestions to the staff on items/areas of interest to the child.
- Communicating with staff about special events in the child's life at home, for example the arrival of a new baby, grandparents visiting from overseas, moving house.
- Reading School communications and emails, collecting information from the family's pigeon hole or pocket on a regular basis, reading and where necessary acting on the information provided.

**Source**

- The Early Years Learning Framework
- National Quality Standards

Policy Review Date
November 2016 New Logo 2018