



Wheeler Heights Public School

Communication Policy (Feb 2024)



Our Vision

At Wheeler Heights Public School we value our connection to community and the strength it brings to our supportive and successful learning environment.

Through our passion and commitment as expert educators, we provide inclusive educational opportunities that motivate and engage all learners to be curious, confident and empowered individuals.

Rationale

Wheeler Heights Public School attracts strong support and respect from families, local businesses and organisations. In line with our desire to be regarded as a school of excellence and opportunity, we aim to communicate clearly and consistently with our community. Communication is used to inform parents and families of our commitment to the successful development of our students, to provide a secure and positive environment for all and address issues in a proactive manner. The protocols included within this policy aim to ensure that all community members continue to work together in a positive and respectful manner to ensure the growth and learning of all students. Our school uses various forms of electronic communications to parents. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the different forms and their uses.



Contents

1. Aims	4
2. Communication to our Community	4
3. Communication with our Community	5
4. Communication from our Community	6
5. Respectful Relationships	8
6. Communication Flowchart	9
7. Quick Reference Guide	10
8. School Newsletter	11
9. Flexischools App	12
10. School Bytes	13
11. Emails	13
12. Website	14
13. Additional Sport	15
14. WHPS OSHCare	15
15. Class Parent Representative - Role Statement	16



Aims

Respectful, open and timely communication is at the heart of the parent-school relationship. This Communications Policy aims to lay out the guiding principles and way in which Wheeler Heights Public School will communicate with each other, our children, their parents/carers and all other members of both the wider school and local communities.

Communication to our community

Our community can expect to receive communication in a streamlined process through various digital channels. Depending on the content being communicated, information will be sent via newsletters, Flexischools App, School Bytes, email, phone call or in person.

Student Reports

Individual student reports are emailed out to parents/carers at the end of Term 2 & Term 4. These reports provide insights on how your child is progressing both academically and socially. Further, they contain constructive feedback, recognition of achievements, suggestions for skills to further develop and encouragement for the future.

School Strategic Improvement Plan

The school's Strategic Improvement Plan documents the steps our school will take to improve learning outcomes, and the achievement and growth of all students. It can be found on the school website. [WHPS Strategic Improvement Plan](#)

School Annual Report

The school's Annual Report summarises the achievements and activities for the previous calendar year. It contains information on our progress towards achieving the goals set in our Strategic Improvement Plan, external assessment scores and how finances and human resources have been deployed.

P&C

The P&C holds open meetings in the library on the 3rd Monday of each month. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings. Dates, times of meetings and other information are advertised in the P&C section of our fortnightly newsletter, which can also be found on our website. The P&C also communicates through the "Wheeler Heights Public School P&C" Facebook page, please like the page for more information.

Class Parent Representatives

Class Parent Representatives play a valuable role in supporting the school. Their role includes activities such as organising; contact information lists, parent/carer helpers to assist in class and class get togethers. Their role also includes passing on information from the class teacher to parents/carers. Please note it does not include passing on information about whole school events. [Class Parent Representative Role Statement](#)

Communication with our Community

Meet the Teacher Evenings

At the beginning of each year, parents/carers have the opportunity to attend the 'Meet the Teacher' evening. These evenings provide an opportunity for parents/carers to meet and introduce themselves to their child's classroom teacher/s and gives parents/carers an insight into the learning expectations of starting a new grade.

Parent Teacher Interview

During Term 1, parents/carers have the opportunity to attend a formal parent-teacher interview. This is an opportunity for teachers to meet with parents/carers to discuss their child's progress both academically and socially, and raise any concerns or areas for focus.

Meeting with your classroom teacher

Whilst there is only one formal parent-teacher meeting, parents are welcome to meet with their child's teacher at any stage throughout the schooling year. To arrange a meeting with your child's teacher, please contact the school office.

Notification of serious single or ongoing issues

Please be assured that all teachers will make contact with parents/carers regarding any serious single or ongoing issues concerning their child, as soon as reasonably possible. Please note, teachers are sometimes only made aware of an incident at the end of the day and may need to gather some more evidence before contacting parents.

Communication from our Community

School phone: 9971 8352

School email: wheelerhts-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

There are a variety of reasons why you may need to contact the school. Please find below information on the channels you should go through.

Communicating with Teachers

If you would like to speak directly to your child's teacher, please contact the school office and they will pass a message on to the teacher. You can expect to get a response within 48 hours.

Contacting the School

The administration staff are available to answer your phone call or speak with you in the office between 8:30-3:40. The following information should be sent directly to the office:

- Changes in family circumstance
Please inform the office by email of changes in your family circumstances (custody arrangements, living address, contact details, etc.).
- Medical Information
If your child has a medical condition, contact the office by email. Administration staff will contact you to discuss what action needs to be taken. If your child's medical information has changed please inform the office immediately. All updated medical health plans should be sent to the office as soon as they are available. ASCIA action plans (e.g. anaphylaxis) must be provided in colour.
- Sick Leave
If your child is unwell, please fill in the appropriate form on School Bytes. See page 12 for instructions to download the app.
- Planned Absences
Please email the school if your child is being picked up early or their pick-up arrangements have changed. If you need to collect your child urgently (within 2 hours) please phone the school to ensure we have acted on your request. When planning to take your child/children out of school for more than 10 days, you are required to get the leave approved by the principal. Contact the office for a leave request form.

- Changes to Scheduled Appointments

If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment with a member of staff, please inform the office.

- Good News

We know that many of our students experience successes outside of the school gates. We love to hear about these activities and, if given permission to, are very happy to share the news with the wider community. Email the information to the school email address.

- Urgent

If urgent information needs to be passed on to your child, like their going home arrangements changing during the day, please call the office.

Opportunities to provide feedback

We value the feedback that we receive from our parent/carer community. There are a number of surveys during the year which we ask parents/carers to engage in. Parents/carers are able to provide feedback to the school at any time during the school year, either by phone call or email to the school office.

Serious Concerns

If you have any serious concerns regarding your child's academic or social development, we always encourage parents to contact the class teacher first. This is because your child's teacher knows your child best. However, there are a small number of circumstances where you may need to take your concerns further. Please refer to the Communication Flowchart for further information.

Making a complaint

Your child's teacher is generally the best person to handle routine concerns about matters within their classroom and/ or area of responsibility. Before you approach your child's teacher, be clear about the issues you want to discuss and think about how the matter could be resolved.

If you have raised your concerns with your child's teacher and are dissatisfied, you can escalate your complaint. If you are still dissatisfied with the school's response to your complaint, you can make a complaint to the Department of Education, you can find the link here.

[Making a complaint about NSW public schools - guide for parents & carers](#)

Respectful relationships

In all workplaces people have the right to feel respected. When communicating with the school, we respectfully ask parents/carers to consider the following:

- teachers are very busy before school getting ready for the day, please try to avoid having an informal meeting at this time. Similarly, at 3:15 teachers are busy supervising students leaving the school and trying to chat with your child's teacher at this time may cause a distraction
- you can expect to have someone contact you regarding your inquiry within 48 hours. Please note that staff will not make contact either by phone or email, outside of work hours, during the holidays or on weekends. Staff will not provide parents/carers with their personal phone number or email address
- avoid speaking to your child's teacher negatively with your child present
- use age-appropriate language around children during drop-off and pick-up times
- recognise that we may not always agree, but we promise to listen
- teachers have their own families and lives, please respect their privacy
- schools are busy places of work. Before contacting the school to ask for a message to be passed to your child, please consider whether it is essential. E.g. Please do not ask for us to remind your child to put their jumper on
- we're all on the same team, your child's support team!

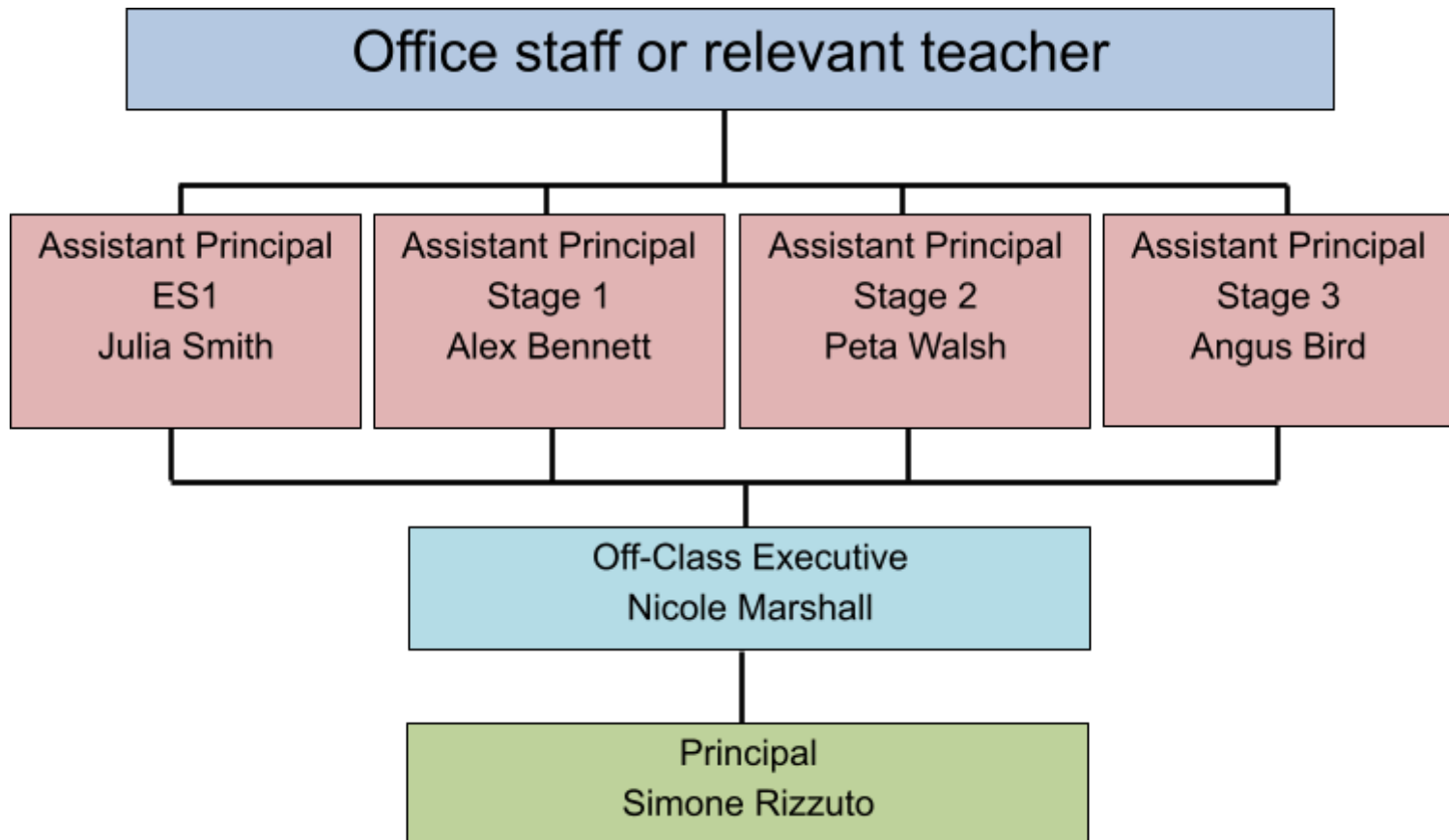
The School Community Charter

The School Community Charter outlines the responsibilities of parents, carers, educators and school staff in NSW public schools to ensure our learning environments are collaborative, supportive and cohesive. You can access the charter here.

[School Community Charter](#)

Communication Flowchart

Your child's teacher should be the first person you contact if you have a concern or query. However, if you feel that your concern/query has not been addressed or it is of a more serious nature, please contact the relevant Assistant Principal.



Quick Reference Guide

Communication Channel	Information Received
Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sent via email and flexischool notification fortnightly. - School newsletters are intended to provide essential information to parents and can also foster a connection between the classroom and the home.
FlexiSchools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Downloadable application. See page 12 for instructions - This app is used to place canteen and uniform orders and receive messages from the school. - Parents need to sign up for the groups that their child/children are involved with to ensure they receive the relevant information.
School Bytes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All forms will be emailed to parents/carers. These forms are electronically completed and signed. - To inform the school of absences
Class Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a point of contact between teacher & parents - Circulate class contact list and ensure privacy and confidentiality of information. - Welcome new parents and farewell leaving parents. - Organise class social events. - Provide support to the P&C social & fundraising committee, distribute P&C information when requested
Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails will be forwarded to the necessary teacher/s - An automatic response will be sent, informing parents/carers their message has been received. - Your email will be responded to within 48 hours.
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access the school's newsletter. - Stage newsletters, stationery and text book orders
Sport 'Stack Team App'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further information about sport at the school, zone, regional or state can be found by downloading the 'Stack Team App'. See page 15 for instructions

School Newsletter



The school Newsletter is the 'source of truth'. It is an effective medium of informing students and parents/carers about various school activities and events occurring at our school on a fortnightly basis. School newsletters help both students and parents/carers organise their time to keep up with anything school-related. Awards, performances, schedule changes, updates, events, policies, news, articles, community happenings are examples of information that can be found in the newsletter.

The purpose of our newsletter is to,

1. **Inform** - Our school newsletter aims to provide essential information to both students and parents/carers.
2. **Remind** - To remind parents/carers about upcoming classroom activities or events.
3. **Connect** - To foster a strong connection between the classroom and the home.

Flexischools App



The Flexischools App is one of our major communication platforms. It is used to send out reminders and information regarding changes to routine, e.g. Netball training being cancelled. Flexischools provides parents with:

- Instant notifications regarding whole school events.
- Specific information relating to a class or group. For example, individual PSSA teams, dance groups, chess club etc.
- Parents/carers are able to submit absence notes or leave dates via the application.
- Place canteen and uniform shop orders.
- For more information on how to use Flexischools, please click on the link below.

[Getting Started with Flexischools](#)

When using Flexischools, please ensure you select the correct class, year and groups (PSSA, dance, band) for your child. This will ensure you receive any important information sent from teachers and don't get overloaded with messages that are not relevant to your child.

More information on how to select the correct class and year group can be found below.

<https://flexischools.zendesk.com/hc/en-au/articles/8623729631769>

School Bytes



School Bytes

All forms will be emailed out to parents/carers via School Bytes. To access the form you need to open the email and click the blue 'view online form' icon. This will take you to the form.

- From here, you will be able to access all the relevant details about the specific event e.g. date, time, venue, dress code, food, special instructions etc.
- Please fill in the required information for the consent form (if consent is required)
- The green text box at the bottom shows that the form has been submitted.

Emails

Wheeler Heights Public School recognises that electronic email is a valuable communication tool that is widely used across our society. Emails received from parents/carers will be forwarded to the necessary teachers and a message will be emailed back notifying the sender their message has been received. You can expect to hear back within 48 hours or earlier, depending on the nature of your inquiry.

Website

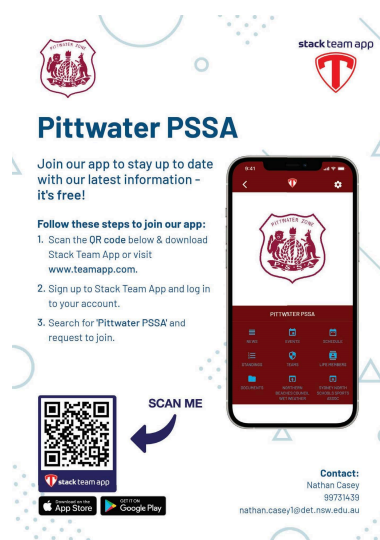
Our schools website is a valuable communication channel where a range of school wide information is able to be accessed. All notes can be found on our website. The table below will assist in navigating our website.

Name of Tab	Information located in tab
Make a payment	Instructions for how to make a payment of your school fees
Enrolment	Access our online enrolments for both in area and out of area students
News	Latest news released from the department
Newsletter	Access to the fortnightly newsletter
Events	Information on upcoming events at the school
About Our School	Under this tab you will find school planning & reporting, location and transport information, enrolments, financial contributions and assistance, our staff, rules and policies, what we offer, school map & school community charter
Supporting Our Students	Information regarding student health & safety, P&C, counselling, interpreting services and parent teacher interviews
Learning at our School	Curriculum Information
Notes	Notes requiring consent will be email via 'School Bytes'
Parent Information	P&C, Canteen, Class parents, Fundraising, uniform shop, band, text books and exercise book ordering, grade/stage stationery lists, WHOSHC and stage newsletters
Kindergarten Enrolment	Information for the following year's Kindy - transition dates, transition morning presentations
COVID-19 information	COVID 19 updates to the school community

Additional Sport

If you would like further information about sport at the school, zone, regional or state level, please use the following apps/websites.

- WHPS Sport – Flexischools app, school website and school newsletter.
- Pittwater Zone Sport – Team app. Sign up to the website/app and search for 'Pittwater PSSA' https://www.teamapp.com/?_detail=v1
- Sydney North PSSA – Website <https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/sport/SydneyNorth>
- NSW PSSA – Website <https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/sport/NSWPSSA>



WHPS OSHCare - run by an external organisation

At Primary OSHCare, we offer your child a wide range of fun, stimulating activities, nutritious meals and support from our friendly team so you can be sure that they are in the safest of hands while they learn and develop. Please click on the link below for more information about WHPS OSHCare,

<https://www.primaryoshcare.com.au/nsw/wheeler-heights-public-school/>



Class Parents Representative - Role Statement

Class parents play an important role in the school. They facilitate communication between students, parents and class teachers and assist in the co-ordination of helpers for school events.

Role competencies:

- willingness to co-ordinate and organise class activities
- willingness to co-ordinate helpers and liaise with P&C for school events or initiatives
- willingness to have fun!

Role description:

The role of Class Parent varies according to the individual needs of each class, however it usually includes the following:

- organising a *voluntary* class contact list of parent names & details and communicating with parents should the class teacher require it
- co-ordinating parent support to the class teacher. (eg: helping to find reading helpers, etc)
- co-ordinating social activities for the class if desired – (eg: picnics, holiday activities, end-of-year functions)
- attending any Class Parent meetings.

*It is **not** the Class Parents responsibility to pass on information within the newsletter or Flexischools messages sent to our community. All parents are responsible for checking the communication channels regularly for information relating to them or their child/children.*

Please note: When communicating with parents, **blind copy or BCC**, should be used in all emails used for class distribution. If you are unsure of how to use this function, our school office staff can assist.

It is important to note that under no circumstances are Class Parents to share confidential information regarding the education or wellbeing of students.