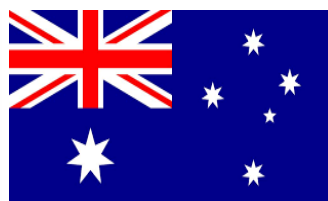


Coorow Primary

Communication Policy 2024 – 2027



*How we communicate with you –
and how you communicate with us*



Policy:

Coorow Primary School is committed to using processes and techniques that help to ensure clear and successful communication and build a positive environment for students, staff and parents.

Objectives of this Policy

- To define appropriate and effective modes of communication between members of the school community.
- To promote professional, ethical, inclusive, and constructive communications.
- To ensure that communication takes place in a timely manner.

Contact us

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Address | 14 Bristol Street, Coorow WA 6515 |
| Email Address | Coorow.ps@education.wa.edu.au |
| School Website | https://www.coorowps.wa.edu.au/ |
| Facebook | Coorow Primary School |
| Messaging App | Audiri |
| Phone | (08) 9952 2800 |
| Teacher emails | Listed in annual parent handbook and in class handouts at start of year |
| School mobile | The school mobile is not the best way to contact us. However, please add this number to your contacts in case we use it to contact you during an excursion or when our other systems are down: 0436 694 580 |

Help us to contact you

- Ensure that the school has your current phone number, email address, and up-to-date details for an alternative contact person in case of emergency.
- Download the free Audiri app from the App Store or Google Play

As the school office is unattended on Fridays, we ask that parents limit telephone calls to urgent matters, such as bus changes.

Our protocols

All communications are guided by our school Code of Conduct

- Parents and visitors are greeted in the office in a friendly and welcoming manner.
- School staff, students, and other members of the school community communicate courteously with each other.
- Any conflicts that arise are addressed in a prompt and respectful manner.
- No school-related contact is made via teachers' personal mobile phones or social media channels. Teachers, administration staff, and parents may contact one another:
 - in person
 - by email
 - by telephone using the school phone system
 - by telephone or message to the school mobile
 - by message via Audiri or the school's SMS absence notification system

All written information from the school is inclusive, professional and timely.

- Written communication is jargon-free, accurate, succinct, and is edited for spelling and grammar.
- Verbal communications take place in an open, courteous and respectful manner.
- At least one week's notice in writing is provided for school events that affect parents or require them to send money and/or permission.
- All notes to parents will be viewed by the principal before being sent.
- A copy of all notes and documents is available on the Audiri app. A paper copy is available from the office on request.
- School staff will respond to all emails as quickly as possible. The turn-around time may be 48 hours, so urgent matters should be discussed by phone or in person.
- Cultural protocols and personal needs are considered when communicating with members of the school community.
- On request, the school will make available materials and information for a parent who lives apart from their child/children.

The 'Who to Ask' guide:

| Your question or problem | Who to approach |
|--|--|
| Absences, bus changes | Office or teacher by phone, email, SeeSaw, Audiri, or a note in your child's diary. (Please do not use email on Fridays when office is unattended.) |
| Lost or forgotten items, excursions, payments, any general questions that are not class specific | Office - by phone or email |
| Student requires morning tea and/or lunch to be provided | Office - by phone, before 10.30am. |
| Obtain copies of school policies | Website, or office - by email |
| Questions about content or application of school policies | Principal – by phone, email or appointment. |
| Classroom routines, academic work or homework | Class teacher - by note, email, appointment, or by phone after 3.05pm |
| General inquiries about your child's progress or welfare | Contact the teacher to make an appointment. This may be done by note or email, by phone or in person after 3.05pm. Same day appointments may not be possible. |
| Sensitive or confidential matters regarding your child that require privacy and discretion | Contact the principal by phone or email to make an appointment. |
| To discuss individual needs of your child (medical, needs, disability, diversity, etc) | Email class teacher to make an appointment. Copy the principal into the email. |
| Problems with the class teacher Please see notes on pg 4: 'Working Together Respectfully' | Firstly, contact the teacher to make an appointment. This may be done by note or email, by phone or in person after 3.05pm. If the problem is not resolved after contacting the teacher, make an appointment with the principal, preferably by email. |
| Problems with the principal | Firstly, contact the principal by email, telephone, or appointment. If the problem is not resolved after meeting with the principal, please refer to the Coorow Primary School Complaints Management Policy for details about how to escalate your complaint beyond the school. |
| Bullying or other problems with friends | Class teacher - by note, email, appointment, or by phone after 3.05pm. |

Working Together Respectfully

For effective resolution of your classroom/teacher related concerns, please follow the defined process for bringing them to our attention.

Concerns may arise during a child's time at school, but staff may not be aware of these issues until they are brought to our attention. To ensure that concerns are addressed effectively, we encourage parents to approach the school directly and as early as possible, rather than allowing small issues to develop into larger ones.

The first point of contact in trying to resolve a problem is explained in the table on the previous page. Parents are expected to raise concerns directly with their child's teacher before involving the principal.

For anything other than casual questions, this should be done by emailing the teacher to outline the concern and request a face-to-face meeting. This approach allows the teacher time to prepare, reduces the chance of misunderstandings, and usually leads to a faster resolution than email exchanges. You may wish to use the following email template.

Subject: *[Child's Name]*: Request for a Meeting to Discuss a Concern

Dear *[Teacher's Name]*,

I'm writing to let you know that I have a concern I'd like to discuss with you regarding *[brief summary of the issue, e.g. "how my child is feeling about reading groups" or "an incident that happened during lunchtime yesterday"]*.

I understand it's best to speak about these matters face to face, as it helps avoid misunderstandings and allows for a quicker resolution.

Could we please arrange a time to meet at your earliest convenience? I'm happy to come in before or after school, or at another time that suits you.

Thank you for your time and support.

Kind regards,

[Your Name]

[Re: Your Child's Name]

[Preferred contact details, if needed]

Please note It is not appropriate to copy the principal into emails unless this process has been followed. The principal will not respond to concerns about staff members before a meeting has taken place, unless the concern involves a clear risk of physical or psychological harm to a child.

However, once a meeting with the teacher has taken place, if your problem has not been resolved, the parent should make an appointment with the principal, preferably by email, as described in the table on page 3. (Continued over page)

After meeting with the principal, parents will be provided with a written summary of the meeting, detailing both the concern and the steps that will be taken to resolve it.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this meeting, please consult the Coorow Primary School Complaints Management Policy or see <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/complaints> for more information about how you can escalate your complaint beyond the school.

You can choose to make an anonymous complaint. However, if you do, the Education Department will not be able to contact you to obtain further information that might be required to clarify issues or to take action to resolve your complaint. Additionally, the Department will not be able to provide you with the outcome to your complaint.

Regular formal communications

The following points deal with regular communications essential for the smooth running of school operations.

Excursions and school events

- A term planner showing planned events, public holidays and pupil-free days will be provided in the first two weeks of first term and before the beginning of each subsequent term. A copy of this will be available on Audiri.
- Some events may be planned after the publication of the term planner. Parents will be advised of these by Audiri or email. **The Audiri copy of the planner will not be updated.** Parents are advised to download the planner and add such events themselves.
- Parents may be asked to RSVP to some events. As this is required for planning purposes, prompt attention to providing the RSVP is appreciated.
- At least one week's written notice is provided for school events that affect parents and / or require them to send payment and / or permission. (One month's notice will be provided for school camps.)
- Generally, information is provided on Audiri and via email. Paper copies will only be provided on request. Families who prefer to always receive a paper copy should inform the office.
- Electronic permission forms will be made available whenever possible. Payments may be made by direct deposit to the school account, or by cash to the office.
- Written permission is required for water-based events and school camps. Paper-based forms will always be provided for these events.
- **It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that permission forms are returned by the due date.** The school does not have the resources to follow-up permissions that have not been returned. If parent permission is not given, students cannot participate in the excursion or activity.
- Students will never be barred from an activity due to inability to pay. However, parents must still return permissions, and should contact the office to discuss payment.

Dismissal of students and school buses

- Parents may notify the school of changes to their children's usual dismissal routine by telephone, email, Audiri or a note in the child's diary. **On Fridays, please use telephone only.**
- **For the safety of students, and the convenience of everyone, it is essential that both the bus driver and the school office are informed about changes**

to bus routines before home time. If the school has not been informed of a change, we are obliged to ask the driver to wait while we telephone the parent. We cannot take the word of the child or the driver.

- If a change to the bus routine is last-minute, and the school has not been notified, the parent **must** inform the duty teacher who will be wearing a high-vis vest.
- Bus drivers will provide their mobile telephone numbers to parents and should be contacted directly. Drivers should be given as much notice as possible about intended changes to routine.
- Kindergarten and Pre-Primary students will only be released into the care of their parents/carers or the bus-duty teacher. Please inform the school by telephone, email, Audiri or a note in the child's diary if there are any changes to your child's usual routine.
- Parents collecting children before the end of the school day are required to sign them out from the office. They still need to inform the bus driver if there are any changes to a child's usual routine.
- Questions or comments about school buses that are not related to changes to routines should, in the first instance, be directed to P&C bus representatives (elected annually) or directly to the Public Transport Authority.

Student health

- Parents will complete a student healthcare summary for each child at the start of each school year.
- Parents should immediately inform the office of any changes to the details in the student healthcare summary.
- So that staff can provide an appropriate level of care, students with known health conditions (such as anaphylaxis, asthma, epilepsy, or diabetes) require a current medical action plan that has been signed by the family doctor.
- If a student is to be given medication at school, whether for short or long term, the parent must complete an 'Administration of Medication' form at the office.
- Parents will be notified immediately, and the circumstances described, if their child is involved in an accident at school.
- Parents should notify the school if they discover lice in their children's hair. The school will then advise the school community that all students should be treated for head lice. Information about treatments will be attached to the communication.
- Parents should notify the school if they discover that their child has any infectious condition. The school will then decide whether it is necessary to advise the

school community. Any information provided will be based on the advice of the WA Health Department. Student privacy will be maintained at all times.

Student absences

- It is a legal requirement for parents to notify the school of the reason for a student's absence, even if the absence is only a half-day.
- Parents may notify the school of an absence in writing, by email, by telephone, or by replying to an automated SMS absence notification.
- The school is required to follow-up unexplained absences. This may be done by email, telephone, or sending home a note that is to be filled in and returned promptly.
- It is Education Department policy that parents notify the principal in advance of a planned family vacation.

Reporting

- Invitations and opportunities will be provided throughout for parents to discuss assessment and programs with their child's teacher. Such events may include:
 - classroom information meetings at the beginning of the year
 - an open classroom event or learning journey
 - invitations to meetings following the issue of end-of-semester reports
 - teacher-requested or parent-requested interviews at any time
- Ongoing communication throughout the year is critical to ensure parents and caregivers are kept informed of their child's progress and about any concerns with a child's learning. **Parents/caregivers should not be surprised by any of the information about their child's progress and achievement in the formal end-of-semester report.**
- Formal reports will be made available to parents before the end of each semester.
 - Parents will be invited to make an appointment for an interview to discuss their child's report. This should be done, even if the grades are excellent, as communication about progress increases every child's chance of success. With few comments on reports from Semester 2, 2024, it is even more important to meet with the teacher and obtain as much information as possible.
- Parents of students on IEPs will be asked to attend one meeting each term to discuss the child's educational goals and progress that has been made toward achieving them.

- Parents of students on IEPs will receive a statement in plain English describing several ways that they can help their child at home.
- More information about reporting and the records that teachers are required to maintain is available in our Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Policy.

Student behaviour

- Staff record incidents of classroom and playground behaviour on Integris.
- Parents will be notified immediately if a serious incident occurs or if a pattern of negative behaviours is seen to be emerging.
- Positive behaviours may be recognised through classroom or assembly awards, at parent meetings, by telephone call, or in informal conversations with parents.

Other Formal Communications

Planning, Policy and Accountability

- The school's strategic plan is updated every three years, and an electronic copy is circulated to all school families at that time.
- The annual report for each calendar year, which includes an assessment of the school's progress towards the goals and targets of the strategic plan, is published in March of the following year and an electronic copy is provided to all school families.
- Accountability documents including annual reports and Public School Review reports are available from the school office, the school website, and at Schools Online www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline
- Copies of all school policy documents are available from the school office or from the school website. Copies of the Department of Education's overarching policies are available from <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/>

Parent participation in strategic planning and policy-making

- Parents wishing to have input to school planning or policy should approach a member of the school board.
- Progress towards school goals and targets is regularly reported to the board.
- Any parent may nominate to be a member of the school board. Vacancies on the school board, and the nomination and election processes, will be widely advertised with at least one month's notice.

Non-academic matters

- The school will consult with the P&C about matters that affect the school community but are outside the remit of the school board.

Regular informal communications

The following informal communications are used to keep the school community updated:

- School newsletters are published twice per term (weeks 5 and 10). A copy is emailed to each family, placed on Audiri, placed on the school website, and a hard copy is available on request. Past editions remain available on the website.
- Information about school activities, including photographs of students, is regularly posted on the Coorow Primary School Facebook page. We ask that no comments are made on the page. Please do not share posts, but instead you may invite people to follow or like our page.
- Assemblies are held at 2pm on the Tuesday of weeks 5 and 10. (If the term does not have 10 weeks, any changes to these times will be clearly advertised.) Honour certificates and class reports assist in communicating individual and whole school achievement.

Mobile Phones at School

For the purposes of this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, and similar 'smart devices, as well as associated listening accessories, such as earbuds and headphones.

Students

- Education Department policy states that primary school students are not to have mobile phones in their possession during the school day. Students with mobile phones are to hand them in at the office for safekeeping.
- Students who bring tablets or similar devices for entertainment during their school bus travel must not use them during the school day or while waiting for the bus in the afternoon. They may hand them in at the office for safekeeping. If these devices are not capable of receiving or transmitting messages or calls AND they are turned off students may leave them in their bags, but the school can take no responsibility for any loss or damage. Handing in for safekeeping is strongly recommended.
- Students who wish to contact their parents must do so only through their teacher or through the office staff.
- Parents who wish to contact their children during the school day must only do so by calling the office. Such communication should be limited to urgent messages.

Staff

- Staff mobile phones must not be used for calls, messages, social media or internet access during face-to-face teaching time, or whilst on playground duty

except to contact the office in the case of an emergency. They may be used in a reasonable manner during DOTT (Duties Other Than Teaching) time.

- Staff mobile phones must be set so that they do not emit sound during teaching time, other than a sound, such as an alarm or timer, that is being used for an educational purpose, or music that is being used to accompany an activity.
- In line with Education Department policy, staff who use their mobile phone as a camera must remove all photographs at the end of the school day and transfer them to the school computer. They must not forward photographs to any person, including parents, from their personal phone.
- Education Department policy states that staff may use school phones and internet for personal purposes in a reasonable manner. However, any personal use of the school mobile must be charged at the rate determined by the department.

This policy has been approved by the school board and will be reviewed in Term 3, 2027.

| Document History | | |
|------------------|--------------|---|
| Date | Name | Notes |
| 2021 | School board | Policy approved |
| 24 May 2023 | J Whyte | Document history table added Update app from Skoolbag to Audiri Top three lines added to table on p.3 |
| 15 August 2024 | J Whyte | Cover page changed References to school website inserted Increased reference to the importance of notifying school and bus drivers about student dismissal routines Reference to teachers using mobile phones to provide music to accompany an activity Minor changes to wording and order of information to increase clarity |
| 26 August 2024 | School board | Policy approved |
| 12 November 24 | J Whyte | Note inserted – from semester 2 2024, reports will contain few comments, so interviews become more important |
| 28 March 2025 | J Whyte | Address for school website added. 'Children's individual needs' added to the 'Who to Ask' guide. School mobile number – please add to contacts. |

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|--------------|---------|---|
| 24 June 2025 | J Whyte | Improved definition of 'confidential inquiries specifically related to your child's welfare' as matters requiring privacy and discretion. Section 'Working together respectfully' section added to pg 4/5. |
| 28 July 2025 | J Whyte | Policy definition of mobile phones <i>and</i> 'If these devices are not capable of receiving or transmitting messages or calls AND they are turned off students may leave them in their bags, but the school can take no responsibility for any loss or damage. Handing in for safekeeping is strongly recommended.' added to pg 11 |