

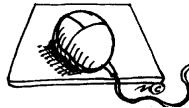


## Boroondara Park Primary School Communication Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*This document is intended as a guide for parents and families of Boroondara Park Primary School and has been developed in response to requests by the BPPS community. The Communication FAQs includes answers to questions identified by parents and staff as being commonly asked. Any additional suggestions are always welcome. Please email any suggestions to Amanda Ralph at [moamanda@inet.net.au](mailto:moamanda@inet.net.au) or call Amanda on (03) 9857-3576. We hope that the guide is useful to you and your family.*

*The Communication Committee*

### Electronic Communication



#### Does the school have a website?

BPPS has a comprehensive website which is regularly updated. The website contains information such as **key dates**, the most recent **school newsletter**, school policies and procedures, **contact details** and information for each teaching team or unit. The website can be accessed at [www.bpark.vic.edu.au](http://www.bpark.vic.edu.au)

The website is constantly being improved and updated. If you have any suggestions for the website please contact the webmaster at [boroondara.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:boroondara.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)

#### Can I email the school?

If you have a general question or query you can email the school at [boroondara.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:boroondara.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au). Your email will be received by the school Admin team and will be forwarded on to the appropriate person for action.

#### Can I email my child's teacher?

At present you can only email your child's teacher via the general school email address. The school is investing in a local email server and telephone voicemail system, meaning that at some point in the future you will be provided with a voicemail and email address for your classroom teacher.

## School Newsletter



### How often is the newsletter produced?

The school newsletter is produced weekly and is distributed **every Thursday** via the eldest child of each family. The newsletter is also uploaded to the school website every Thursday afternoon.

### What happens if my child is absent from school on a Thursday?

If your child is absent a copy of the newsletter should be kept for them and placed in their tubs (located in the classroom for Teams 1 and 2) or blue folders (Team 3 and 4). Alternatively you can ask for a copy at the School Office or access a copy via the school website at <http://www.bpark.vic.edu.au/documents/newsletter.pdf>

### Can anyone place an item in the school newsletter?

Anyone who is a member of the school community can place an item in the school newsletter; however the school newsletter team has the final editorial say as to whether or not an item is accepted for inclusion.

### What is the deadline for submitting an item for the newsletter?

All items for the school newsletter must be submitted to the School Office by **4pm Tuesday** of the week in which the newsletter is published. Ideally items should be emailed to [boroondara.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:boroondara.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au) in **Microsoft Word** format.

### Can I place an advertisement in the newsletter?

Anyone who is a member of the school community or a school supporter/sponsor can place an advertisement in the school newsletter; however the school newsletter team has the final editorial say as to whether or not an ad is accepted.

### Does it cost anything to place an advertisement?

There is a small charge payable to place an advertisement in the school newsletter. Cost varies depending on the nature and size of the ad. For details regarding the cost of placement, please contact the School Office.

### Can I receive an electronic/email copy of the newsletter?

The school newsletter is not currently available via email; however, the most recent school newsletter can be viewed at <http://www.bpark.vic.edu.au/documents/newsletter.pdf>



## Team News and Notice boards

### How do I know what is happening in my child's Unit?

Most Teams have Team Newsletters which are distributed to all students. The Team Newsletter contains information and news about specific activities and curriculum items such as **excursions/camps**, homework schedules, **projects** and key dates.

A copy of the Team News is available via the school website and in the case of Team 1, the **Team 1 Notice board**. You should check with your child's classroom teacher for details of how regularly the Team Newsletter is published.

## Communicating with your child's teacher(s)



### What do I do if I want to speak to my child's teacher?

If you wish to speak at length with your child's teacher, you should make an **appointment time** with them. Remember your child's teacher is responsible for over 20 students so they need to schedule meetings to ensure that you and they are well prepared and allocate enough time to discuss your issue. Together you can arrange a time which is suitable for you both.

For parents working full-time, it can often be difficult to arrange a suitable time during the day. Make sure you communicate clearly about your own availability and schedule. If a face-to-face meeting is not possible in the first instance, you may be able to arrange a phone meeting or a meeting before or after class hours.

To arrange a meeting, contact the School Office, explain your reason for calling and leave details including your name, your child's name, Grade, Teacher's name and the best contact telephone number and time to call. They will return your call and confirm a time that is mutually agreed upon.

### I am not happy with the teacher's response, what do I do now?

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your meeting with your child's classroom teacher then your next step should be to make an appointment to speak with the **Assistant Principal**.

### Can I email my child's teacher(s)?

At present you can only email your child's teacher via the general school email address. The school is investing in a terminal server and VoIP voicemail system, meaning that at some point in the future you will be provided with a voicemail and/or email address for your classroom teacher.

## Communicating with my child during school hours

### How do I get an urgent message to my child?

Understandably, there are times when you need to get a message to your child. With 600 students in the school, messages to your child during school hours should be kept to a minimum and for urgent situations only.



If you need to get a message to your child (e.g. "Nana will be picking you up from school today"), you should contact the School Office and advise them of:

- Your child's name and class
- The message (please keep it short and simple)
- And a contact number for you in the event that the school needs to contact you.

## Student Diaries and Reader Bags



### Reader bags and books (Teams 1 and 2)

Teams 1 & 2 have a red 'reader bag', which is also used as a receptacle for notices, and a yellow 'reader book' in which the parents record their child's home reading. Team 1 teachers check the reading diary when the children change reading levels while Team 2 teachers check them at least weekly. Team 1 and 2 teachers who wish to communicate with a particular parent catch them in the playground, ring them or write them a note.

Communication from parents is addressed in the email/`phone contact section

## Student Diaries (Teams 3 and 4)

Students in Team 3 and 4 are allocated student diaries each year. The diaries are used for recording homework assignments, key dates and may also be used by you and/or your child's teacher to communicate short messages or notes.

## School notices



### How are school notices distributed?

School notices are distributed to students by their classroom teacher. General or school-wide notices are limited to 1 copy per family and are given to the eldest child in each family. Team or class-specific notices will be given to every student in that Team or class.

### My eldest child was absent from school on a day on which notices were distributed. What should I do?

If your child is absent a copy of the newsletter will be kept in their classroom for them to collect on their return to school.

### Our family seems to be missing out on a lot of notices. What should I do?

Contact your child's teacher. If the problem persists, see the Assistant Principal.

## Student reports



### When are school reports distributed?

Student reports are sent home twice per year. The mid year report will be distributed during the last week of term 2 and the end-of-year report in the last or second last week of the school year.

### What happens if my child does not bring home their report?

Contact your child's teacher or the school office.

### What should I do if I have questions about my child's report?

If you have a question in relation to your child's school report you should arrange a time to meet with the relevant teacher to discuss your concern or query.

## Class reps

### How do I keep up-to-date with events and activities for my child's class?

Social events or activities specific to your class are coordinated by your class reps (parent volunteers). The class reps are responsible for coordinating and communicating to class parents about events and activities such as:

- School Fair (including assigning school fair work rosters and groups)
- Social gatherings such as teacher morning tea
- End of year class get-together party
- Any other social or school fundraising activities specific to your child's class



Class reps are also a great point of contact to give feedback to the school about school events.

Class reps are NOT the person to go to if you have a particular issue with your child's teacher or about an event which has happened in your child's class. Any concerns or issues in relation to your child, their teacher or class should be directed to either the teacher directly or to the Assistant Principal.

## Class allocation for the new school year

### What input can I have into the class placement of my child each year?



As anyone can appreciate, the allocation of classes each year is a complex and difficult task. Class allocations are made in consultation with your child's class teacher, support teachers (e.g. guidance counsellor and specialist subject teachers) and the Assistant Principal with consideration given to the teaching style and environment best for your child.

As with the allocation of classroom teachers, the choice of classmates is a complex task. Teachers need to consider a range of factors including class dynamics and student competencies and personalities. Where possible, an allocation will be made to ensure that your child has at least one classmate with whom they are friends.

Towards the end of Term 4, your child will be asked to nominate 4 friends/classmates they would like to be in class with the following year. Your child's request will be considered when the classroom allocations are made.

Each year, parents with specific concerns or needs are invited to submit their requests **in writing** to the Assistant Principal. It should be noted that **this is not an opportunity to request a specific teacher**, but rather the opportunity to have input in relation to your child's emotional, social and educational needs. The invitation for submissions is issued in the school newsletter towards the end of Term 4 (sometime in November). A submission deadline will be published and all requests must be submitted by the nominated deadline.



## First Aid

### What happens if my child is sick or injured at school?

Boroondara Park Primary School has a First Aid Officer, who is responsible for assisting your child if they become sick or injured while at school. In addition to the First Aid Officer, the school has teachers and members of staff who are trained in first aid.

If your child's illness or injury requires medical attention or for them to go home, the First Aid Officer will contact **you** or your nominated **emergency contact person**.

It is important that you keep any contact details, particularly mobile and home/work telephone numbers, up-to-date so that they can easily contact you.

### What do I do if my child needs to take medicine during school hours?

If your child needs to take medicine during school hours (with the exception of asthma puffers) it must be handed in to the School Office (**not the class teacher**) with written instructions, with your child's:

- Name and Class
- Type of medicine
- Dosage and
- Times to be administered



These instructions must be dated (including ongoing dates if necessary) and signed by your child's parent(s) and/or guardian(s). A measuring container should also be provided for liquid medicines.

Please also send a note to the class teacher, especially if your child needs to be reminded to take their medication at a particular time.

### If your child is going to be absent from school

#### Who do I call if my child is going to be absent from school?

If your child is going to be absent from school due to illness or any other reason, you need to let the school know. You should call the **school office**, ideally **before 9:30am**, and advise them of your child's name, class, classroom teacher and the reason for their absence. The Admin team will record the absence in the school register.



Please send a note with your child when they return to school (**addressed to their classroom teacher**), confirming their absence (including the timeframe of that absence).

Remember, if your child is absent due to an infectious illness such as **chicken pox** or **German measles** you **MUST** advise the school immediately.

### Taking my child out of school during school hours

#### What do I do if I need to pick my child up early for an appointment?

If you need to pick your child up early for any reason (for example for a dental appointment) then you will need to fill in a **leave pass** at the front office before you collect your child.

The leave pass will be authorized by the office staff and you will need to present it to your child's teacher when you go to their classroom to collect them. The supervising teacher will check the pass and retain it with their absence records, as verification that your child has been collected by the properly authorized person.

## Family 'Buddy' system for new families to the school

### What is the school family 'buddy' system?

New families to the school (Prep families and families who come to the school throughout the school year) are assigned a 'buddy' family to help welcome them to the school community and to be a resource for them in answering any questions they may have about the school from a parent's perspective.

The family 'buddy' system is a **support network for families**. The family buddy system is coordinated by a parent volunteer.

If you would like to be assigned a buddy family, or if you would like to volunteer to be a buddy family for families new to the school, please contact the volunteer coordinator:

**Karen Flower**

Tel: (03) 9859-1842      Email: [rkflower@iprimus.com.au](mailto:rkflower@iprimus.com.au)



## Lost property

### My child has lost something at school, what do I do?

If your child loses something at school you should, in the first instance, check the lost property box which is located in the corridor in front of the library. You may also want to let their classroom teacher know as they may have left the item in their classroom.

If you still cannot find your lost item, you may also put a notice in the school newsletter.

## English as a second language

Θέλω να μιλήσω στο δάσκαλο του παιδιού μου  
parlare all'insegnante del mio bambino

Desidero

### I am not confident in speaking English but I want/need to speak to my child's teacher, what should I do?

There are many parents and teachers within the school community who speak languages other than English. If you feel comfortable speaking to your child's teacher with another parent or member of staff present, then you can ask the Assistant Principal to arrange for someone to assist you, either in person or via the telephone.

If you are not comfortable with a member of the school community assisting with interpreting, or where no suitable volunteer can be found, the school has access to professional phone **interpreting services**. To request these services, please speak to the Assistant Principal.





## Parents and Friends Association (PFA)

### What is the Parents and Friends Association?

The aim of the Parents and Friends Association is to provide a forum for all members of the school community to discuss issues, to build a sense of community within the school, to organise and /or support school events, to support the School Council and to raise funds for the benefit of students.

### How do I become a member of PFA?

Membership of the Parents and Friends Association is automatic, following payment of its membership fee; currently the cost of membership is \$1.00. In order to streamline accounting processes, the cost of membership is included within the BPPS Voluntary Contributions.

### When does the PFA meet?

The PFA meets on the first Wednesday evening of every month during school terms, in the school staffroom.

### Can anyone attend the PFA meetings?

Any member of the school community is welcome and encouraged to attend the meetings.

### How do I put forward an agenda item for the PFA?

Items may be placed on the agenda, by sending information to the President of PFA, through the school office.

### How will I find out about PFA news and events?

PFA news and events are advertised through the school Newsletter.

## School Council

### What is the School Council?

All government schools in Victoria have a School Council. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within centrally provided guidelines. In doing this, a School Council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

School Councils consist of Parent and Teacher representatives. New School Councillors are elected each year during February and March.

### When does the School Council meet?

The School Council meets in the school's staffroom at **7.30 pm** on the second Wednesday of each month during school terms.

### Can anyone attend the School Council meetings?

All members of the school community are welcome to attend Council meetings as observers.

### How do I put forward an agenda item for the School Council?

Contact a School Councillor, or write to the Council President or Principal. School Council members are listed in the School Directory. If you do not have a copy, contact the school office and they can provide you with the relevant contact details.



### How will I find out about School Council news and resolutions?

A summary of Council business will appear in the school newsletter the day after each meeting.

### Why is Parent membership so important?

Parents on School Councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school.

Those parents who become active on a School Council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

### How can you become involved?

- The most obvious way is to stand for election as a member of the School Council  
OR
- Encourage another person to stand for election.



### Do I need special experience to be on school council?

No. What you do need is an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

### What do you need to do to stand for election?

If you decide to stand for election, you will need to arrange for someone to **nominate** and **second** you on the forms which are available from the school office. Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the Principal within the time stated on the notice of election.

If there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted in the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.