

Communication Guidelines between Parents and the School

I. Objectives

The communication between the parents and the school is an essential component of successful school work. It is also essential to the effectiveness of the educational work of the school and parents. The German International School Sydney is therefore interested in a close and effective communication between the school and its parents. An important part of communication between school and parents is the participation by parents in school life, particularly through the Parent Representative Council (PRC), Class Representatives and Parents Association.

In addition to the GISS Communication Policy; where all questions regarding confidentiality and data protection are regulated, the following guidelines for communication between school and parents are being defined.

II. Guidelines

1. At the beginning of each school year, class teachers invite parents to the first parents' meeting which follows an agenda. The agenda should be sent out with the invitation to the meeting. Once the parent representatives have been elected they are responsible for calling and conducting other class meetings. There should be at least one parents' meeting per semester.
2. At the beginning of the school year, the class teachers; preferably supported by the respective subject teachers during the first parents meeting, are required to present the scope and sequence of our curriculum in individual subjects for the class and explain in further detail if necessary. This material also includes information on methods and criteria of performance measurement. This can also be provided in writing. However, it is important to bear in mind that class schedules can lead to significant changes in these plans.
3. Students are issued with a school report twice a year which contains assessments of their performance. Comments about the grading (either as a written attachment to the report or orally between parents/students and teachers) can complete the grading. Written assessments / class work will be presented to the parents (after correction) for their information and signature. The teacher will contact the parents, should the student show significant academic or emotional changes.
4. The parents' representative council (PRC) is elected within the first 4 weeks of the school year and the first meeting should occur no later than 6 weeks after the school term commences. Meetings should be held twice per term. The

Principal and Chairman of the School Board shall attend these meetings as guests.

5. All parents are provided with the email addresses of their child's teachers. The parents are also informed about the days when a part time teacher is not working at school. Teachers are advised to check their emails once a day (part time teacher: on their working days at school) and to respond to emails from parents as soon as possible.
6. All teachers are available and can be reached daily from 8.30am to 3.30pm (these hours are restricted for part-time teaching staff). In order for teachers to better coordinate their time they can define weekly consultation hours where they are available to talk to the parents.
7. Twice a year the school holds a Parent/Teacher Interview night. Meeting requests are sent by the parents prior to the event to the school receptionist who then coordinates these meetings. Meeting times are limited; therefore if parents feel it is not enough time they should arrange an alternative time to meet with the teachers. The Parent/Teacher Evening is not a substitute for communication which should occur during the school year particularly if there are problems or emerging issues.
8. The school informs the school community about current affairs/events and also fortnightly via the school newsletter, the Gutenberg Post.
9. Lists of the materials required for the following school year will be issued to parents at the beginning of last term (of the previous school year).
10. For non educational related queries, members of the administration team are always available. For more complex questions, appointments are necessary.
11. School management are always available for meetings with parents when it concerns matters beyond individual educational issues of individual students. Please note however, that appointments and registration are required and can be made via the school secretary