

Communication Policy

1. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the DSCCC Management Committee at its meeting on 14 February 2018.

2. Review date

This policy shall be reviewed in 3 years in February 2021.

3. Policy statement

Principles

DSCCC is committed to open, transparent communication through:

- Promoting a friendly, comfortable and cooperative relationship between parents/guardians and staff.
- 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.

Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines for communication between parents/guardians, Management Committee, volunteers and staff, both formal and informal.

4. Scope

This policy applies to parents/guardians, volunteers, staff and the Management Committee.

5. Legislation

- *Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010.*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (NSW).*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010.*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth).*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.*

6. Procedures

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The Management Committee is responsible for:

- Giving parents/guardians the opportunity to participate and/or comment on policy reviews.
- Ensuring details of the nominated contact person(s) on the Committee are available to parents/guardians.
- Ensuring opportunities are provided for communication between parents/guardians, the staff and the committee. This can be facilitated through such things as informal discussions, surveys, noticeboard displays, social events and appointments.

The Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring a noticeboard is provided in the main entrance of the centre.
- Sending emails regarding important centre happenings to parents/guardians.
- Providing a quarterly newsletter (together with the staff) to inform parents/guardians of centre events, changes to policies, information on the children's program etc.
- Displaying minutes of Management Committee meetings on the noticeboard in the main entrance and ensuring the Minutes displayed comply with the centre's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.
- Ensuring the centre handbook is reviewed annually and copies are available for new families.
- Providing access to interpreters, translated materials and other resources as needed to implement this policy.
- Updating the parents/guardians library and communicating to parents/guardians the opportunity to borrow from the library.
- Ensuring parents/guardians are informed of students attending the centre via a notice on the room door. This should detail the nature of the visit and if possible a photograph of the student.
- Displaying the following information about the kindergarten program: the current Kindergarten Program Certificate; posters promoting the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy and Early Start Kindergarten; a notice indicating the times during which the funded kindergarten program operates each week; and the name(s) of the qualified early childhood teachers delivering the funded kindergarten program.
- Providing information about fees, waiting lists, access and inclusion policies, and the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy, Early Start Kindergarten and the Early Start Kindergarten extension grant to parents.
- Providing information to parents at the commencement of the kindergarten year about session times being offered during the year and the impact of any planned closures, professional development activities and child free days.
- Providing written confirmation to parents during the enrolment process informing parents that their child is entitled to receive one year of funded kindergarten in the year before school and that it has been claimed for their child at this service.

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The staff are responsible for:

- Greeting families on arrival at the centre and welcoming the child into the program.
- Ensuring the current program is displayed in the relevant room and that parents/guardians are informed of their location during their orientation.
- Providing daily opportunities for direct contact with parents/guardians, for example during parents'/guardians' participation in the program and by telephone.
- Using communication books and whiteboards as required under policies of the centre.
- Providing access for parents/guardians to the centre at any time their child is attending a program at the centre.
- Ensuring all communication with parents/guardians is sensitive to the cultural and social backgrounds of each individual family, their lifestyles and their child-rearing practices.
- Providing access to interpreters, translated materials and other resources as needed to implement this policy.
- Providing parents/guardians with information about how the educational program at the centre is developed and the philosophy on which it is based.
- Consulting with parents/guardians when developing the educational program.
- Offering a variety of opportunities for parents/guardians to participate directly in the children's program, including spending time with the children, assisting with activities, excursions and special events and volunteering special skills to share with the children.
- Encouraging parents/guardians to contribute, in an appropriate manner, their suggestions regarding any aspect of the program through discussions with the staff and/or the Management Committee.
- Providing the parents/guardians with opportunities for communication about their child, either informally before or after the program, or by appointment during the staff member's non-contact time with the children and encouraging parents/guardians to take up these opportunities.
- Developing strategies, which contribute to a partnership approach with parents to create a two-way process of knowledge and information sharing.
- Providing opportunities for parents/guardians to discuss the individual observations the educator has recorded of their child.
- Providing information regarding the educational program through bulletin boards and quarterly newsletters, which will show an understanding of, and consideration for, the relevant languages and cultural diversity of the families using the centre.

The kindergarten teachers are also responsible for:

- Offering advice to families with children born between January and April who are unsure about the best time for their child to start kindergarten.
- Preparing a Transition Learning and Development Statement for all children starting Prep in the following year.

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Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Informing a staff member of the child's arrival at, and departure from, the centre.
- Participating at the centre, this may include spending time at the centre, assisting with activities, excursions and special events (see parent participation policy for details).
- 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 DSCCC emails, newsletters and where necessary acting on the information provided.

7. Related documents

Related DSCCC policies:

- DSCCC Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- DSCCC Parent Participation Policy

8. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the Management Committee will:

- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution of issues raised in relation to parents/guardians access and involvement has been achieved.
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parents/guardians survey.
- Take into account feedback from staff and parents regarding the policy.
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding the access and involvement of parents/guardians.

Date Reviewed	Details of Changes (if any)	Date of Next Review
February 2018	No substantive changes	February 2021
March 2016	Move some responsibilities from Management Committee to Director. Include information as required in the DET <i>The Kindergarten Guide 2015</i>	March 2018
March 2012	Including details of new legislative framework and external references	January 2014
January 2010	Including details of updated Children's Services Regulations, and inclusion of reference to centre emails.	January 2012
November 2007	Initial DSCCC policy based on 2006 KPV Communication policy.	November 2009