



## Communication Protocol – Guidelines for Parents and Carers

*How do you find out what is happening around the School, about decisions that are taken and who makes them? Who do you talk to if you would like to be involved, or if you have a question or concern?*

*The Communication Protocol provides pathways to assist you with communication during your time at Kindlehill. Our communication ethos is that all members of the School community uphold a respectful, kind, fair and supportive culture for all.*

*A good place to start is for each of us to model the courteous, respectful and kind communication that we would like our children and young people to emulate.*

*Respectful communication prioritises seeking to understand by asking questions rather than making assumptions or judgements. We ask parents and carers to keep in mind, that perspectives provided by your child, may need clarifying or contextualising by the School. Central to our teaching is care and consideration for the children's wellbeing. This is cultivated in countless ways through the days and years. Teachers want to work in partnership with parents and carers knowing how significant this is for supporting the unfolding child.*

*Additionally, we ask that members of our School community refrain from gossip or negative discourse that is potentially disrespectful and undermining. This includes online forums.*

*Relevant resources and policies related to communication can be found on our website.*

### Communicate with Respect

#### Talk to your Class Teacher or Guardian first

The Class Teacher or Class Guardian is your first point of contact for information about your child's class, to raise or share concerns about your child, for questions about curriculum, activities and events.

We particularly encourage you to promptly raise concerns with the teacher via their School email. You can request they reply by email, call you or make a time for an in-person conversation. Typically the teacher will reply within a 1-2 day working day period. An in-person meeting is preferred for resolving significant questions and concerns.

If there is a change of circumstance in the family or a significant issue arises for the child, it is helpful the teacher is informed so that s/he can bring appropriate support and understanding toward the child.

For urgent matters that require attention within the School day, contact the office who will forward a message to the relevant teacher or student.

In the event of any other urgent matter, outside of school hours where a teacher needs to be contacted, the Principal can be contacted on her mobile and will advise the relevant teacher.

**What happens if a matter isn't resolved with the Class Teacher or Guardian?**

If you feel your concern has not been resolved or adequately addressed by the Class Teacher or Guardian, the Principal can guide the process.

**Primary School** – direct your ongoing concern to Erica Chaperlin as Principal.

**High School** – direct your ongoing concern to Erica as High School Coordinator.

**Principal** – The Principal can additionally provide guidance, monitoring and support for parents and guardians with ongoing issues and concerns.

**Conflict of Interest** – If you perceive there may be a conflict of interest in resolving an issue, contact the Principal who will guide the process.

**After School Care** – Concerns about your child or matters relating to After School Care should be raised with Meredith Mallin. If a significant issue arises, please discuss this with the Principal, Erica Chaperlin.

### **Promoting a positive, supportive and respectful School environment**

We know from experience that harmonious and friendly relationships between teachers and parents bring many positive benefits to the children. They feel themselves secure and cared for in the manner of a caring extended family.

#### **To cultivate and protect healthy home – School relationships**

We request that parents and carers refrain from sharing off-hand criticism and negativity about teaching staff or the School with their children or other parents and carers. Concerns raised in a timely way with teaching staff can in most instances be resolved fairly and with kindness. In doing this, we provide a living example of how we would like our children to address issues and concerns.

#### **Complaints and grievances**

A copy of the School's Complaints Policy is available on the website. This details the process for making and resolving a serious complaint or grievance. Procedural fairness is the basis of this policy.

### **Regular Communications**

**School Newsletter** - This is shared fortnightly and provides important information about the events and activities of the School, opportunities for parent involvement as well as insights into what lies behind the educational approaches typical to Kindlehill. Newsletters are sent via email and are available on our website.

**Class News** - Each teacher provides regular updates via email within the term specific to the class. Invitations to volunteer, information about lessons, excursions and camps are communicated via Class News.

Class email lists cannot be used by anyone other than School staff.

**What's App** – Some classes have a Class What's App where parents and carers can post photographs and messages. Respectful communication is essential and these are not forums for sharing concerns or raising issues. The Class Teacher should be invited to join as should all parents and carers. Please be mindful that not all parents and carers use social media and this doesn't replace other forms of communication.

**Kindlings and the Annual Report** – Kindlings is published in Autumn and provides engaging articles about School happenings written by teachers and others. The Annual Report provides an overview of the past year including formal reports. Both are available from the office or on the website. These are excellent publications for gaining insight into Kindlehill and the Steiner pedagogy.

## School is Social

**Social events** - Plays, performances, seasonal celebrations, open days and fairs, provide a rich opportunity for parents and carers to share in the community life of Kindlehill.

**Volunteers** – There are many opportunities to be involved in the life and activities of the School, and to share your skills and care. These are mutually enriching and support a sense of belonging to a creative, resourceful and caring community. Teachers and Class Coordinators will invite your participation in a range of activities and events, and communications about these are provided in regular newsletters.

Volunteers must abide by the *Volunteer Code of Conduct*.

## Helpful Resources

**The Parent Handbook** which you receive in the information pack and which is available on the website under resources, provides a good all-round introduction to Kindlehill. It summarises the history and ongoing development of the School and introduces important School protocols and policies. The handbook also summarises the philosophy and broad educational principles that underlie the education provided at Kindlehill. The handbook is available on the website.

**Values Statement** – This outlines the values and guiding principles of Kindlehill School and is available under resources on the website.

**Directory of Mandates** – An updated version of this is distributed to families at the beginning of each year and is available on the website. It informs parents and guardians about how the School is organised and who does what around the School - individuals and groups.

**The Enrolment Contract** – Parents are informed via the Enrolment Contract that in the event of a breakdown in the relationship between the School and parent/s, the School may terminate the enrolment.

**Kindling the Light** – This publication celebrates 21 years of Kindlehill. It is beautifully written and tells the story of the School’s purpose, growth and development over time. Copies can be purchased from the office.

### Learn about your child’s education at Kindlehill

We strongly encourage you to learn about Kindlehill’s approach to Steiner education. This will help you understand your child’s learning journey and to be supportive of the teachers’, and of the School ethos. A healthy and consistent approach to home/school life is cultivated, and the sense of community is enriched as we grow our children in a place of shared values.

Class meetings, newsletters, school publications, talks and events, are important ways to get informed about and share the Steiner focus and culture of Kindlehill.

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Class Teachers		
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