

Parent/carer communication plan

Rebecca Eveans – EDC4000

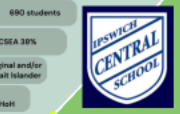


Ipswich Central State School

Class context



This plan is written in the context of Ipswich Central State School which is a government primary school under Education Queensland. The My School (ACARA, n.d.) website shows ICSS is predominantly low socio-economic status with an ICSEA percentage of 38. Being in the heart of Ipswich the catchment area covers three suburbs but with many schools surrounding the area ICSS takes students from out of catchment as it is a school of choice due to its great reputation, culture, and inclusive practices. Current enrolment sits at 690 students, 71% of students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 9% EAL/D, 2% Deaf or Hard of Hearing. For the purpose of this assessment, I will simulate the role of a year 2 classroom teacher at the beginning of the year 2024. There are 78 students in the cohort, 18 students in my class, 11 of which are boys and 7 are girls. Three students are diagnosed with ADHD, one who also has Autism.



Digital approaches

Rationale

Goff, (2021) identifies the importance for responsive and regular communication with families which is why digital approaches are ideal. Despite potential barriers such as lack of access to devices, internet connectivity, and digital literacy skills, using digital methods like email, applications and websites is an effective means to regularly and easily update and engage parents. The Department of Education (Department of Education [DoE], 2016) and Queensland College of Teachers (QCoT, n.d.) code of ethics state the expectations for educators to communicate sensitively and confidentially, especially when handling private information concerning any child. Therefore, when delivering whole class information regarding learning objectives and upcoming reminders, teachers need to ensure email addresses, student or family information, or anything of a sensitive nature is included.

In my class

The digital tools included in my plan include email for weekly class newsletters and Class Dojo to share learning experiences with parents. At ICSS email is the preferred method for parents to communicate with teachers. Fortunately, every family in my class has provided an email address which will also be used to link and invite parents to join the Class Dojo app. The app allows the teacher to send pictures and messages privately to individual parents and share whole class learning experiences also. As a primary school many parents are interested to know what their children are learning and keen to see how they can help their children at home. However, as many students go to OSHC before and after school, parents are not always able to come in to the classroom to see their child's learning progress so communicating with parents digitally is an effective and inclusive alternative. The app will also be used as a system for reminders for upcoming events such as excursions, school photo days, and notices to return permission slips. Adhering to the DoE standards of practice (2016), permission to share student photos must be obtained and verified to protect the privacy of students. Dojo is an efficient way of communicating with parents as the teacher can quickly and easily share photos, videos, and messages when most convenient and parents will get a notification and can check the message at a time that suits them. I intend to send weekly class newsletters via email and Class Dojo which will be written on a Friday, and checked by administration before being sent out every Sunday for the coming week. The only resources needed for this mode of communication is access to a computer, internet, and time to create newsletters and distribute them to parents. And for Class Dojo the app will need to be accessible, ideally on a school laptop for the teacher to take photos and videos evidence of learning to share with parents.



This table outlines the policies from government bodies that enforce procedures that guide the practice for Queensland teachers when engaging effectively, sensitively, and confidentially with parents and carers.

Policies	Procedures			Practices
	Effective	Sensitive	Confidential	
DoE Code of Conduct and Standards of practice	Meet the teacher	Meet the teacher	Meet the teacher	
QCoT Code of Ethics	Parent/teacher interviews (Terms 1 and 3)	Parent/teacher interviews	Parent/teacher interviews	
AITSL APST's	Written reports (Terms 2 and 4)	Report cards	Class newsletter	
DoE Parent and community engagement (PACE) framework	Newsletters	Class Dojo	Class Dojo	
	Weekly assembly	Celebrate achievements		



- Positive greeting
- Notice for upcoming opportunity to meet with the teacher
- Purpose of communication
- Information about student learning to partner with parents
- Availability and methods of contact

Artefact

Traditional approaches

Rationale

While digital methods of communication have advanced due to their effectiveness to communicate quickly and regularly, traditional methods remain important and invaluable to build connection and culture. Traditional physical objects such as letters home, awards, and completed work activities is an inclusive method as some families may not have access to devices and internet to access digital forms of communication (Grant & Ray, 2019). The physical notes children bring home serve as a source of pride, highlighting their accomplishments and offer a conversation starter for parents to inquire about their child's day. The delivery of traditional methods often can be improved by technology for example digital portfolios which can be shared with parents and newsletters which include links to support at home learning that can be distributed easily to families without the risk of notes getting lost in children's bags.

In my class

As required by ICSS, my communication plan begins with an introduction letter to students and families before students go on December/January holidays and mailed home to new students. Providing families with information about their teacher for the upcoming year can alleviate any anxiety students might feel over the holidays, cultivate excitement for their new learning journey and lay the groundwork for connections with students and their families. Outside my classroom, I plan to display artefacts for students to proudly showcase to their families at pick-up time. This is an easy and effective way of drawing parents to the classroom where informal discussions can take place for nurturing relationships. Artefacts must be carefully chosen to display to ensure everyone's work is displayed fairly and students and parents will not compare their work to that of others. Alternatively, artefacts can be shared digitally via Class Dojo. Frequent letters home acknowledging good work or notable effort will be sent home regularly for positive interactions between teachers and caregivers as often as possible. This aims to nurture a good relationship ensuring that if any problems arise, they can be addressed without fear of the teacher harbouring negative sentiments toward the student. To make this manageable, I intend on having printed slips that can easily be filled out for frequent student recognitions. And finally, to conclude the term, I intend on writing personal notes home to families. While this may be time consuming, I believe on the terms that do not have written report cards, families would like to be updated on their child's progress. By personally writing to each family, as these students are in the lower primary years, I believe a strong connection will be made that will benefit for future terms to encourage partnership for their student's success.

Artefact – Personal letter to parents



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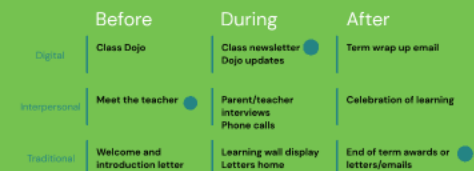
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Timeline



The timetable above shows the digital, interpersonal, and traditional methods of communication that will occur over the course of the first term. The before phase includes initial contacts with caregivers in the form of welcome letters and meet the teacher face-to-face. This is especially important for younger grades such as this as parents may be relatively new to the school. The during phase consists of digital methods, Class Dojo and newsletters, as this is a time effective way to deliver information. Personal calls and emails will also occur as personal interactions are vital for fostering relationships. Finally, the after phase will include an email/newsletter, personal email to parents, and a celebration of learning.

Interpersonal approaches

Rationale In my class

Barlund (1970/2008) acknowledged that interpersonal communication relies on continuous sharing of information with the aim of achieving a common goal – that is enhancing student learning and wellbeing. He also emphasises the importance of cultivating relationships based on respect and trust to improve the process of communication. Direct interactions between teachers and parents provide valuable opportunities to nurture these relationships, enabling both parties to learn from each other and support students in reaching their full potential (Goff, 2021). However, due to the constraints faced by many working parents and busy schedules, opportunities for face-to-face conversations at drop-off and pick-up times may be limited. Hence the importance for teachers to proactively extend invitations to meet with families and initiate contact over the phone to share students' accomplishments wherever possible, thereby fostering a positive communication culture.

As required by ICSS, I meet the teacher afternoon will facilitate the initial development of relationship. As this is a lower primary school class most parents are very eager to get to know their child's teacher. This enthusiasm comes from the immense trust parents invest in teachers for the care and education of their children. According to PACE (DoE, 2022) whereby recognising the partnership with parents, this opportunity allows parents to inform the teacher of any information that might prove helpful when supporting their child, provides clear expectations and goals for their child's learning, and lays a foundation for partnership and collaboration between school and home. As parents may not be able to attend, the slide show with information can be sent via email to parents with a personal note to the caregivers and an invitation to meet at a later date. During term 1 in week 8, ICSS holds parent/teacher interviews. During these interviews teachers give verbal reports of student progress, provide samples of student work, and discuss any points of interest concerning their children. Considering the QCoT code of ethics (n.d.), teachers must demonstrate integrity, dignity, and respectfully as information is delivered with care and sensitivity. Confidentiality is imperative during interviews to never discuss or compare other students. The process of booking interviews is done via an online booking system with availabilities late into the night for inclusivity of working parents. If however parents are unable to attend, they are encouraged to schedule another time to meet with the teacher. As an effective means of communication, phone calls to caregivers are included in this plan to continually check in with parents, notify them of student achievements, and discuss problems as they arise promptly and professionally. Considering APST 7.3 of engaging sensitively and confidentially with parents, when incidents occur that require phoning home, teachers must remain objective, state the facts only, and refrain from speaking about other children (AITSL, 2017). To conclude the term, I intend on holding a celebration of learning morning where parents are invited into the classroom for activities with their children and student work is showcased for celebrations. If families are unable to attend, student work will be photographed and messaged to parents via Dojo. The purpose of holding an event like this is to positively reflect on the outcomes that are established within the class that are made possible by the support of families at home.

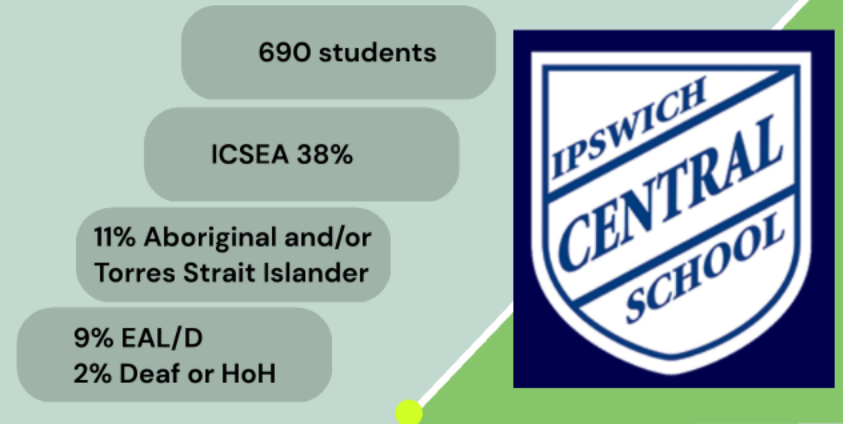
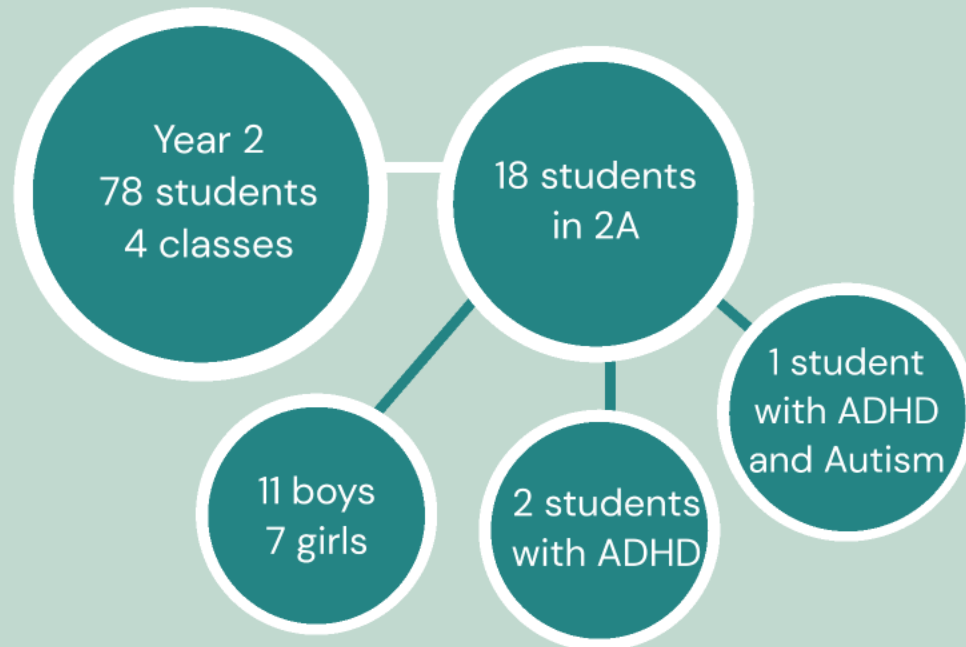
Artefact – Meet the teacher PowerPoint



- Greeting Contact details Availability
- School-wide expectations
- Learning intentions Will also provide learning support for parents
- Information for how parents can support their child at home

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	Weekly assembly	Celebrate achievements

Timeline

	Before	During	After
Digital	Class Dojo	Class newsletter Dojo updates	Term wrap up email
Interpersonal	Meet the teacher	Parent/teacher interviews Phone calls	Celebration of learning
Traditional	Welcome and introduction letter	Learning wall display Letters home	End of term awards or letters/emails

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Artefact

2A NEWSLETTER

Date
Term 1 Week 1

Class news

Welcome everyone to 2A! We are going to have a fabulous year learning together.

Each week you will receive a newsletter from me with reminders, dates, and info about our learning. I hear all the time when parents ask their kids what they did today they get the same old, "I dunno". So you will see our weekly learning focus for you to discuss with your child.

Hopefully you will hear lots of stories this first week.

Kind regards,
Mrs Eveans

Upcoming events

Monday 12th Feb -
Parent/teacher interview
bookings
Monday 26th Feb -
Parent/teacher interviews
Tuesday 13th Mar - School
photos

To-do

Please ensure all of your child's
belongings are labelled

What we're learning

Math We will discuss ways of measuring length.

Science Learning about living things and the life cycle of plants.

English This term's focus will be poetry. More info to come.

Spelling Sound of the week - long a sound e.g. late, great, baby

Contact details

My email address is revea@eq.edu.au should you wish to contact me and I will get back to you within 24 hours however if you need me urgently please call the school on 07 3432 5333 and we can speak via phone or arrange a meeting.

Positive greeting

Notice for upcoming opportunity to meet with the teacher

Purpose of communication

Information about student learning to partner with parents

Availability and methods of contact

Interpersonal approaches

Rationale

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PowerPoint



Information for how parents can support their child at home

Ref

Australian Curriculum

<https://www>

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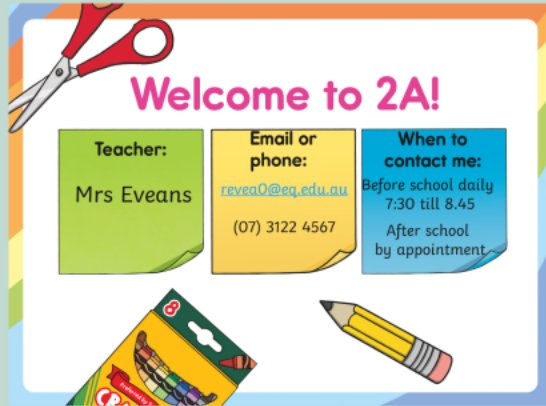
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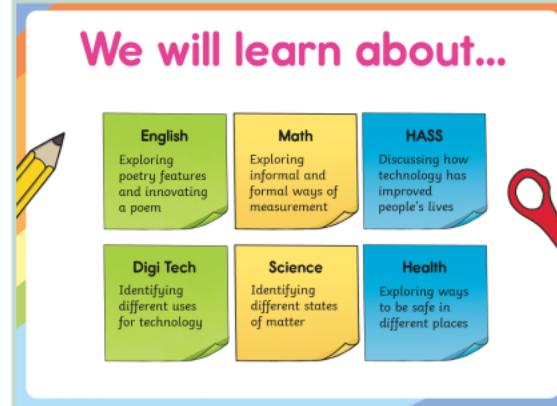
Artefact – Meet the teacher PowerPoint



Greeting
Contact details
Availability



School-wide
expectations



Learning
intentions
Will also provide
learning support
for parents



Information for how
parents can
support their child
at home

Traditional approaches

Rationale

While digital methods of communication have advanced due to their effectiveness to communicate quickly and regularly, traditional methods remain important and invaluable to build connection and culture. Traditional physical objects such as letters home, awards, and completed work activities is an inclusive method as some families may not have access to devices and internet to access digital forms of communication (Grant & Ray, 2019). The physical notes children bring home serve as a source of pride, highlighting their accomplishments and offer a conversation starter for parents to inquire about their children's day. The delivery of traditional methods often can be improved by technology for example digital portfolios which can be shared with parents and newsletters which include links to support at home learning that can be distributed easily to families without the risk of notes getting lost in children's bags.

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And finally, to conclude the term, I intend on writing personal notes home to families. While this may be time consuming, I believe on the terms that do not have written report cards, families would like to be updated on their child's progress. By personally writing to each family, as these students are in the lower primary years, I believe a strong connection will be made that will benefit for future terms to encourage partnership for their student's success.



Artefact – Personal letter to parents

Personalised
positive greeting

Purpose for email

Acknowledgement
of parental support

Offer for further
contact

Positive closing

Good morning Mrs Parent,
I hope this message finds you well.

I would like to take this time to acknowledge the wonderful work that Billy has been doing this term. He has shown great improvement across all learning areas and always gives great effort to his work. He has done exceptionally well this term in English and has written a fantastic poem that is attached. This last week, after he completed his poem, he helped a fellow classmate who needed some inspiration for rhyming words and even gave some constructive feedback during the poem presentations. It's been a pleasure to watch him flourish and grow in confidence this term.

He has also gone up by two reading levels this term which can be attributed to your support and encouragement at home. Thank you. I truly appreciate your partnership in Billy's education. I am excited to continue support his growth and progress next term.

Should you wish to discuss Billy's progress further, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'm always available for any clarification or to discuss any concerns you might have.

Have a safe and happy break.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Eveans

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