

Exford Primary School

INTRODUCTION OF PARENT REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Exford Primary School has always encouraged the active involvement of parents and guardians in the functioning of the school, from classroom helpers to working bees and helping with fundraising and school events. However, in recent years, given our growth, parents have expressed a decline in the sense of community within the school.

This year we are introducing another avenue for parents to become involved in our school community, the Parent Representative Program.

The purpose of the Parent Representative is to help foster good communication in the school between teachers, parents and the children, and to assist in the development of school community. The program will initially be introduced at the Prep year level for the second half of 2017, with intent to expand the program across the year levels in 2018 and beyond.

Being a Parent Representative is a great way to get to know other parents in the school and to make new friends. **You do not have to be 'at' school to take on this role**, as much of the organisation and communication can be done via email or phone. It is a relatively easy task, does not require a significant amount of time and two parents can share the role for each class if they wish. New parents are especially recommended to consider taking up this role. It is a great way to meet all the families in your class, and being involved in the school helps parents to settle into the new environment. The function of the Parent Representative is not formally structured and is not meant to be an arduous task.

The **Parent Representative** role may involve:

- Compiling and circulating a class contact list for families to foster communication within the class group
- Organising opportunities for the group to get to know one another outside of school, e.g. morning teas and dinners for the parents, picnics, class play dates for the children.
- Supporting the class teacher when and if required. Each teacher will have his/her own style of working, and may not require help in all areas
- Where requested by teachers, organising parent helpers for class activities and programs like reading, science projects, sports events, school concert etc.
- Encouraging and supporting the parents of the class group to get involved in school community activities, fundraising and events.
- Welcoming new families to the class and arranging appropriate introductions with other parents of the class.

For a more detailed outline of the Parent Representative program, please visit the link to the Guidelines on our website www.exfordps.vic.edu.au

Parent Representative meetings will be held once per term in the staffroom, at a time convenient for the group. As this is a new program, the first meeting will occur at the end of Term 2 and provide the opportunity to share information and ideas about how to approach the role.

How to become a Parent Representative

If you would like to volunteer yourself to be a Parent Representative for your child's class, please fill out the form below and submit to the office by **Friday 23 June 2017.**

Selected candidates will be notified by the end of Term 2 (for introduction of the program at the beginning of Term 3) and will occupy the role until the end of the school year.

We encourage you to become a part of this new initiative and look forward to seeing our families adopt the Exford Community experience.

2017 Parent Representative Council Nomination

YES I am interested in being a Parent Representative for my child's class

Parent's Name: _____ Phone No: _____

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Exford Primary School

PARENT REPRESENTATIVE GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for volunteering for the role as Parent Representative for your class. It is a wonderful opportunity to be a part of your child's education and the Exford Primary School community. As a Parent Representative, you are a valued member of our school community and your time and commitment are very much appreciated. The purpose of the Parent Representative is to help foster good communication in the school and to assist in the development of school community. It provides another means of uniting the school community and enhances the quality of relationships within the school between teachers, parents and the children. Each class from Prep to Year 6 will have at least one Parent Representative. The function of the Parent Representative is not formally structured and is not meant to be an arduous task.

Protocols of the Parent Representative

Paramount to the role of the Parent Representative is the understanding of confidentiality of the parents and/or carers, the children and the teachers within the school community. This role requires mutual trust, communication and a willingness to promote a harmonious environment for all. Primarily, the class teacher is responsible for the children in his/her care. The Parent Representative should direct all inquiries from parents to the class teacher or Principal. The Parent Representative is to support the class teacher and therefore adhere to the teacher's directions.

All Parent Representatives must sign the Exford Primary School Confidentiality and Child Safe agreement.

Structure of the Parent Representative Team

A Parent Representative will volunteer for a particular class group for a calendar year. Normally there is one Parent Representative for each class group, but to share the load and/or provide back-up, there may be two Parent Representatives for each class group. Working in pairs can be less daunting especially for new parents into the school community. "A job shared is a job halved" and it is always good to bounce ideas off each other and to cover for absences.

Confidentiality

The Parent Representative should at all times be respectful of the privacy of others. Exford Primary School recognises and respects your privacy and is committed to protecting the privacy of all families. No family information will be disseminated unless permission is given by the family.

All families are asked to complete the 'Request for Parent Contact Details' which is attached as Appendix 1. The School will distribute this form to each family at the beginning of Term 3 this year and in Term 1 from next year onwards.

The Parent Representative is then responsible for collating the information and circulating the class list to parents via their preferred method of communication. It is important to note that this list is NOT to be used for commercial or marketing/advertising purposes.

Role of the Parent Representative

The role of the Parent Representative can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Developing a working relationship with the class teacher by meeting/communicating on a regular basis to ensure all needs are being met; regarding:
- Help with excursions and incursions

- Rosters for classroom helpers
- Requests for materials for classroom projects
- Assistance with hands-on class projects
- Provide a personal approach to welcoming new families and assist them in getting to know other families and to feel part of the school community;
- Promote communication between the school and the parents/carers;
- Compile a family contact list for the class group via the correct school protocols (see above section on Confidentiality). Update and re-circulate the class list as necessary.
- To liaise with other Parent Representatives when required;
- Circulate and promote information regarding fundraising projects and special activity days on behalf of the fundraising team.
- Organise family activities out of school hours. This provides an opportunity for families to meet each other etc. This can be done at least once each term and can include; - Mum's Dinner/Drinks – Dads' Dinner/Drinks - Children's Movies - Family Picnics etc. (Appendix 3)

Any delegation of tasks when co-ordinating an event needs to be followed up prior to the event and confirmed by the Parent Representative to ensure that all requirements are met and all offers will be followed through. If people are unable to fulfil their tasks, then a replacement can be made or the Parent Representative can fill in where need be. The final responsibility for any job/task rests with the Parent Representative.

What the Parent Representative is NOT Responsible For

The Parent Representative is not involved in the parent/teacher relationship. If any parent approaches a Parent Representative with any concerns regarding their child's education or experiences at school, the Parent Representative must advise the concerned parent/carer to converse with the teacher or Principal directly.

Parent Representative Meetings & Support

A meeting of the Parent Representatives across the school will be held once per term. This meeting will be chaired by the Parent Representative Co-ordinator who is also a member of the School Council. These meetings will provide opportunity to discuss any issues relating to the role and to share information about upcoming school events and class/year level activities.

The role of the Parent Representative Co-ordinator is to provide support and guidance to the Parent Representatives. You will be provided with contact details for the co-ordinator to assist you throughout the year.

Organised Whole School Events

The Parent Representative Group is a personalised line of communication and major support for enabling all whole school events. Once events have been discussed and approved by the Principal, the Parent Representative Co-ordinator will contact all Parent Representatives to discuss what is required and provide a roster for volunteers. Examples of whole school events are;

- Beginning of year Family BBQ and Information Sessions
- School Disco
- Fundraising
- Walkathon
- Father's Day/Mother's Day stalls
- End of Year School Concert

Photocopying Facilities

If you require any photocopying of notices/flyers, please contact the School Office or email your request to exford.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Fortnightly Newsletter

Parent Representatives are encouraged to advertise upcoming events in the fortnightly school newsletter with reminders sent out through FlexiBuzz. Advertising in the newsletter can create a greater interest and participation in events, and it also personalises many situations in the school community. Ideas of what to advertise in the newsletter are:

- Upcoming class events
- Reminders for parents to respond to deadlines
- A thank you note to parents who may have helped with an event

All requests for advertisement in the newsletter can be made through the Front Office or email your request to exford.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

How to Begin the Year

Below are suggestions on how to begin the new school year;

- Introduce yourself to your class teacher. Have a meeting with them to discuss the specifics of your role and how you can work together;
- Once you have received the contact details for the families in your class, introduce yourself to your class families. You can do this by way of the attached 'Parent Representative Introduction Letter' which is attached as Appendix 2.
- Organise a family activity for your class outside of school hours so all families can meet.
- Pin a laminated photo of yourself to the classroom window (particularly at lower class levels where there are many new families) so other parents are able to identify you around the school.
- Suggest to families the different ways in which they can volunteer their time at the school (see Appendix 5) if they are so inclined.

We thank you for volunteering for this new and exciting role within our school community and hope you enjoy the experience.

Appendix 1 – Example of Parent Contact Details letter

Distributed by the School

EXFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL
RSD Exford Road
EXFORD VIC 3338
Telephone: (03) 9743 5025
Fax: (03) 9743 9876
Email: exford.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
www.exfordps.vic.edu.au

Friday, 2 June 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: REQUEST FOR CONTACT DETAILS FOR PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

As part of our endeavour to promote communication and to assist new families joining our school community, we have a Parent Representative assigned to each class group. To develop the lines of communication between parents/carers, the Parent Representatives would like the contact details for each family in their class group. Due to the Privacy Act, schools are not permitted to provide family details unless that family gives approval.

To assist the Parent Representatives in each class to communicate with you on matters relating specifically to your child's class, requests from the classroom teacher, as well as whole school events, please complete the details below and return to the Office as soon as possible. Only provide details that you are willing to provide to all parents for your class group.

I would like to stress that Exford Primary School and its volunteers respects the privacy of all families within the school community. We are aware that several families have silent telephone numbers and may prefer not to have their contact details given to the Parent Representative. These families may wish to contact their Parent Representative personally and make other arrangements so that they can be advised of class news or coming events etc.

Yours Sincerely,

Lisa Campo

Principal

-
- I would prefer to contact the Parent Representative for my class group personally
 - I am happy to provide the following contact details **only** to the Parent Representative for my class group
 - I am happy to provide the following contact details to **all** parents for my class group

Child's Name _____ Class _____

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Parent/Carer Name | |
| Relationship to Child | |
| Mobile | |
| Email | |
| Other | |

Appendix 2 - Example of Parent Representative Introduction Letter

Dear Year 1 Parents/Carers

I wish to introduce myself and extend a warm welcome to you and your family.

As the Parent Representative for your child's class, I help to foster communication within the school, and to assist with the development of the school community. This is another means of uniting the school community and enhancing the quality of relationships within the school between teachers, parents/carers and the children.

Please feel free to contact me if you wish to help in the classroom or if you require information on how you can be involved as a parent/carer at Exford Primary School. I look forward to meeting you at our first social function.

Yours Sincerely

Parent Representative – Year 1 Phone _____

Email _____

Appendix 3 - Example of an Invitation to a Class Event

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to invite you and your family to join me at our upcoming Year 1 Children's Play Date.

Venue Woodlea Estate Playground

When Saturday 25 February 2017

Time From 10am

What to bring It would be lovely if each family could please bring a small plate of food or drink to share with the group. Please be mindful of allergies.

Please return the RSVP slip back to me by 15 February to confirm your family's attendance.

I hope that you are able to join us for a wonderful morning.

Yours sincerely

Year 1 Parent Representative

RSVP

the _____ Family are able to attend the above function

the _____ Family are unable to attend the above function

Signed _____

Appendix 4 - Parent Representative Contact List - Example

| Child | Parent/Carer | | | |
|------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------|
| | Name | Relationship to Child | Email | Mobile |
| Anne Green | Emma | Mother | Abc123@bigpond.com | ***** |
| | Thomas | Father | | |
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Appendix 5 – Opportunities for Volunteering at Exford Primary School

Opportunities for Volunteering at Exford Primary School

In Your Child's Class

- Listen to children read – Individually, Guided Reading Groups
- Put up displays of student work
- Act as a Class Parent Representative
- Assist in lessons e.g. Art & Craft; Hands on Maths; cooking
- Support small group activities
- Photocopying, laminating and creating resources

In the Library

- Label and/or cover books
- Shelve resources
- Identify and mark texts e.g. for Premier's Reading Challenge
- Read to children
- Help on the circulation desk (issue and return books)
- Help students with research
- Help children to shelve or find books on the catalogue

Around the School - Inside

- Welcome new members of our school community
- Assist Lunchtime Clubs
- Book Club

Across the School - Outside

- Improve school sustainability e.g. recycling, compost etc.
- Work in the garden or with Garden Club
- Working Bees
- Attend excursions
- Help with BBQ's

At home

- Cover books with contact