

TLC Communication Guidelines

In TLC everyone is equally responsible to create a healthy, open and harmonious community. As human beings communication is both our strength and our weakness, and when we face challenges, this usually comes down to individuals feeling that there is a lack of or gap in communication.

It is important that you are well informed of what TLC is before joining. TLC is not a school, but a Learning Community, where everyone is a learner alike, children, parents and facilitators. We do not have top down functioning, instead everyone is active where they choose to contribute and equally responsible:

- The Aspiration team for those interested to, with commitment, hold the long term visioning, research and implementation of Integral Education (requires min one year in TLC before joining this team).
- The Community Team to keep the collective organism healthy and thriving.
- Teams to hold areas like finances and food.

When there is a feeling that communication is not functioning, the first step is to stop and reflect if you as an individual have taken your responsibility towards the collective to follow the Communication Guidelines we have in TLC.

If you have, and you have suggestions for ways of improving communication, take initiative and bring your ideas and suggestions to the community gathering.

Communication forums:

- Community Gatherings
- Conflict and mediation steps
- Community board
- What's App communication guidelines
- Newsletter
- Admissions Process
- Exit interview

Community Gatherings

Monthly Community Gatherings - take place every monthly workday from 11.30-12.30. This is a place for everyone to bring topics - to share ideas, discuss, learn, and problem solve. It is essential that all members use this forum to maintain a harmonious community.

If you have topics for the **Community Gathering** please send an SMS to Mrinalini. If time permits, we will include all topics, if not, the Community Team will prioritize the topics and some may be kept for the next community gathering.

Remember that it is your individual responsibility to bring all concerns or questions to the community gathering. Issues should be addressed right away in this forum. It is the time/place to share, to gain clarity, find solutions and build understanding.

Conflict and mediation

Our culture in TLC strives to use tools from:

- Compassionate communication.
- Practice deep listening.
- Non Violent Communication (NVC)
- P.E.T. advocates parents to use communication and conflict resolution skills to influence children and empower them to become self-reliant, make positive decisions and control their own behavior.
- Restorative circles to build and strengthen relationships in our community. Fostering healing, repair and increasing accountability to build connection, allowing all community members to thrive and feel valued.
- Sociocratic and democratic practices to guide collective processes.

We follow the following steps to build a harmonious community together:

Children

1. Try to solve the situation yourself.
2. Ask for support from another child or from an adult.
3. If the conflict remains unsolved, facilitators, and children sit to listen, hear and offer repair.
4. If the conflict remains, a meeting with parents and children is called.
5. For ongoing conflicts the Children's or Adult **community gatherings** are used to **constructively problem-solve together**.

For adults

1. Try to solve the situation yourself. **Bring an attitude of openness and non-judgement.**
2. Reach out to the child's mentor or to the Aspiration team for a meeting. **Be receptive and solution-oriented.** What goes on with each individual is also part of a collective process. Nothing is one-sided.
3. Bring the topic to the ALL TLC community gathering to constructively problem-solve together. Trust in the process.

Community Board

The community board is just inside the gate. You can't miss it! Make a habit to read the information on the board. The Community team and Aspiration teams will fill the board with this and that, so if you have anything that you feel should be on the board, pass it on to them...

What's App Communication Guidelines

Our main guideline for whatsapp groups is that **we only share short messages** about everyday things that need to be communicated. If there is a need for a response it can be done as PM/DM (private/direct message). We **don't answer with emojis or short comments** that are not necessary for all, rather use the emoji reaction option. If this is not followed the whatsapp groups get overloaded with messages and we don't pay the same attention to them. Important messages can be missed.

For anything that needs deeper discussion or is of a sensitive nature, we always meet to talk. We never use whatsapp or email for this. **Contact the mentor or a member of the Aspiration team to book a meeting.** Or bring the topic to the all TLC Community Gathering.

We DO NOT use voice messaging as it requires a lot more time from the receiver, and also there is no way of knowing the nature of the content beforehand. Therefore voice messages require to be listened to in private. Most of the facilitators have children around at home, or live with other people, which makes it difficult with confidentiality and privacy in regards to content shared if parents communicate with voice messaging.

We have four whatsapp groups:

- **TLC Integral learning** - for sharing of practical information for Current ALL TLC members, our newsletters, questions to all etc. All parents and facilitators need to be a part of this group as there can be important info shared regarding practical

functioning. This group should only be used for messages relevant to all the children (or the majority) - it is NOT for messages pertaining to individual children. Please message your child's mentor or the relevant facilitator in these instances.

- **TLC nursery** - a group for sharing of NURSERY activities, scheduling, questions to all etc. All parents and facilitators need to be a part of this group as there can be important info shared regarding practical functioning.
- **TLC saplings** - a group for sharing of SAPLINGS, scheduling, activities, questions to all etc. All parents and facilitators need to be a part of this group as there can be important info shared regarding practical functioning.
- **TLC photo moments** is the group that includes all members of TLC (plus some former members). Here we share photos of the kids, quotes, reading material, invitations to events in av and other stuff to share with all. Please keep your sharings positive!
- **Team WhatsApp groups** to discuss week/monthly work that needs to be done. Depending on which team and task you will choose to participate in, you will then be automatically added to the relevant group.

Email

We only use our TLC email for official emails, not for any internal communication in TLC. We have two email addresses, tlc@auroville.org.in for communication with SAIER, school board or outside bodies. Our email tlcwelcome@auroville.org.in is for communication with interested families and with Auroville school admission only.

Newsletter

At the start of each term a detailed newsletter is sent to all parents and facilitators. It is important to read the complete newsletter as important information is shared here. The newsletters are available on the TLC website.

Information in the newsletter:

- New people joining and people leaving TLC are announced.
- Schedules
- Community events
- Other

Admissions Process

We follow the following admission steps:

1. Know about TLC. Attend our information meetings, read on the website, read about Integral Education, meet us to ask questions
2. If you resonate with TLC, and want to become a part of this living organism, an admission meeting is held with the TLC welcome team.
3. If you resonate and there is mutual agreement to go ahead, a second meeting is scheduled to know more about your family and child.
4. After this meeting it is time to contact Auroville's central school admission and fill the common admission form with questions about your family and child, and why you are choosing TLC. This is sent in writing to TLC and to School admission, together with the admission form.
5. The admission process is finalized with Auroville School Admission.
An integration plan is made together with the facilitators.
6. Joining TLC you commit to follow the TLC communication guidelines and do your best to contribute towards the positive growth of the community. You also commit to a minimum of one full year in TLC, to allow for your family to settle, understand TLC's functioning, and integrate into the community. You also agree to the TLC exit process in case you choose to step out of TLC after the year.

Exit interview

As you have chosen to join a community, it is important that the process of leaving the community happens with respect for the collective. Therefore we insist on an exit interview with all families that leave TLC.

Family / Caregiver Exit Interview

Family Name:

Child(rens) Name and Age(s):

Reason for Leaving

- Why did you decide to leave The Learning Community?
- Were there any specific challenges or concerns that contributed to this decision?
- Did you share your concerns with anyone at TLC prior to deciding to leave? What was the response?

Child's Learning

- How would you describe the impact of TLC on your child's personal growth and development?
- Do you feel their needs were met - how or how not?

Community and Relationships

- How would you describe your experience in the TLC community and the relationships you formed?
- How was the TLC orientation process for you and your child(ren)?
- Did you feel supported? If not, what would make you feel more supported?

Administration and Management

- Based on your understanding of TLC before joining, how did TLC match up to these expectations?

- Were you satisfied with the administration and management of TLC?
- How could this be improved? (Consider communication, organisation, other administrative processes)

Final reflections

- What do you value about TLC?
- How could TLC improve? (Consider overall approach, community engagement, administration, management)
- Any final comments or thoughts you would like to share?

Child Exit Interview (where appropriate / possible)

Child's Name:

Age of the Child:

Reason for Leaving:

- Why are you leaving The Learning Community?

Learnings and Memories

- What is one of your favourite memories at TLC?
- What is one of your most challenging moments at TLC?
- Are there any specific subjects or activities you enjoyed the most?
- Do you feel TLC has supported your personal growth and education?
 - If yes, how?
 - If no... what could TLC do differently to better meet your needs?

Improvements

- Anything else TLC could do differently to improve?
- What would you want more of?
- What would you want less of?

Other comments

- Any final comments or thoughts you would like to share?