



St Monica's Primary School Evatt ACT



COMMUNICATION AGREED PRACTICE

PURPOSE

St Monica's Primary School values the partnership that exists between parents/carers and staff. This partnership aims to foster academic progress, nurture student wellbeing and promote a positive school environment. It is therefore in the interest of the whole school community that communication between parents/carers and staff is open and respectful, appropriate, constructive and timely. This document is designed to ensure the most effective and productive communication between staff and parents/carers.

FRAMEWORK

The St Monica's School Community Council Executive and the School Executive Team acknowledge the professionalism, integrity and privacy of our staff and respect their right to an environment that is safe and supportive. The school is committed to promoting open and respectful communication between parents/carers and staff.

CONTENT

- Parents and carers should allow between 1-2 school days for a reply during staff working hours (8.00am – 5.00pm) to any communication
- It is acknowledged that staff have time constraints during the school day and that issues or concerns are best dealt with when uninterrupted time and attention can be given to them
- Issues or concerns should not be discussed in front of students or other families
- Issues or concerns are best shared when they first arise
- Sensitive matters will not be dealt with via email
- No school related communication will occur, or be entered into, via any social media sites
- First contact should always be made with the teacher or staff member concerned. The school coordinators would be the next point of call, followed by the Assistant Principal and finally the Principal
- Parents/carers should contact their child's class teacher if the matter involves their child or an issue of class operation
- Parents/carers should contact the appropriate staff member/specialist teacher should the matter involve a matter outside the classroom or a particular area (eg canteen concern, sacramental question, finances, library, creative arts, languages etc)
- Where a teacher and parent/carer meeting is cancelled, it is the responsibility of the person cancelling the meeting to communicate with other parties and reschedule a mutually convenient time
- Where matters involve a third party, discussion will occur within privacy guidelines
- During meetings a record of the meeting will be recorded to be placed on a student's file
- Email communication may be filed for future reference
- Teachers email addresses can be provided to parents of the students in their class each year
- The Principal should be advised of any concerns about the lack of response to communication

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Home/School Communication Tools

- School Website
- Online Calendar
- Weekly Newsletter
- Term Overviews
- Information Nights
- Parent Workshops
- Parent/Teacher Meetings
- Emails
- Phone
- Flyers
- Scheduled appointments
- SkoolBag App

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

- Acknowledge and respond to emails within 1-2 school days –including emails from colleagues
- Send emails only to respondents who need the email
- Respond to parent emails during work hours only 8.00am-5.00pm
- Staff may choose to email colleagues out of these hours but there is no expectation that staff respond outside these hours
- Offensive emails and those of a serious nature should be forwarded to the Principal
- Draft emails and seek coordinator advice/support when required
- It is appropriate for staff to cc their direct coordinator into emails to parents should they choose
- The shorter the email, the better
- In the event of receiving a sensitive email, contact the parent/colleague to meet in person to discuss further and if required, ask for an Executive Member to also be present
- Make a record of parent meetings on school interview record sheets to be filed
- Social Media of any form is not a preferred method of communication at St Monica's
- In the event of cancelling a meeting, with parent or colleague, communication to reschedule must occur in a timely manner

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

- Acknowledge and respond to emails within 1-2 school days –including emails from colleagues
- Send emails only to respondents who need the email
- Staff may choose to email colleagues out of work hours (8am-5pm) but there is no expectation that staff respond outside these hours
- Offensive emails and those of a serious nature should be forwarded to the Principal
- The shorter the email, the better
- Social Media of any form is not a preferred method of communication at St Monica's
- In the event of a child being injured at school by another child and requiring first aid treatment, Administrative Staff will phone parent/s and disclose the incident respecting the privacy of the other student and inform parents of the teacher or executive teacher who will follow up the incident. Class teachers must be informed of incident

GUIDELINES FOR EXECUTIVE STAFF

- Acknowledge and respond to emails within 1-2 school days –including emails from colleagues
- Send emails only to respondents who need the email
- Respond to emails during work hours only 8.00am-5.00pm. In the event of receiving an email from a parent, clarify if the classroom teacher has been communicated with as per our agreed practice. Except in the event of a complaint or issue/concern of a sensitive/private matter.
- Staff may choose to email colleagues out of these hours but there is no expectation that staff respond outside these hours
- Offensive emails and those of a serious nature should be forwarded to the Principal
- Draft emails and seek advice/support from Assistant Principal or Principal
- It is appropriate for executive staff to cc the Assistant Principal or Principal into emails to parents should they choose
- The shorter the email, the better
- In the event of receiving a sensitive email, contact the parent/colleague to meet in person to discuss further and if required, ask for another Executive Member to also be present
- Social Media of any form is not a preferred method of communication at St Monica's
- In the event of cancelling a meeting, with parent or colleague, communication to reschedule must occur in a timely manner

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

- Parents/carers should appreciate that sometimes a delay in reply to emails (more than 1-2 school working days) may be experienced due to staff absence/illness or an unexpected circumstance
- In the event of urgent matters parents/carers should contact the front office staff who will ensure that appropriate staff members are informed
- Communication with your child's teacher should be the first point of call in all instances
- Issues or concerns will be discussed in a private meeting between Classroom Teacher and Parent/Carer
- In the event of cancelling a meeting with your child's teacher, communication to reschedule must occur in a timely manner
- No parent/carer should approach the child of another family or their parents negatively with an issue on the school grounds
- Concerns of a sensitive nature will not be dealt with via email. Your child's teacher will ring to make an appointment to discuss further
- Parents/carers should appreciate that making contact in person with the class teacher at morning bell time (or during the day) can be difficult due to supervision of their class. Before the bell goes at the start of the day or after school would be a more appropriate time providing the teacher is not on a duty supervising children
- Social Media of any form is not a preferred method of communication at St Monica's

RELATED POLICIES/GUIDELINES

- Student Welfare & Anti-Bullying Policy
- Catholic Education – Professional Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use Policy – IT
- Privacy Policy – CE
- Complaints Policy - CE