



Communication Protocol – Policy and Procedure

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe St Columban's College's approach towards improving and maintaining positive and constructive communication between the College and its parents, caregivers and the wider community.

The further purpose of this policy is to ensure that the communication of information is carried out in a manner that complies with school, departmental and legal requirements. Building better links between home and school contributes to positive learning experiences and builds the school's reputation in the wider community.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and the Parent Partnership and Code of Conduct.

2. RATIONALE

Communication plays a key role in creating and fostering strong, positive relationships between the College and the home. Communication is a two-way street; our schools share information with our families and community, and our families share information with our College.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

St Columban's College is committed to maintaining high standards of communication and keeping the lines of communication constructive, positive and informative. STC is committed to fair, consistent, open and cooperative communication with parents, students and the wider community. We believe that schools and families benefit from strong partnerships that allow them to communicate formally and informally on a regular basis.

4. PRINCIPLES

Effective and positive communication is achieved by St Columban's College and its community by applying the following principles:

- good communication is a two-way process and needs to be regular, relevant and timely so all concerned staff, students and parents acquire information and details as required.
- we recognise and expect that everyone will, in any form of communication, adhere to respectful and courteous behaviours at all times.
- the effective principles of communication are a good guide to measure one's message and interaction. Is your message
 - Clear and Concise?
 - Correct and Complete?
 - Coherent and Courteous?

5. PROCEDURE

St Columban's College will meet its commitment to engaging in successful communication through providing open and transparent information about programs and procedures.

These protocols outline the communication responsibilities for staff, students and parents / caregivers to support everyone to become fully informed and to strengthen the home / College partnership.



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5.1 Communication Methods

- Face to face communication
- Meetings including one-on-one, parent-teacher interviews, P & F meetings etc
- Telephone communication
- Email communication
- Hard copy written communication eg letters/notes sent to school or home with students, mail communication, Parent Slips etc
- Social media and other electronic communication eg newsletters, websites, Facebook etc

All methods of communication are to be compliant with the principles of this policy.

5.2 Method of Raising Concerns

College staff may be able to be contacted via phoning the school office (07 5495 3111) or via email directly to the staff member or the College email address scaboolture@bne.catholic.edu.au.

Appointments to meet with staff members should also be made in the same way. To find a mutually agreeable time between staff and parents/caregivers, communication via phone or email is the appropriate way to find such a time. Coming to the College in person and demanding to see a member of staff or the Leadership team is not an appropriate way to establish open, positive and productive communication.

5.3 Flowchart for Raising Concerns

If parents/caregivers have a concern about something at the school or in the classroom, they are encouraged to raise the concern in a timely manner directly to the appropriate person. These discussions should take place in the following order:

1. Discuss the concern with the classroom teacher to determine if the issue can be resolved at the classroom level.
2. If this issue cannot be resolved at the classroom level or is a concern outside of the classroom, raise the concern with your child's Pastoral Care teacher or House Leader. Most concerns can be addressed at the school level when staff and parents/caregivers engage in open and collaborative discussion.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved at the PC teacher or House Leader level, they may escalate it to the Student Wellbeing Leader or Assistant Principal (AP) level.
4. The Student Wellbeing Leader or AP may escalate to the Deputy Principal or Principal if required. This is not a decision made by the parent/caregiver.

Any level of the above discussions may be initiated by telephone or email, but may evolve into a face-to-face meeting, which allows for further collaborative discussion to take place. All communication must adhere to the principles of this policy and procedure.



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5.4 Timelines for Communication

- Email communication can be expected to be responded to within 2 business days (during the week, excluding weekends)
- Telephone communication can be expected to be responded to within 2 business days (during the week, excluding weekends)
- Parents are reminded that a response to an email or phone call will depend upon the teacher's commitments. E.g. teaching hours, meetings, yard duty, breaks etc.

Whilst every effort is made to make communication as consistent and time-managed, occasionally there are break-downs in this process and messages may be missed. Please be mindful of the environment we work in, caring for many students across a number of domains.