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ST. JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been developed to outline the processes of effective and efficient communication to and from parents/ guardians and between staff members. The aim of the document is to provide clarity around:

- The appropriate process for communication between Parents and St. John's Primary School staff
- The appropriate process for resolution of any enquiries and issues

To support the students, parents and staff of St. John's Primary School to communicate effectively with each other, we need to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are respectful, professional, timely and clear. Building positive relationships between all stakeholders in a child's education is based on mutual respect and trust that results in supporting the improvement of student learning.

DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is an exchange between parents and carers, communities and schools that involves information sharing and opportunities to learn about each other. To have a significant impact on student outcomes, communication needs to be focused on student learning. It must also be a genuine exchange of information and ideas between the school, the home and the community. Effective communication encourages open dialogue, enables problem solving and promotes a sense of shared responsibility for the educational success and wellbeing of students.

OBJECTIVES

All communications at St. John's Primary School should:

- keep staff, students, parents and other stakeholders well informed
- be respectful, open, honest, ethical and professional
- use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- be actioned within a reasonable time
- use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience
- take account of relevant policies

HOW ST. JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNICATES WITH PARENTS

There are a number of avenues of communication within the School e.g. newsletters, Skoolzine, SeeSaw and appointments with staff. Communication is a critical aspect of ensuring the best possible outcomes for individual students.

It is not always possible to speak to staff during school hours, due to teaching, yard duty and meeting schedules. Should you need to contact teaching staff, email is the preferred method of communication. If you would like to speak to staff personally, please phone and make an appointment for a meeting or leave your name and a message so that staff may return your call. Please remember to allow sufficient time for staff to return your call dependent upon their teaching and pastoral duties on any given day.



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Communications will take place in many different forms:

- School newsletter - this is released weekly on a Monday via email & Skoolzine
- PAM (Parent Access Module) - reports, interviews, school absences, excursions permissions etc.
- Student Reports - released at the end of Term 2 and Term 4
- 3 Way Conversations - during Term 2
- Notes and letters to parents
- Whole school assemblies
- St. John's Primary School website
- Special events and celebrations e.g. Beginning of year Mass, Catholic Education Week
- School Policies and Guidelines
- Seesaw App
- School social media pages

NEWSLETTER

Our newsletter is distributed weekly by email and it is also available online through our website and Skoolzine. The purpose is to report on recent activities and highlight upcoming events. To ensure you continue to receive our newsletter email, please inform the office if your email changes.

SEESAW APP

Seesaw is an app that we use for regular communication with parents regarding their child's learning. Your child's teacher will be able to assist you with login instructions.

PAM - PARENT ACCESS MODULE

PAM provides parents and guardians with access to the school intranet through their own individual private portal. It allows real time access to the student's timetable, academic results, school reports, medical profile, sick bay visits and attendance. Through PAM, families can book Learning Conversations, update medical information, log absences and give permission for excursions/camps.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Reports are shared with parents/guardians electronically at the end of Terms 2 & 4 through PAM.

3 WAY CONVERSATIONS

Learning Conversations are conducted during Term 2. Students from Years F-6 are encouraged to attend these interviews with their parents. The dates of these interviews are published in the school newsletter. An email is sent to all parents, and newsletter and Skoolzine alerts will be used to remind parents to book an interview. Appointments are made on a first come, first served basis. All interview bookings are made through PAM.

LITERACY & NUMERACY ASSESSMENTS

The school conducts a variety of literacy and numeracy assessments at the beginning and end of each term to individualise student learning and measure learning growth. Reading, Writing and Mathematics Assessments are conducted pre and post learning cycles. Parents are welcome to discuss this assessment data with their child's classroom teacher.



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CALENDAR

The school calendar is located on our website and on our newsletter, it includes all important activities, meetings and excursions for the school year. Where possible, dates will be advertised ahead of time, however, in some instances this may not be possible. Calendar changes and updates are published in the school newsletter and website.

SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

Parents are invited to school assemblies. Assemblies are held every Monday at 2.30pm in the school stadium.

PARENT CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The following is offered as the first point of contact regarding particular issues.

ENQUIRY TYPE	FIRST POINT OF CONTACT
Student Progress & Behavioural Concerns	Classroom Teacher - <i>the teachers initial for their first name and then their surname followed by the school email. E.g</i> jmadden@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
Specialist Subject Concern	Specialist Teacher- <i>the teachers initial for their first name and then their surname followed by the school email.</i>
Student Wellbeing/ Medical Concern	Classroom Teacher or Wellbeing Leader jkoch@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
General Enquiries	School Office sburchell@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au jbartlett@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
PAM/SIMON Enquiries	School Office jbartlett@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
SeeSaw Enquiries	Classroom Teacher
School Fees	Finance Officer or Principal sburchell@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au bvandecamp@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
Excursions/Camps	Classroom Teacher or Supervisor outlined in permission letter on PAM



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School Newsletter	School Office jbartlett@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
Child Protection or Staff Misconduct Issues	Principal bvandecamp@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
Curriculum	Assistant Principals jmadden@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au aatwell@sjdennington.catholic.edu.au
Student Absence - Single day	School Office or Classroom Teacher
Student Absence - Extended	Classroom Teacher or Principal

Please note that if after the first point of contact greater clarity or resolution is needed, the following contact can be made:

For Academic Concerns - Principal or Assistant Principal

For Pastoral Concerns - Principal or Assistant Principal

GUIDELINES FOR PARENT COMMUNICATION TO STAFF THROUGH TELEPHONE, LETTER OR EMAIL

1. Emails or letters should not be used to communicate urgent or critical matters. It is always best to speak with the member of staff concerned by telephone or in person. Please contact the school to arrange an interview to discuss urgent or critical matters with the appropriate person outlined in the table provided.
2. Due to the nature of their work, teachers spend almost all of their time in the classroom. When they are not in the classroom, teachers may be in staff meetings, on excursions or planning and marking. They also have limited lunch time, with many staff also performing yard supervision during this time. Teachers have a range of duties to fulfil and as a result, it may take longer than a parent might wish for them to respond to an email, letter or telephone call. Generally speaking, teachers will endeavour to respond to an email, letter or telephone call within two working days, within the hours of 8am-5pm. If an email is sent over the weekend or during school holidays, it will not be addressed until working days resume for that particular staff member.
3. It is important to reflect upon the tone, timing and content of an email or letter before it is sent. Correspondence written in haste or in anger rarely helps to sort our issues or problems; in fact, a poorly written or emotionally charged correspondence will almost always have the opposite effect. Too often, harshly written and 'angry' emails or letters result in later regret.



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4. Some members of staff have many different responsibilities. It is therefore important to ensure that you have made contact with the correct member of staff to be able to address your particular question or issue. The Parent Channels of Communication table and School Website of staff listed responsibilities may give you an indication of who to contact. However, it is school policy that you direct your initial discussion with the person with whom you have the concern.

5. Emails and letters are a quick and convenient way of communicating “good news”. You are encouraged to use emails to send messages of encouragement and support to staff. Please contact the office if you require a teacher’s email address.