



For the Whole of Their Life

**St Philip's Christian College
Waratah**

**Communication – Home/School Policy
2021**

Policy Document Information

Author/Supervisor	P, O'Dea, ELT
Compliance	
NESA	Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual Section 3.6.2 (Student Welfare)
Legislative Requirements	Education Act (1990)
Other Policy Relationships	Complaints Policy Grievance Policy Managing Student Behaviour (Discipline) Policy Managing Student Behaviour (Discipline) Guidelines and Procedures Reporting Policy Privacy Policy Staff Handbook
Key Dates	
Date of last review	May 2021
Review Date	May 2024
Policy Review	This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or as needed in line with legislative changes and the requirements of the Association of Independent Schools
Applies to	St Philip's Christian College, Waratah K-12

The College's policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the *Education Act* and of NESA for registration of the school.



St Philip's Christian College Waratah

Communication – Home/School Policy 2021

1. General Statement

It is widely recognised that the more involved parents are in their child's education, the better is the student's success at school. International research has consistently found that good staff-parent relationships, particularly in the early years, benefit children, staff, and parents. Research also shows that parents and community members play an important role in their children's education, a strong partnership between parents and schools enriches the learning experience of the child and students do better in school when parents communicate often with teachers. ¹

The staff of St Philip's Christian College, Waratah is therefore committed to developing strong, positive relationships with the school community, in line with our core value – 'Building Community' and to increase learning opportunities for, and well-being of our students. In order to do this, open channels of communication are needed, particularly with the parent/carer (or the 'home') and the school. Staff and parents are encouraged to actively keep the lines of communication open, so that if an issue arises, it can swiftly and easily be addressed.

This policy outlines the formal channels of communication that the school has in place. Numerous spontaneous opportunities arise throughout the school year for informal communication to occur. At all times, the staff of St Philip's Christian College will be above reproach in their communication with the parent/carer.

This policy is to read in conjunction with the College's Complaints policy, Grievance Policy and Staff Handbook.

2 Aim

By implementing this policy, we aim to provide the best learning opportunity for, and well-being of the students by ensuring open, meaningful and honest communication between the home and the school, always being careful to understand the child's background and family life.

¹ See the following websites for detailed research and articles.

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/succeed/communication.cfm>

<http://www.teachingtimes.com/articles/bridging-the-gap-communication-parents-pupils-schools.htm>

<http://education.qld.gov.au/parents/school-life/communication.html>

<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v3n2/hughes.html>

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/dro/view/DU:30001155>

3 Objectives - Policy statement

3.1 To provide open, honest channels of communication between the Home and School

3.2 To promote a safe, supportive and inclusive environment which;

- Promotes positive communication between the child/home and school
- Recognises student's background and interests.
- Provides opportunity for parents/carers to actively and meaningfully become involved in their child's education,

4. Audience and Applicability

The College community including Executive Staff, Teaching and Non-teaching staff, Students, Parent/Carers.

5. Context

5.1 At St Philip's Christian College, Waratah we strive to provide quality learning environments which are safe, secure and supportive. To do this we need systems that cater for open and honest communication between the key stakeholders in the child's education. Staff and parent/carers also need to be aware of protocols to ensure communication is appropriate and effective.

6. Responsibilities and delegations

6.1 Principal

- Provide opportunities for meaningful communication with College Community through newsletters, annual report, annual survey,s Thanksgiving Service report, website, PTF, parent forums, MySPCC, LMS, etc
- Communicate innovations, new programs, new or revised policies, building works, etc with College community and provide opportunity for input and feedback.
- Ensure systems are in place for regular home/school communication by sub-schools – progressive (Years 5-12) and/or semesterly (Years K-4) reporting, and formal interviews, yearly information nights/sessions and other webinars or information sessions as required
- Approve the publishing of official College information via digital communication (College Facebook page, Twitter, LinkedIn, Website, etc)
- Ensure all media communications (television/newspapers ads/articles, website, Facebook, Twitter, etc) promote the College in an appropriate manner
- Be available for one-on-one interviews with parents
- Remind staff of responsibilities of professionalism, privacy and sensitivities when communicating with parents/carers.

6.2 Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal/Heads of Schools

- Provide opportunities for meaningful communication with College Community – through newsletters, PTF meetings, website, parent forums etc
- Ensure effective communication with parents.
- Communicate innovations, new programs, building works, etc with College community and provide opportunity for input and feedback.
- Oversee arrangements for regular home/school communication by sub-schools – progressive (Years 5-12) and/or semesterly (Years K-4) reporting, and formal interviews, yearly information nights/sessions and other webinars or information sessions as required
- Ensure staff document all formal interviews or matters of significance.
- Approve all official sub-school written communication.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to discuss matters pertaining to their child with specialist staff/chaplains if required.
- Be available for one-on-one interviews with parents
- Communicate to parents/carers positive as well as negative information
- Attentively listen to parents/carers and provide meaningful feedback, following up on relevant matters.

- Provide meaningful and honest communication to any other professionals who may be involved in the child's wellbeing (Psychiatrists, counsellors, etc)
- Ensure all student files and TASSweb are up-to-date and contain relevant communication
- Uphold the child's privacy and anonymity in communication with people who are not personally involved in the child's wellbeing.
- Remind staff of responsibilities of professionalism, privacy and sensitivities when communicating with parents/carers.

6.3 Dean of Students

- Ensure effective communication with parents.
- Ensure learning support and student support service staff document all formal interviews or matters of significance.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to discuss matters pertaining to their child with specialist staff/chaplains if required.
- Be available for one-on-one interviews with parents
- Communicate to parents/carers positive as well as negative information
- Attentively listen to parents/carers and provide meaningful feedback, following up on relevant matters.
- Provide meaningful and honest communication to any other professionals who may be involved in the child's wellbeing (Psychiatrists, counsellors, etc)
- Ensure all student files and TASSweb are up-to-date and contain relevant communication
- Uphold the child's privacy and anonymity in communication with people who are not personally involved in the child's wellbeing.
- Remind staff of responsibilities of professionalism, privacy and sensitivities when communicating with parents/carers.

6.4 Teachers

- Provide meaningful, honest communication to parents/carers in formal ways – progressive/semester reports, parent/teacher interviews, IP goal setting meetings, parent letters, emails, etc.
- Communicate to parents on a regular basis through informal methods - class newsletters, term overviews, assessment calendar and tasks, updating information on MySPCC/email.
- Be proactive with parent communication – follow up matters of interest quickly and promptly, send out letters re excursions, camps, etc giving adequate notice.
- Be available for before/after school parent/teacher interviews or phone interviews when necessary.
- Document all formal interviews/phone calls or matters of significance.
- Communicate professionally to parents in informal settings.
- Communicate to parents/carers positive as well as negative information
- Attentively listen to parents and provide meaningful feedback.
- Provide meaningful and honest communication to any other professionals who may be involved in the child's wellbeing (Psychiatrists, counsellors, etc)
- Uphold the child's privacy and anonymity in communication with people who are not personally involved in the child's wellbeing.

6.4 Administrative Staff

- Assist by implementing effective systems for formal communications – parent/teacher interviews, schedules
- Make communications available to parents/carers through hard-copy/email/website or MySPCC.
- File all copies of communication (specialist reports, etc) appropriately.
- Communicate in a friendly, professional manner at all times when greeting visitors/parents on the telephone or in person.
- Communicate professionally to parents in informal settings.

- Ensure all official written communication meets the College Style Guide.
- Uphold the child's privacy and anonymity in communication with people who are not personally involved in the child's wellbeing.

6.5 Parent/Carers

- Follow the College's communications procedures.
- Provide constructive, objective feedback to staff
- Follow College Complaints Policy if a concern arises.
- Check regularly student information on MySPCC and read College newsletters and emails.

6.6 Students

- Ensure all communications from home/school are passed on.
- Communicate effectively with home/school

7. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed every three years or as needed in line with legislative changes.

8. Document details and history

Created 2011 (G:\Staff\Policies; Guidelines & Procedures\Communication Home-School)

H:\College Documents\Policies and Procedures\Administration\Communication

Additional Materials

College Complaints Policy/procedures

Grievance Policy

Managing Student behaviour (Discipline) Policy, procedures and guidelines

Staff Handbook

CRICOS Manual