

COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL: PARENTS/CARERS AND STAFF

John Wollaston Anglican Community School (the School) prioritises the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Communication amongst students, parents and staff is an important part of education. We aim to foster an environment of inclusivity in which parent participation is encouraged. School communities thrive on open communication wherein staff, students, and parents/carers have opportunities to share good news, discuss issues and maintain an ongoing dialogue.

The School is committed to ensuring open, respectful and honest communication with parents. The Principal and school staff communicate with our parents/carers in a variety of inclusive ways that are reflective of our school community. They may provide information in writing and/or speak with parents/carers in person. This will generally occur during the school day.

We ask parents/carers and all staff to follow the protocol and guidelines below:

PROTOCOL AND GUIDELINES

- Communication with school staff is important and encouraged.
- Good communication is the result of parents/carers, staff and students working together, in partnership.
- Communication should be mutually respectful, honest and courteous with all parties listening to and empathising with each other.
- Telephone, SEQTA Direqt Message, email, written and face-to-face communication are appropriate forms of communication:
 - Telephone calls are most appropriate for immediate or urgent concerns. Parents are advised to contact School Administration or the appropriate Reception for time-sensitive or urgent issues.
 - SEQTA Direqt Message is preferred for routine information or clarification. It is not appropriate for sensitive engagement with issues.
 - When telephone and SEQTA Direqt Message conversations become extended, face-to-face communication is appropriate.
- The School will endeavour to respond to all telephone calls, SEQTA Direqt Messages and emails within two (2) working days wherever possible. Staff are not expected to respond to parent communication before 8:00am or after 5:00pm on weekdays, nor are staff expected to respond on weekends.
- The School owes a duty of care to its staff to protect them from intimidatory, threatening or bullying behaviour. Verbal and/or physical aggression or threats, offensive language or derogatory comments, whether face-to-face, over the telephone, via SEQTA Direqt Message, email or on social media is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any contact determined to be of this nature will be terminated and referred to the relevant member of Executive or Principal.
- SEQTA Direqt Message or other communication that does not comply with protocol will only be acknowledged as having been received.
- It is not appropriate to submit group petitions, letters or emails. If parents have concerns, they are advised to approach the School individually.

- Parents are reminded that during the day teaching staff (including Executive) are expected to be primarily engaged in teaching duties and school related business. It is not always possible to address all concerns immediately.
- Parents are asked to bear in mind that the non-student time immediately preceding and following the school day is used for lesson preparation, marking, year-level assessment, staff meetings, scheduled appointments, training and professional learning. Prior to the commencement of the school day, teachers will also be engaged in meeting and greeting students. Parent meetings are to be scheduled to take such demands into account.
- For major concerns, parents are asked to make an appointment with the appropriate member of staff. Where parents are unsure about who this is, they are encouraged to clarify this when making the appointment or contact the appropriate member of Executive for guidance.
- The School encourages parents to contact their child's Classroom or Subject Teacher as a first point of contact. In the Secondary School, issues of an academic nature may then be referred to the relevant Head of Department.
- Secondary School parents are also encouraged to contact their child's House Group Teacher should the issue be of a pastoral nature (social, emotional, behavioural, psychological). Pastoral issues may then be referred to the relevant Head of House.
- Under no circumstances should a parent approach another student directly about an issue with their own child. All concerns must be dealt with via the appropriate school staff.
- The *Dispute and Complaint Resolution Policy and Procedures* for Anglican Schools Commission Schools can be found on our school website.

For concerns of an **ACADEMIC NATURE**, e.g. assessment policy, reporting procedures, curriculum issues, classroom management issues, please follow the procedure below:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Teacher ↔ Primary Coordinator ↔ Deputy Head of Primary ↔ Head of Primary ↔ Principal

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Teacher ↔ Head of Department ↔ Dean of Teaching and Learning ↔ Principal

For concerns of an **EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL OR BEHAVIOURAL NATURE**, please follow the procedure below:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Teacher ↔ Primary Coordinator ↔ Deputy Head of Primary ↔ Head of Primary ↔ Principal

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Teacher ↔ House Group Teacher ↔ Head of House ↔ Dean of Pastoral Care ↔ Principal

For concerns of an **ADMINISTRATIVE NATURE**, e.g. accounts, school buses, Café, please follow the procedure below:

School Administration/ Reception ↔ Assistant Business Manager ↔ Business Manager ↔ Principal