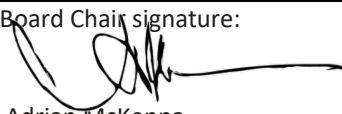




Positive Relationships and Communication Policy

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Approved by Southern Christian College Board:	Board Chair signature:  Adrian McKenna	Date of Authorisation: October 2023
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Owner:	Southern Christian College	

Rationale

Southern Christian College recognises the importance of parents/carers working closely together with teachers and other school staff, to support each child's educational experience. When enrolling a child at Southern Christian College, parents/carers enter an important partnership with the College, based on trust and cooperation. This partnership requires an ongoing commitment to respectful communication that reflects the College values. This helps to uphold the sense of safety and wellbeing of community members and provides a positive model for students and how to effectively communicate with others.

Staff, students, parents and visitors at the College must take reasonable care for their own psychological and physical health and safety and must take reasonable care not to adversely affect other people's health and safety. This aim of this policy is to provide protocols to promote respectful and safe communication between all members of the College community.

In the Bible, we are called to love our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 22:39), to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and to ensure our conversation is full of grace (Colossians 4:6). These principles should guide communication between all members of the College community.

Scope

This policy refers to all parents, guardians and carers of students who attend Southern Christian College, volunteers at the College and any members of the wider community that attend College activities. Expectations for respectful communication by students are detailed in the Student Code of Conduct and expectations of staff members are detailed within the College Staff Code of Conduct.

Implementation

Should a parent need to contact their child during the school day, they should contact the Administration Office. Parents should not be using mobile phones to contact their children.

Parents/carers should provide information to the College directly regarding:

- When their child is home sick or there are planned absences
- A medical issue or diagnosis that changes or arises
- When their child has a communicable disease (head lice, chicken pox, etc.)

- Change of address or contact details
- Changes that may significantly impact on their child’s ongoing enrolment, learning or wellbeing or behaviour at school
- Any issues relating to custody or access.

The College respects the privacy of students and their families. Information shared is managed in line with the Australian Privacy Principles.

Requests for Information, Concerns or Complaints

Parents/carers are encouraged to ask questions or raise concerns. These are best dealt with promptly.

The following are recommended communication pathways.

Issue	Communication Pathways
Concerns about your child’s wellbeing	Contact your child’s class teacher (K-6) or Home Group teacher (7-12) in the first instance. If it is a sensitive issue, contact the Head of School or Head of Pastoral Care.
Concerns about your child’s Academic Progress	Contact the teacher of the subject concerned. If the concern is general, your child’s class teacher (K-6) or Home Group teacher (7-12)
Concerns about School Policies or Procedures	Contact the Head of School
Unsure who to contact	Contact the Administration Office and they will direct your enquiry

Parents/Carers may contact the relevant staff member by email or by contacting Administration. Time for a meeting or phone conversation may then be scheduled. Teachers readily greet parents during drop off or pick up but cannot engage in detailed conversations as they have responsibilities for supervision of students. Parents should not visit classrooms or engage teachers in conversation at the beginning, end or during the course of the school day, without an appointment. Parents are encouraged to book appointments directly with the Home Group Teacher, or contact our Admin Office on admin@scc.tas.edu.au

When parents arrive at school for appointments, they should always sign-in at the Administration Office on arrival.

Parents/carers can expect a reply to an email or phone message within 48-hours of their email (excluding weekends, public holidays and school holidays). This may consist of an initial acknowledgment and details of when additional follow up may be expected.

When communicating concerns, it needs to be recognised that complex issues may take time to resolve, and that staff may need appropriate time to investigate and manage particular issues.

If the issue is not resolved, parents/carers should refer to the [College Complaints Policy](#) which details subsequent steps in the Complaints process.

Courteous Communication Expectations

All communication between parents/carers, teachers, volunteers or visitors to the College should be positive and respectful. The following provides an overview of acceptable communication.

- All communication between or in reference to members of the school community, whether in person, through email or other online formats, should be courteous and respectful. Consideration should be given to the language and tone used.
- Concerns or complaints should be managed through the processes outlined above. Conflicts should be resolved respectfully and in a restorative manner.

Communication that impacts adversely on respectful relationships may include:

- Interference with a staff member or volunteer undertaking their role
- Behaviour that in any way causes concern or alarm to students, staff, parents or other visitors to the School
- Any form of communication in person, by phone, email or online formats that involve sarcasm, derogatory remarks, offensive comments, intimidation, discriminatory conduct or harassment
- Approaching another in a confrontational manner or acting in a violent, aggressive or threatening manner
- Unauthorised approach and reprimanding of another student during any School sanctioned activity

Should there be an occasion when expected communication standards are breached, a meeting may be arranged to restore the relationship and deal respectfully with concerns. More serious or repeated instances may result in a sanction by the Principal or their delegate. This may include one or more of the following:

- The adult may be directed to leave the School grounds immediately.

- Contact may be made with appropriate authorities, such as the Police.
- The adult may be denied access the School premises or attendance at events for a period of time or for the duration of their child's enrolment.
- The adult may be requested to meet with the Principal to discuss potential termination of enrolment of children at the School as a result of the behaviour.

Related Documents:

- Student Enrolment Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy
- Model Work Health and Safety Bill
- Student Differentiated and Special Needs Learning Policy
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022 (Tas)
- Privacy Policy
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 (Cth) (includes Australian Privacy Principles in Schedule 1)