



SACRED HEART CENTRAL SCHOOL

COMMUNICATION POLICY

PURPOSE

To provide effective communication between all stakeholders in order to maintain an environment that is open, honest and transparent and which ensures a strong and positive sense of school community.

POLICY

Sacred Heart Central School strives to always to be clear, accurate, timely, relevant, targeted, open, reciprocal and interactive in communication. We seek to:

- Provide parents and the wider community with information about events, results and other happenings at the school.
- Provide a two-way channel of communication between the School and parents for open discussion.
- Provide parents with an avenue for communicating their concerns to teachers and an opportunity to take their concerns further if necessary.
- Ensure communication processes are enacted to their fullest extent such as, an interview with the Principal, where a student may be considering leaving the School.
- Enact a two-way channel of communication between staff for communicating concerns and opportunities.
- Provide an open channel of communication between staff and students for honest discussion and advice.

DEFINITIONS

Communication

Any contact, formal or informal, where members of the school community interact and share information and concerns about the operations of the school community. This may take the form of verbal, written, electronic or in person.

PROCEDURES

Communication with Parents

Parents play an important role in their children's education and a strong partnership between parents and schools enriches the learning experience. Effective communication is vital in nurturing this partnership. At Sacred Heart:

1. A yearly calendar of School events is supplied on the school website. This is posted at the beginning of each school year and updated regularly.
2. A weekly newsletter is emailed to parents, caregivers and the community about school activities, developments and initiatives. Newsletters are also sent out via the Skoolbag App and parents may request a printed copy.
3. Official correspondence from the School (eg information letters, excursion permission notes, references) and on school letterhead should be approved by a Coordinator and signed by the Principal (or Assistant Principal if Principal unavailable) prior to circulation.

4. Teachers are encouraged to use the Student Diary (App) for immediate and informal contact with parents/guardians.
5. The Skoolbag App is utilised for notes sent home, updates such as whether carnivals are on, reminders for events and other information that needs to be sent home quickly.
6. The School website contains important information regarding history of the school, staffing, curriculum, events, calendar and community involvement.
7. The School facebook page highlights upcoming events and student opportunities and achievements as they occur.
8. Letters from parents must be acknowledged after consultation with the relevant Coordinator or PCA.
9. An interim student report is provided to Secondary at the end of Term 1 and 3. Comprehensive reports are issued at the end of each Semester for both Primary and Secondary. There are additional opportunities to meet to discuss students' performance through organised student/parent/teacher interviews, requested interviews etc.
10. Teachers are to respond in a timely manner to written or phoned requests for information or appointments – acknowledging calls within one day and supplying written information in 2-3 working days.
11. Teachers are encouraged to discuss matters of importance with parents and should ensure that the appropriate Coordinator or PCA is informed about phone calls or correspondence.
12. Teachers are to respond quickly to concerns raised by families, contacting them within 48 hours.
13. Teachers are to keep parents who have lodged a concern informed about the progress of their query, and ensure they know who is taking responsibility for resolving the situation (eg teacher or Exec member).
14. Parents/guardians and family members are invited to School Masses, Liturgies, Sports Events and Academic Awards Ceremonies.
15. Staff are expected to respond to emails. This should be within 24 hours for an initial response and up to three working days to allow for a full response.
16. Information evenings are held in Term 1 for a range of purposes and elective evenings are held in Term 3 to enable students and parents to make informed decisions about elective choices.
17. Front office staff are to promptly answer telephone calls using standard professional responses with a friendly manner and return telephone messages within 24 hours.
18. Front office staff disseminate messages to relevant staff and students as promptly as possible.
19. Front office staff respond in a timely manner to verbal or written requests for information or appointments, sending information within 2-3 days.
20. Front office staff provide a phone enrolment enquiry service between 8.30am and 4.00pm weekdays.
21. The School Board and P&F meet once per month. Board meetings are usually the third Thursday of the month and P&F the last Wednesday of the month. Confirmed dates are published in the newsletter.

Communication with students

1. A daily mailbag system circulates each morning, providing information to students and collecting any notes, etc to be returned to the front office.
2. Weekly assemblies (Primary on Fridays and Secondary on Mondays) are conducted to disseminate information and hand out weekly awards. This includes acknowledgement of country and prayer.
3. PCAs conduct weekly year group meetings on Wednesdays.
4. Students from Year 5 to 10 are encouraged to check their emails and diary daily for important information, homework, assessment tasks and updates.

Communication with staff

The dissemination of information for members of the school staff is facilitated in a range of ways including:

- The Week Ahead details activities and variation to routines for the school week, including substitute staff and meeting schedules. This is emailed at the beginning of the week with advance warning of coming events.
- Connections is a Principal publication detailing acknowledgements and important staff information. This is emailed at the start of the week.
- The Staff notice board is a daily schedule and displays a three week calendar of upcoming events.
- Staff gather for prayer on Monday mornings in the Chapel. (Voluntary)
- Staff prayer and “Goodonyas” as recognition are held Wednesdays 10mins into first break (lunch 1). Staff are rostered on to share prayer and contribute to morning tea.
- Staff meetings are held weekly on Wednesdays from 3.40pm to 4.40pm. A schedule of staff meetings, not exceeding the 10hour a term limit is published at the end of each term for the upcoming term. Staff attendance is mandatory or on a pro-rata arrangement for part-time staff. Exceptions from meetings are at the Principal’s discretion. Minutes of staff meetings are stored on the T-drive.
- Morning briefing is a mandatory meeting Tuesday morning for 10 minutes to highlight important issues, disseminate information other than email, invite feedback and consideration of issues/ideas/proposals, deal with minor administrative details or share PD. A briefing book is kept in the Principals office for staff who are absent on that day. Staff on duty or absent are encouraged to catch up with a staff member who attended to be updated with relevant information.
- It is an expectation that staff check their emails twice a day to manage the dissemination of information. Staff must be aware of the quantity of email traffic that exists and manage it accordingly. This also applies to the sending of emails to warrant replies. They are to be marked, *response required* if actioning a reply.
- Staff are to phone through requests for unplanned sick leave or carer’s leave to the AP on the morning it is required or earlier if possible. IEAs are to ring the IET who will inform staff via email of their absence.
- The School Executive meet once per week on Thursday afternoons from 3.40pm. This meeting may be rescheduled depending on the availability of Executive. Items discussed are noted in Connections each week and staff are encouraged to discuss any items with any member of the team.
- Staff personal pigeonholes are available in the staffroom for the dissemination of information.
- Teachers are to submit any concerns regarding student behaviour or wellbeing on the appropriate forms.
- Referrals to the counsellor are to be completed using the form available in the staff room. A record of students met, parents contacted, etc is in the book kept in the Principals office. The counsellor is to email updates to relevant teachers, the Pastoral Care Coordinator and the Principal each Monday afternoon.

Annual School report

All schools publish an annual report on the school's website each year outlining information from the previous year. The information includes:

- distinctive curriculum offerings
- extracurricular activities
- characteristics of the student body
- total number of enrolments
- NAPLAN summary of results
- Patterns of attendance

- staff development priorities
- social climate of the school, including pastoral care programs
- parent, teacher and student satisfaction with the school
- strategies used for involving parents in their child's education
 - Including School Board and P& F
- staff composition and qualifications of teachers
- average staff attendance.

Personal appointments

Our school offers parent-teacher interviews each semester. These opportunities, allow parents/guardians to talk about issues or concerns, and to ask how children are performing and progressing at school. Parents are encouraged to meet with any staff member at a mutually convenient time at their child's school to discuss relevant issues and concerns if they are not contingent with interviews or are not appropriate to be discussed in this forum. Teachers may request support from Executive at parent meetings.

Parent Information nights

Sacred Heart Central School conducts parent information nights at the start of the year and at strategic times of the year to discuss class or year/stage programs/events with parents, including elective and enrolment periods.

My School

Is an Australian Government website profiling almost 10,000 schools throughout the country. It features statistical and contextual information, as well as NAPLAN results that can be compared with those of statistically similar schools across Australia. It provides a snapshot of a school using nationally consistent indicators. Schools can be searched by location, sector or name.

For more information visit [MySchool website](#) .

Phone Calls and emails

Teachers and parents communicate through phone calls and emails as the need arises. Dates, details and outcomes are recorded or archived for future reference. The classroom teacher and PCAs are informed about any contact.

School Diary

There are provisions in the Student Diary (app4students) to allow for communication between parents and teachers. Similar conditions exist for phone calls and emails. Teachers of Infants and Stage 2 are encouraged to maintain a communication book or diary with parents to note less major incidents during a school day or reminders as necessary.

Forms

Student Behaviour Form
 Student Wellbeing Form
 Counsellor Referral Form

RELATED POLICIES

Pastoral Care Policy
 Student Management Policy
 Complaints and Grievances Policy

Approved by:	School Board
Issuing Group:	Executive
Implementation Date:	2015
Supersedes Policy Dated:	2010
Revision Date:	2020
Contact Officer:	Principal