



## Communication Guidelines for Staff

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### Related Policies

- [Communication](#), St Benedict's Primary School
- [Complaints](#), St Benedict's Primary School
- [Complaints](#), Catholic Education

### Purpose

To encourage and maintain open and clear communication between all members of the St Benedict's community, whilst providing staff with school guidelines which uphold professional integrity.

### Formal communication strategies and guidelines

#### Face to Face Meetings:

- When arranging meetings with Parents teachers need to ensure an Executive Staff Member is aware of the meeting and if necessary onsite or at the meeting.
- Face to Face Meetings should take place in appropriate surroundings e.g. classrooms, meeting room and not on the playground.
- Teachers need to ensure the appropriate amount time is given to a meeting.
- Meetings of a sensitive or confidential nature need to take place in the meeting room.
- The Classroom Support Teacher needs to be included in the meeting or involved in discussions if the student has a personal plan.
- Teachers need to take minutes of the meeting using the school meeting proforma. These meeting minutes where necessary need to be provided to the Parents and Classroom Support Teacher.
- Teachers need to be mindful that the language they use during all meetings is appropriate and of high professional standard.

#### Emails:

- All emails by staff to parents and students are expected to be respectful and purposeful.
- Staff will use their Catholic Education email for all school related communication to parents and students.
- Staff will keep all emails from students and parents as a record of conversation and seek advice about those email conversations that require archiving.
- Staff will not answer parent and student emails on a weekday after 7pm and not before 8am in the morning. Nor will they respond to emails on a weekend.
- Staff may not be able to respond to parent and student emails during the school teaching day.
- Staff will endeavour to respond to parent emails within twenty four hours of receiving them Monday to Friday.
- Emails of a concerning nature need to be discussed with an Executive Staff Member before a response is given.
- Staff are welcome and encouraged to copy in the appropriate Executive Staff Member when necessary.

- Staff are reminded that emails are not necessarily confidential and can be subject to freedom of information regulation. Confidential information should be conveyed in person or via phone contact.
- Staff are encouraged to remove the 'sent from my iPhone' message when replying to emails.

### Phone Calls/Text Messages:

- Staff will endeavour to respond to parent phone calls within twenty four hours of receiving them Monday to Friday.
- Phone calls of a concerning nature need to be discussed with an Executive Staff Member.
- If necessary an Executive Staff Member is able to sit in on the phone conversation.
- If the nature of the conversation requires a significant amount of time or a solution cannot be agreed upon, the phone call is to be discontinued and a face to face meeting arranged.
- Teachers need to take minutes of the phone call using the school meeting proforma. These minutes where necessary need to be provided to the Parents and Classroom Support Teacher.
- Teachers need to be mindful that the language they use during all phone calls is appropriate and of high professional standard.
- Teachers are encouraged to make phone calls using school phones. The relief phone can be provided for offsite school activities.
- Staff are not to give out their personal telephone numbers. If circumstances arise that necessitate this, it must be done with the explicit knowledge of the Principal and it must be discussed with the parent that the number is to be deleted immediately after the necessary event.
- Teachers are not to use text messaging as form of communication with parents and students.

### Legal obligations

At all times the communication strategies used at St Benedict's will abide by any relevant legal regulations:

#### Confidentiality & Privacy

All content in any communication is expected to be consistent with the school's obligations to keep confidential any information not destined for public release and also keeping private any person's personal information.

### Future communication

It is expected that the communication strategies used at St Benedict's will continually evolve as technology changes and the needs of the community change.

### References

Nil

Approved by:	School Leadership Team, 2019
Ratified by the School Board:	12 <sup>th</sup> March, 2019
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