



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School

Communication Policy

2019

Rationale:

At Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment, which promotes open communication, respect, fairness and positive relationships. We believe that the relationship between home and school is a very important part of ensuring that children are happy, secure and open to learning. Effective two-way communication is integral to this partnership.

As a school community we are committed to working in partnership to meet the various needs of our school community. Central to achieving this is trust and open, effective communication between all members of the school community.

Aims/Goals:

To ensure:

- That effective communication between all school community members takes place
- That processes are in place which allow for open and honest communication amongst all school community members
- That confidential information is managed in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations
- That clear, positive and fair processes and guidelines are provided which allow issues or concerns to be aired and resolved in a timely, effective and respectful manner
- That a positive, productive and harmonious school environment is maintained
- To ensure the care, safety and welfare of the OLSH School community

CHILD SAFE STATEMENT:

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School will provide a safe and nurturing culture for all children, where they have the right to be treated with respect and will be protected from harm.

Implementation:

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart communicates information to families and the wider school community using a variety of means. At the beginning of each school year families will be asked to confirm contact details to ensure communication is being directed correctly.

Formal Communication

FROM SCHOOL:

As circumstance requires, this may include:

- electronic and paper documents
- parent information sessions
- meetings, and
- telephone and personal contact. Telephone contact will not be made or responded to between the hours of 6pm and 8am school days and 6pm Friday to 8am Monday.

Type of Communication	Location
Annual Report to the School Community - compiled in collaboration	The report is available:

with the school community. It proposes actions for the coming year against key objectives for the School. The Principal reports on the progress achieved against the plan in the previous year by the end of March each year.	School Website Hard Copy from Office upon request
School Policies and Procedures - ratified by the OLSH School Board in consultation with the school community.	School's website or upon request from the school office.
Parent Information Handbook - provided to all families at the beginning of the school year. Parents will be notified of any changes to school policy and procedures.	Sent out to families at the beginning of the school year. School website. In the foyer of the school.
School Newsletter - printed weekly and emailed to each family a hard copy is sent home with students whose families don't have internet access.. It is also available via the website.	Hard Copy from the office Website
School Notes/Permission/General School Info. - School notes with general information or permission to attend events are distributed to the oldest student in the family.	Hard Copy Website Email by request Parent Access Module
Principal's report to the School Board - highlights resourcing and operational issues relevant to the general school community.	Board Members only
Principal's report to the Parents and Friends Association - highlights events and achievements within the school.	Distributed at PnF meeting Newsletter
Digital Portfolios - sent home at the end of Terms 1 and 3. It outlines curriculum areas of study relevant to student's year level.	Digital Portfolios
Academic reports (written) - issued twice yearly at the end of Term 2 and 4.	Hard copy - by post Parent Access Module

Communication outside the formal program:

Teachers will contact a child's parent as soon as possible (by phone or to make an appointment to meet in person) to discuss concerns that arise about a student. Parents are also contacted by the child's classroom teacher if the child's inappropriate behavior disrupts the teaching and learning process.

The school administration staff will contact parents if a child is seriously injured at school, complains of illness or needs to go home for any reason.

From Home:

To ensure the school is able to provide the best care for every student it is the responsibility of every parent/carer to keep the school and their child's teacher informed about any significant incidents and changes that are likely to affect the student at school, their attendance at school. This may be via a short note to the teacher. Alternatively, parents can contact the teacher or school administration by email, telephone or in person. Parents may approach teachers directly, but to avoid disruption to the teaching schedule, they should do so only at mutually convenient times before school, after school or during the lunch break.

Raising Concerns:

At times parents may have concerns regarding their child's academic progress, social relationships or a general classroom matter. These concerns should be raised directly with the child's class teacher in the first instance.

Procedure for contacting a classroom or specialist teacher:

When a parent wishes to contact a member of staff to discuss matters relating to the child, the procedure is to contact the teacher involved, giving a brief outline of the issue. Contact should be made using one of

the following approaches:

1. Contact the school, either by phone or coming to the office personally, and ask the school administration officer to arrange for the teacher to contact you to arrange a suitable meeting time. Teachers are not usually available to answer phone calls or come to the office during teaching time or whilst on yard duty.
2. Contact the appropriate teacher in writing (email addresses are provided at the bottom of the document), asking them to organize a suitable meeting time, teachers will respond within 24 hours.
3. Speak with the appropriate teacher, either before or after school hours (not when they are teaching or on yard duty), and ask them to arrange a suitable meeting time.

Procedure for contacting other school personnel:

When a parent has a concern or wishes to discuss an issue regarding a situation which they considers affects the whole school, their child's wellbeing or relates to a school policy or matter, the procedure is to:

- contact the Principal, using one of the three approaches outlined above.

When parents have a concern or wish to discuss an issue relating to a member of staff or of a sensitive nature, they should make an appointment with the Principal by contacting the school office, either by phone or coming to the office personally, and asking the administration officer to arrange a suitable meeting time.

In all cases if the matter is urgent and/or relates to the possible risk or harm to a student, a member of staff or another member of the school community, the Principal should be informed immediately and the urgency of the matter conveyed. The Principal will determine who is the most appropriate person to deal with the issue and the process to work towards a resolution, as well as ensuring that contact is made as soon as possible.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School will deal with all complaints and issues sensitively, promptly and confidentially. Matters will be investigated and dealt with in a timely manner. In working through any issues a resolution which treats all parties with dignity and respect will be sought. Issues and matters which have been raised will be kept in the strictest of confidence and not discussed with any other persons, excepting those directly involved.

- Resolving matters of concern are best achieved through face-to-face contact with the appropriate person. Emails and letters should be brief, alerting the person to the issue; they should not be used as a forum for in-depth discussion.
- Formal meetings will be minuted and all persons involved will receive a copy of the minutes. Any correspondence received by the school will be kept in a secure file.
- Anonymous complaints will not be accepted or acted upon.

Issues arising between student and families:

No parent should approach the children of other families or their parents with a school related or non-school related issue. Such matters must be addressed to the Principal and not discussed with other persons.

From time to time differences in expectation and disappointments about delivery will give rise to tensions and disagreement in the partnership between school and parents. Both school and parents are responsible for respectful communication about these concerns. All matters of concern must, in the first instance, be addressed to the school. Only after this courtesy is afforded to the school may a matter that cannot be resolved locally be referred to Catholic Education Sandhurst (03 5443 2377) for resolution.

Communication Strategy with the Wider Community

The school endeavours to use local media to communicate with the wider Rochester community. Articles are submitted to the local newspapers to promote the school's activities and to highlight the benefits of attending Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School.

As a school we also encourage the wider community to access our school website (www.olshelmore.catholic.edu.au) and Smartphone App (search OLSH Elmore) to gain the most current and relevant information about our school community. Communication on behalf of the school with any external bodies, including the media, just be approved by the Principal.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School community believes that we exist successfully only within the strong relationships formed with the parents of the students, relationship of School to Parish, and in the context of the wider Elmore community. We support and encourage each other in our endeavours to provide the best opportunities for the students in our care, and trust that there is not situation that cannot be addressed through working together in active partnerships between home and school environments.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three- year review.

We will monitor the implementation of this policy by;

- re-reading and editing annually

Reviewed 2018

Ratified by School Board - May 2019

Next review 2021

Email addresses of 2020 staff:

PRINCIPAL:	principal@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au
ADMINISTRATION:	admin@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au
CASEY FREW (Grade 5&6)	cfrew@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au
KIM PORTWINE (Grade 5&6)	kportwine@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au
JACINTA DULLARD (Grade 3&4)	jdullard@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au
TRACEY ANGOVE (Grade 2 Class)	tangove@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au
DENISE NIHILL (Grade F&1)	dnihill@olshelmore.catholic.edu.au

