



Communication - Email

POLICY and PROCEDURES

Cape Clear Primary School

RATIONALE

At Cape Clear Primary School we are committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to communication that is respectful, measured, sensitive and constructive. In adhering to these principles, we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents and the school and thus enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our students.

We acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents communicating via electronic means, and understand its shortcomings. This policy is designed to establish clear expectations for both staff and parents in the use of electronic means as a communication tool.

OBJECTIVES

- We will decrease administrative workload for the school by communicating with partners through the use of a single communication channel.
- We will increase parent engagement within the school community through consistent and accessible communication.

COMMUNICATION

School policies, once updated, will be available at school.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Email, SMS and Messenger is an environmentally friendly way of communicating that can save time when used effectively. Our school community values face to face and phone conversations, however we acknowledge that electronic communication is very convenient for many parents who find it difficult to catch up with school staff during regular work hours.

Expectations of Staff and Parents

When communicating via email, SMS or Messenger, staff and parents are expected to adhere to email etiquette.

- Emails are at their best when they are brief and informative. Issues that require a level of detailed discussion are better dealt with in person or over the phone.
- Emails should always be respectful and constructive. If the email relates to a concern or problem, the goal should be to understand the problem and be solution focussed.
- Avoid sending negative or confrontational emails. Email is not to be used to vent. We never say in an email what we wouldn't say to the recipient's face.
- Avoid writing about or seek personal information regarding third parties (staff, students or parents). Emails containing personal or sensitive information should not be passed on to a third party without permission of the sender.

PROTOCOLS FOR THE USE OF EMAIL AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

- Staff and parents are not expected to respond to emails that are contentious. A face-to-face meeting will be arranged in these circumstances.
- Group e-mails have the potential to waste the time of many, so avoid sending emails to anyone for whom it is not relevant. It is also courteous to avoid time wasting emails, including jokes, chain letters and commercial solicitations.
- Make sure the purpose of your email is clear – Is specific action requested or is the email for information only.
- Staff and parents must not disclose the email addresses of others without permission to do so.

Expectations of Staff

Email should not be used to discuss a sensitive issue, which was not initiated by the parent or had not been previously discussed with the parent.

When an email is received from a parent that requires some time in order to gather information, the staff member should respond acknowledging that the email has been received and indicate when an informed response will be sent.

- Staff will aim to reply to parent emails within 2/3 working days.
- Staff will not respond to abusive emails and will forward them to the School Principal.

Expectations of Parents

- Please be respectful of staff personal time and do not expect immediate responses outside of work hours.
- Please only send non - vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use email to inform a teacher that your child is not to go home on the bus that afternoon, as the teacher may not see the message in time. Remember that given work demands teachers may not get to read emails until late in the day.
- Please make an appointment to discuss in detail your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioural issues.
- Emails that are intended for the office staff/leadership can be sent directly to the school's email address,,: cape.clear.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Facebook

The school has a Facebook page which is used for celebrations, promotions, educational articles, event updates, human interest stories and key information. This page is administered by two members of staff. Any inappropriate comments are removed and the individual contacted by the principal or assistant principal.

Camps/Excursions/Incursions/Student Free Days

Teaching and admin staff will prepare documents regarding camps/excursions/incursions/student free days and receive approval from the Principal to distribute the material. The information will be cross checked against the events calendar and the events calendar will be updated accordingly by the Principal. This detailed information will be distributed to parents in writing where possible at least 2 weeks prior to the event. Last minute programs are to be avoided where possible but where it cannot be avoided, the information is to be distributed as close to the confirmation point as possible. This is to ensure maximum reach of the message and the ability for parents to make alternative arrangements to attend if applicable.

Alerts

In the event of a whole of school alert such as evacuation, disaster warning or threat, the Principal, in keeping with the school emergency management plan, will issue an alert through Facebook, once it is safe to do so. Parents will be phoned directly where required at the principals discretion.

Considerations: This process must be incorporated into the Emergency Management Plan and Critical Incident Policy and must be controlled by the Principal to avoid premature alerts being issued to parents before the school is prepared to accept parents on site. In the event of a threat that does not result in an evacuation (bomb threat for example) this tool will be used at the conclusion of the threat to inform parents, it may also be used to inform parents of any drills that may result in discussion at home, such as a fire drill, to allow parents accurate knowledge to alleviate fears and questions. In the event of an evacuation, classrooms will follow existing process and only once the students are safe and accounted for, will the alert be issued to parents to allow the school to manage the changed circumstance.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff and parents are responsible for using email in accordance with this policy.

This school policy will be available via the school website.

- Parents on enrolment of their child.
- The whole school community annually.

Policy Review – This policy will be reviewed as part of three year review cycle.

Cape Clear Primary School Policy: Ratified July 2019, Review 2021.