



Communication Procedures and Schedule Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure that the communication of information is carried out correctly and in a manner that complies with school, departmental and legal requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the communication of policies to the Langwarrin Primary School community to preserve the professionalism of the school, to protect the rights of individuals, to uphold our duty of care to students and to comply with departmental and legal requirements.

POLICY

- Langwarrin Primary School has a policy of open and cooperative communication.
- This practice however, recognises that staff members have legal, departmental, local, professional and social obligations with regards the communication of information.
- All staff should be mindful of how they communicate with parents and the wider community. Department of Education employees are free to make public comment on issues relating to education, but in doing so, must be wary not to make comments that can be construed as negative criticism of our school, School Council, our community, staff or community members.
- As a matter of professional courtesy, and as a requirement of Section 3.6 of the Teaching Services (Conduct of Duties) Order 1998 staff will communicate with the Principal before making public comment or formal statements on educational issues or anything that bears on the organisation or program of the school or place of work.
- The Principal and School Council president will ensure that each other are informed.
- The Information Privacy Act and the Health Records Act require that schools protect the interests of individuals with regard to their personal information and respect the individual's right to control how their personal information is used and for what purpose.
- The school will only collect information that it requires about individuals and will only communicate and disclose information for the purposes for which it was collected.
- Any person seeking information from the school that falls outside the school's previous practices must be directed to the Principal who may require that a formal written Freedom of Information request be made.
- All such Freedom of Information requests will be referred to the Department of Education's Freedom of Information Unit.
- Information sought by police, including interviews of students must be directed to the Principal class.

- Requests from personnel working for the Department of Human Services child protection unit for information regarding students or families will be complied with at all times.
- The school will comply with court subpoenas to provide information at all times, but will not respond to requests from lawyers seeking information without Education Department approval.
- Action may be taken by individuals, the Department or organisations, against staff members who choose to communicate information improperly.
- We will provide a minimum of two written reports, two parent-teacher interviews for students and additional interviews upon agreement.

Advice to Teachers and Education Support Staff

- Communication with Parents: Teachers are advised to maintain open lines of communication with parents/guardians and act in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Teachers are required to keep relevant documentation on Sentral which details all contact or attempts to contact parents and guardians. This database is accessible should it be required by the Principal, Assistant Principal or other relevant person
- Communication with community: all policies and/or procedures relating to the care, safety and welfare including discipline of students will be found on the school website <https://www.langwarrinps.vic.edu.au/>.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- *Communication Procedures and Schedule Policy*

REVIEW CYCLE

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

This policy was updated on 1st January 2019 and is scheduled for review in January 2022.

- Staff **must not** provide advice to, or write letters of support to parents in relation to family arrangements such as custody issues. Staff should decline requests for personal opinions about students or any issues that may be contentious in nature. Staff must ensure that, unless otherwise required by law, confidentiality is observed in relation to any official information or documents acquired during the course of their employment. Any requests received for this type of information should be directed to the Principal class.
- Social Media: “While staff can be friendly with students, parents and communities, their relationship must always remain professional and should never be on a personal footing. The world of social media can seriously damage reputations and propel bullying to new levels. Even with security settings in place, issues may still arise.” (Excerpt from DET website) As such, staff members should not connect with students and their parents via social media sites such as Facebook.
- Notices: All notices to be sent home must be approved by the Principal class and will be distributed through the office unless otherwise agreed. Copies of notices will be placed on the website and removed when no longer current. Staff who wish to send a notice home must provide a copy to the Communication Liaison, or in their absence the Principal class for proofreading and final approval. Notices must not be sent home without this approval.
- Letters Sent By Staff Members: All letters to parents, other members of the school community or the wider community must be approved by the Communications Liaison. School letterhead must not be used without the permission of the Principal class. The office will not hand out letterhead to staff members unless they have been directed to do so by one of the aforementioned people. **All letters of a personal nature, including those requesting personal or long service leave must be written on plain paper as they do not count as official school business.**

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of DET Recommended review cycle.

Resources

- Communication of School Policies Policy

CERTIFICATION

This policy was ratified at the School Council Meeting held at Cranbourne South Primary School, on Wednesday, 20th February 2019.

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