



*Small School Big Learning*

## Communication policy

### **Rationale:**

It is necessary to formulate and provide effective communication methods and forums for the whole school community which will support, involve and inform students, parents, staff, families (current and prospective) and other members of the school community, in relation to school policies and procedures, school events, educational directions and current initiatives and projects.

The policies of the school guide the main processes, functions and operations of the school. The development and review of policies is part of an agreed process to ensure that key stakeholders are part of the consultation and review process.

### **Aims:**

- To ensure that Yering Primary School policies frame and accurately reflect the school operations, directions and goals and meet all legislative, compliance and duty of care requirements.
- To constantly review and improve as required, existing communication channels between the school and home, with the intention of maximising the effectiveness of the contact and support for parents and families.
- To provide information forums to effectively communicate with the whole school community.
- To promote school community awareness and involvement in events, educational directions and current initiatives and projects.
- To provide information packages to the members of the community who may be interested in becoming part of our school community, such as prospective parents.
- To provide a variety of communication and information outlets for members of the school community which caters for the different preferred methods of access.
- To establish and implement protocols for acceptable and necessary communications between parents in the school community, in accordance with DET privacy principles.
- To describe the process for effectively managing communication whilst protecting the rights of all parties involved and seeking solution to the problem in the best interest of all affected.
- To provide a commitment to respond positively to feedback, ensuring parents have the opportunity to contribute to the continued improvement of the school. It is expected all staff will demonstrate a commitment to ensuring the culture of consultation and open dialogue is nurtured at every level of the school.
- To address communication needs responsively, openly and in a timely manner to increase levels of parent satisfaction and to maintain harmonious relations in the wider community.
- To commit to positive, proactive communication between staff, students, parents and the broader school community, for communication in all domains is critical to the wellbeing of the school community as a whole.

## **Implementation:**

### *School Policies and Procedures*

- The policies describe the rationale, aims and implementations of the operations and directions of the school as a whole.
- The process of considering school policies will be managed by the Principal and will be a continuous cycle, and will use a transparent and consultative process.
- New policies will be added and modified to reflect the growth and evolution of the school and new programs.
- All policies will use the school policy layout, meet legislative and compliance requirements, and have a designated review period.
- When developing a new policy, the Principal will consult with appropriate personnel in order to draft the initial policy statement. The draft policy may be circulated for comment to staff members, to parents, to students before ratification by School Council.
- Policies will be developed taking into account Department of Education and Training policies, memos and circulars relating to a particular policy area.
- A database of policies and a review schedule to provide a timeline for reviews is to be maintained.
- When reviewing an existing school policy, the Principal will consult with staff and other appropriate Committee/s, and present the policy to School Council for ratification.
- Changes as a result of policy developments and / or reviews will be widely advised to students, staff and parents.
- Staff will be given opportunity to provide input into the policy development or review process.
- The focus of all school policies must remain the needs of students and school operations.
- Any concerns relating to the structure of the school should be directed to the Principal or School Council president.
- Relevant policies will also be available for all staff to peruse and loaded onto the school website for community observation and comment.

### *Communication*

- Parents will receive a weekly school newsletter, which will present information regarding school events, educational directions and current initiatives and projects, to maximise and encourage school community awareness of and involvement in these aspects. This school newsletter will be made available to each family and will be uploaded to the school website, to be accessible via the internet and filed on the school website with all school newsletters for the previous year/s.
- The school newsletter is the most essential communication link between the school and the wider community. It is imperative that the newsletter is accurate, informative and contains information that will mutually benefit both school and community members
- The website coordinator will regularly update the school website information and will be provided with current and necessary information from staff and the School Council, so as to amend and present relevant and current information on the school website.
- The school website will be used to highlight and publicise current and forthcoming events such as the school excursions, sporting activities, teaching and learning events and Education Week.
- The school website will be used to digitally present information (in text and image forms) to current and prospective parents in the following pages presenting relevant information:
  - Home page
  - About Us - Principal's message, School Profile
  - Newsletter
  - Calendar

- Information
- Community
- Resources
- Policies
- Contact Us
- The school will use available communication forums to promote family involvement and each year will coordinate and publicise a range of student learning and social family events
- Parents and families will receive a copy of notices via email or hardcopy to inform them of events, such as sporting events, school 'highlight' days and Parent/Teacher interviews.
- The communication of some information will be best accomplished by direct face to face involvement, such as school tours and parent information sessions/forums.
- Communication can occur in the following ways:
  - Newsletter - weekly, via hard copy, email or website
  - Advertising in the newsletter is at the discretion of the Principal (policy)
  - Telephone
  - In person
  - Parent/teacher interviews
  - Email
  - Text
  - Written communication (letter)
  - Student Reports
  - Surveys/on-line questionnaires
  - Meetings
- Contact from the media should be directed in the first instance to the Principal. In most cases, the School Council President will act as a spokesperson for the school.
- Photo consent forms must be considered when selecting students to be used in media footage.
- Communication from police with regard to student interviews must be directed to the Principal.
- Requests from Department of Health and Human Services (child protection) must be directed to the Principal.
- Court subpoenas, requests for information from solicitors, Family Court orders and all other legal documentation and communication must be directed to the Principal.
- The school logo will be used without alteration in all communication and advertising. It will be clearly applied, not obscured, stretched, or otherwise defaced. All outgoing advertising material will be approved by the Principal.
- In all contact with the community, office bearers and staff of the school will represent the school according to the school values.
- Reference to the availability of the School Strategic Plan, Annual Implementation Plan and Annual Report will be advised in the school newsletter and made available to parents/carers and the school community via the school website. Hard copies will be available upon request by parents/carers to teachers, staff, or the Principal.
- Achievement Measures:
  - Analysing school community awareness and involvement in events, educational directions and current initiatives and projects.
  - Quantifying and recording the number of prospective parents who have accessed school information and communication packages eg: website access, school tours, enrolment enquiries, kindergarten information exchanges.
  - Assessing the extent and assortment of school information access points and formats in terms of whether the school is catering strongly and diversely for the variety of methods by which parents (current and prospective) obtain information.
  - Analysing and recording the incidence of and responses to communications between parents which have not been aligned with DET privacy protocols and principles.