

Michael House School

Staff Communications Policy

Presented to	Date	Signature	Name
Collegiate	3/11/16		J BALL
Trustees	11/11/16		I. DUFFY
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Introduction

Effective communication is essential to ensure that we can deliver a first class learning experience to all pupils. Many channels of communication are available; formal and informal, internal and external. Technological developments raise expectations about communication from parents and others in the school community and we need to be mindful of this when communicating with others. This policy outlines staff responsibilities, details the basic methods and skill sets required of staff and others in positions of responsibility and how they might be employed effectively.

Principles

- Staff need to have the relevant skills and tools to be able to fo access all relevant school information in order to meet their responsibilities effectively.
- Staff need to be aware of their own responsibility for maintaining good communication practice and updating their own skills and knowledge to enable this to happen.

Collegiate and School Transformation Manager Responsibilities

The Collegiate and the School Transformation Manager will ensure that structures are in place by which information is made available to staff in a timely and appropriate manner. It will also ensure that open channels of two-way communication are maintained by which comment and feedback may be harnessed in order to inform the decision-making and make improvements.

Support Teams

Support teams will have a designated administrator responsible for maintaining communication and recording of activity of the team and acting as a conduit by which others outside the group may communicate with the group itself. Administrators will ensure that action points, notes and other relevant documents are made available to appropriate individuals using secure and approved channels designated for that purpose by school management e.g. Basecamp.

Staff and other Individuals

All staff will recognise their responsibilities under this policy and will employ good communication practices detailed within the policy in the effective discharge of their duties and responsibilities. They will also recognise their own personal responsibility to ensure that they keep up to date with changes in communication practices and encourage others to do the same.

Categories of Information

Management and Strategic Direction

Trustees and the Collegiate will use management information and strategic communications to inform the work of Support Teams and others engaged in school activity.

Day to Day Operations

It is the responsibility of individuals to maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality, secure storage and safe disposal of documents or files whether determined by internal practices and/or legislative requirements.

Communication within the School Community and Beyond

Individuals must ensure that when information is communicated that there is clarity on whether they are expressing a personal view or that of the school as a whole. Staff should also be clear that actions which are likely to result in damage to the employer/employee relationship may result in disciplinary action. Communications should be co-ordinated by the School Transformation Manager.

Communication Methods

Face-to Face Communication

Communicating face-to-face or by telephone is often the most effective method of sharing information and knowledge. The conversational nature allows for greater understanding of context and encourages feedback, questioning and reflection. It forms an important part of ensuring that well-managed meetings make effective decisions and result in appropriate actions. However, it should not be a substitute for documentary recording of actions and decisions where that is more appropriate.

Email

Email is not only one of the most common methods of communication in modern organisations, but also the one which is considered to be overused or inappropriately used. Email should be used appropriately and with full consideration given to security and confidentiality.

Web-based Systems

The introduction of web-based systems e.g. Basecamp as the recognised means by which support teams record, communicate and action their activities in school requires all participants to have an understanding and be users of such systems appropriate to their responsibilities. Alternative systems and methods of managing the work of teams should not be employed without the prior approval of the Collegiate in order to protect the integrity of the whole-school systems approach employed by the school.

Professionalism

In all communication, staff and appropriate volunteers are reminded of their responsibility to serve the interests of the School and ensure that content is appropriate at all times.

Training

In any organisation, a wide range of technical knowledge and skills will be evident. Guidance and training, from basic to advanced levels, will be available to all staff and volunteers in order to fulfil their responsibilities. Individuals are expected to play their part in identifying gaps in their own knowledge or skills and seeking guidance and training in order to improve.