



# **Mother Teresa School**

# **Communication Policy**

# COMMUNICATION POLICY

To be read in conjunction with the MTS Complaints Policy.

## Rationale

At Mother Teresa 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. As a school community we are committed to working together 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. As a Catholic school the Gospel values form the basis for a proactive approach to communication and problem solving.

## 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;

## Implementation:

### Procedure for contacting a classroom or specialist teacher:

When a parent wishes to contact a member of staff to discuss matters relating to their 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 office staff 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 or via email, asking them to organise a suitable meeting time;
3. Speak briefly with the appropriate teacher, either before or after school hours (not at a time 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 consider affects the whole school, their child's wellbeing or relates to a school policy or matter, the procedure is to:

- Contact the Principal, Deputy Principal or a relevant School Leader, 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 Office Manager or an 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.

Mother Teresa 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.

Anonymous complaints will not be accepted or acted upon.

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.

#### **Issues arising between students and families:**

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

<b>STAFF COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>MECHANISM</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Improvement Process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review current school practice and performance and set goals for strategic planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of teachers, parents and students</li> <li>• Preparation of issues paper and development of School Management and Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 year review cycle</li> <li>• Parent student and staff satisfaction surveys annually</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To articulate the actions to be taken towards the 3 year priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive and staff to formulate a plan at the beginning of each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually</li> </ul>

		Operational plan reviewed at end of each year	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USB Drive for all new staff commencing in 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To introduce new staff to all policies and procedures in a digital form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New staff to access in their own time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTS Express</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement whole school goals and provide professional support and dialogue for staff</li> <li>• To allow staff to pursue personal learning goals</li> <li>• Career path planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive staff member supports team through formal and informal meetings to plan/support and evaluate the pathways process.</li> <li>• Staff prepare documentation prior to formal meeting times</li> <li>• Assistant Principal co-ordinates the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing throughout the year</li> <li>• Formal meeting at the Planning Stage, Mid Cycle review and Summative end of year</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure whole school cohesion, strategic planning and management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal, Assistant Principal and Executive teachers raise issues, share information and a plan at whole school level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide information, raise issues, plan and discuss school management, activities and programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole staff meetings held each week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and Learning Leadership Teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review and develop school based curriculum school programs and procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee elect a coordinator and meet as required to plan for student learning and school program delivery (all staff are members of a leadership team)</li> <li>• Committees report to the Principal and share progress with whole staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When needed during assembly time</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade level meetings, staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To share information and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to all staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>

email and intranet	documents		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication whiteboards in Staffroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide daily information timetable changes and staff absences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to all staff for input and notices are entered before 9:00am</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Term overviews to Parent/Carers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To inform parents/carers of class organisation, activities planned for the term</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class teachers write the overview with their year level team and distribute to all students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week 3 of each term</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School correspondence including excursion notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide parents/carers with details of school programs and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent home with students as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School counsellor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enable parents and carers to discuss any social, behavioural and academic concerns they may have</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By referral from Executive of class teacher and with parent consent</li> <li>• Parent request</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front office staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A point of contact for parents/carers if they are unable to access a teacher</li> <li>• A point of contact to set up appointments with the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information from parents/carers passed on to the staff notice board or personally as necessary</li> <li>• Appointment booked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing/as required</li> </ul>

<b>STUDENT COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>MECHANISM</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal meeting with student and teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To share relevant information to support student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student or teacher initiates meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School counsellor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enable students to discuss any issues they may have</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By referral from Executive or class teacher and with parent consent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recognise and share achievements and information with students and parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly schedule each term detailing whole school</li> <li>• Parents advised or special presentations</li> <li>• Assemblies prepared by students and their teachers and hosted by students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified in newsletter</li> </ul>

<b>REPORTING TO AND FROM PARENTS</b>			
<b>MECHANISM</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal meetings with parents/carers and teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To share relevant information to support individual students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent/carer or teacher initiates meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment and Reporting Guide for parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To outline the assessment and reporting practices and schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Printed pamphlet distributed with the first newsletter each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Term 1 each year to commence in 2017 once assessment schedule is finalised</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 way conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To meet with students and their parents to discuss goals, strengths and areas of concern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students and their parents are invited to meet with teachers for 15 minute conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End Term 1</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Med year 3 way conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents, students and teachers meet to discuss student achievement, progress and concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the issue of written reports, notes are sent home inviting parents and students to attend individual interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term 3 each year</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Assessment Program – Literacy &amp; Numeracy (NAPLAN)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess student performance in Language Conventions, Writing, Reading and Numeracy against National benchmarks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One week of testing in Term 2</li> <li>Reports are issued to parents by the beginning of Term 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Week 2 Term 2 Testing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semester Written reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide a comprehensive report about students' academic progress, achievements, social development and work habits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers complete assessment and moderation, and prepare written reports</li> <li>Reports are submitted to the Executive and Principal for review and comment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Week 9 Term 2</li> <li>Week 9 Term 4</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term calendar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide an overview of school events, excursions and professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upcoming events are written on the calendar and emailed to staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing/updated throughout the year</li> </ul>

<b>COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>MECHANISM</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MT school handbook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce and provide information to new families and staff about the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Printed and handed to all new families and staff members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Council meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To participate in school based management decision making and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting are to be advised in the school newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of 2 meetings a term</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Community Council sub committees (eg Yearbook Committee)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide ongoing opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in and informed of school activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting times and articles are published in the school newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To communicate key events, policies, ideas and achievements to the School Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admin staff to co-ordinate terms</li> <li>Teachers and students contribute items</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter is distributed each Friday in digital form via Skoolbag</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent Information Sessions and Forums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform and consult with parents about school initiatives and programs eg School Improvement, Report Formats, School and Parent Partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosted by teachers, Executive, Assistant Principal or Principal as required to provide opportunities for consultation with parents</li> <li>All forums and sessions are advertised in the school newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduled as required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide parents with information and strategies to be able to support their children at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepared and provided by classroom teachers and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduled as required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Contact details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure all student information, health issues and contact details are up to date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Printout of student information held on Maze and sent home with each student for review by parents to ensure contact details are accurate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early in Term 1</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse Learning Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To foster optimal educational outcomes for students with special needs – consultation with parents, Catholic Education and representatives and outside agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation and monitoring of Individual Learning Plans for identified students</li> <li>• Student Centred Appraisals of need (SCAN) and in school reviews for students receiving support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with relevant stakeholders held as required</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring throughout the year</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School events, eg Grandparents day, school concerts and performances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To foster a sense of school community through a shared experience and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes to advise as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the year</li> </ul>

<b>POLICY DATES</b>	
<b>Formulated &amp; Implemented</b>	2016
<b>Next Review Due</b>	2019