



## COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

### RATIONALE

St Helena's Catholic Primary School's communication guidelines and communication protocols ensure that effective and courteous written communication occurs at all times between staff, parents/caregivers and students. These protocols apply to all electronic communication including instant messaging and online feedback systems used by the school, including but not limited to Seesaw, Microsoft Teams and SEQTA.

### OUR COMMITMENT

#### ***St Helena's Catholic Primary School Staff will:***

- Include a greeting and salutation in all communications.
- Communicate with integrity and respect at all times.
- Be polite and professional in their written communication at all times.
- Respond to emails within 48 hours (excluding weekends/holidays) where possible.
- When parents/caregivers make contact via telephone, teachers will take the time to get back to them as soon as possible. Phone calls/meetings are to take place when communicating behaviour incidents and if more than a maximum of 2 emails are exchanged on the same topic.
- Cc parents/caregivers to emails with therapists and external providers.
- Adhere to the communications protocol listed in the communication protocols attachment and our Code of Conduct.

#### ***St Helena's Catholic Primary School Parents/Carers will:***

- Include a greeting and salutation in all communications.
- Communicate with integrity and respect at all times.
- Be polite and courteous in their written communication at all times.
- When teachers make contact via telephone, parents/caregivers will take the time to get back to them as soon as possible.
- Adhere to the communications protocol listed in the communication protocols attachment and our Code of Conduct.

#### ***St Helena's Catholic Primary School Students will:***

- Include a greeting and salutation in all communications.
- Communicate with integrity and respect at all times.
- Be polite and courteous in their written communication at all times.
- Adhere to the communications protocol listed in the communication protocols attachment and our Code of Conduct.

## EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The School Leadership Team and Staff will review the Communication Guidelines and Communication Protocols for Staff and Parents/Caregivers, to ensure that in the everchanging digital world in which we live, we are keeping up with changes to the different forms of communication and the necessary protocols to ensure we maintain a respectful home/school partnership.

## COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS FOR STAFF AND PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

### ***Email Salutation***

All emails should include a greeting and salutation. You should identify yourself at the beginning of the email if it is possible the recipient does not know who you are.

### ***Avoid Being Over-familiar with the Recipient***

As a rule, use a greeting and title or form of address that you would use in verbal communication.

### ***Subject Line to Summarise the Message***

Ensure that the subject line summarises the content of the body of the email. The recipient should know what the email is about based on the subject line heading.

### ***Provide the Recipient with the Appropriate Background Information***

Include enough contextual information at the beginning of the email for the recipient to know what the matter is about. If in doubt, include additional background information.

### ***Appropriate Email Content***

Face to face meetings rather than email communication should take place when communicating complex or emotive information. Staff and parents/caregivers should make contact by phone or arrange a meeting in these instances.

### ***Email Etiquette***

Emails should be typed using appropriate spelling, grammar and punctuation. Use appropriate sentence case and refrain from using all capital letters unless necessary. Large sized fonts (greater than 12) are useful for people with vision impairment issues, but are not appropriate for general use.

### ***Acknowledge Emails Received***

If an email will require a period of time during which to prepare a suitable response, send a brief acknowledgement email (less than two lines) to let your correspondent know you have received their email, and notify them as to when you are likely to respond.

### ***Allow Time for a Reply***

Email messages do not usually require an immediate answer. Community members sending emails after 3:00pm or before 8:00am should not expect an immediate response. Staff will endeavour to respond to emails within 48 hours where possible (weekends and holidays are not included as part of this timeframe). Any urgent issues or topics of significant importance require a phone call or face to face meeting.

### ***Do Not 'Reply All' Unless Necessary***

Consider the need to send a reply to everyone. Perhaps only selected people need to see the email response.

### ***Confidentiality of Emails***

It is possible for the contents of your email to be read by others without your knowledge. Every email sent and received is scanned for certain words that are deemed unacceptable. Email with unacceptable content is quarantined, and a record is kept.

### ***SEQTA Emails***

Staff email parents/carers via SEQTA so that a record of communications is retained. If a staff member replies to an email from a parent/caregiver via their school's email account, depending on the topic of the email communication, a copy of the email trail will be uploaded to SEQTA as necessary.

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

*CEWA Parent and Carer Code of Conduct*

*St Helena's Catholic Primary School Code of Conduct*

| SOURCE OF AUTHORITY               |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b><i>CECWA Policy</i></b>        | <i>Community</i>       |
| <b><i>Executive Directive</i></b> | <i>Code of Conduct</i> |
| <b><i>Originally Released</i></b> | <i>2023</i>            |
| <b><i>Last Review</i></b>         | <i>2026</i>            |
| <b><i>Next Review</i></b>         | <i>2027</i>            |