Communication Policy / Procedure

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Policy Statement

Effective communication is key in order facilitate a well-coordinated, thriving and successful school; be it to staff, students, parents or with other members of the wider school community. Sri KDU International School, Subang Jaya aims to ensure that communications between all members of the school community are clear, professional, timely and appropriate.

Aims

- To ensure that staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders are kept well informed
- To ensure that there is a clear structure outlining which form of communication is to be used for each purpose
- To use the method of communication that is most effective and appropriate to the context; message and audience
- To be open, honest, ethical and professional
- To use jargon free, plain language and be easily understood by all
- To action communications within a reasonable time – maximum 48 hours
- To be compatible with the core values of the school

Procedures

Internal Communication – to Staff

(a) **Time-Sensitive, Communications of High Importance** – From time to time an important and urgent message may need to be relayed to staff. In this case the communication must be made as a face-to- face communication, or if to a wider audience by means of a mobile phone call or message (in emergencies only).

(b) **Non-Time-Sensitive Communications of High Importance** – If the communication is not time- sensitive it should be sent by email which ensures a lasting record of the communication made for reference.

(c) **Communications of Low to Medium Importance** – These may be made either by a briefing email to the appropriate group or via 1:1 email, depending on the circumstances and how many staff need to receive the communication. Whole school emails should always be avoided.

Warning - Uncontrolled when printed! The current version of this document is kept on the school website/ shared drive

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(d) **Communications Involving Sensitive Data** – These should be kept to a 'Need to Know' basis. Points (a), (b) and (c) apply, however, only specifically relevant staff should receive the communication, and face-to-face communications are preferred.

Additional Points to note:

- As per the 'Acceptable Use of Technology Policy', staff should never share logins and/or passwords to computer accounts, email accounts or their mobile phones.
- Emails and other electronic messages should be sent between the hours of 06:00 and 18:00, there will be no expectation for a response to any emails or other message sent out of these times.
- An internal Email Briefing is sent out daily that contains useful information; staff should make a point of reading this properly at the earliest possible moment.
- In addition, weekly morning briefing, in person or via video call is held on Monday at 7:30 for the whole school. Primary and secondary briefings are held at the same time later in the week.
- Staff meetings are held weekly from 15:00 on a variety of days according to team and focus.
- Staff should check emails regularly; at least three times daily including first thing in the morning and before teaching, in case there are urgent messages. Staff should attempt to respond to emails when required timely, notwithstanding the fact that they should not compromise their teaching to do so unless imperative.
- When sending emails information should be kept as concise as possible with links or attachments made available if expansion on points is thought useful.
- Staff should only email the person they wish to receive a response from and should refrain from Cc and Bcc staff members who do not need to directly respond. If the receiver does not respond then a line manager will be copied in to the follow up email.
- Teams chat should only be used via a Teams group during collaboration on a task, meeting or to check someone's status, not as a main means of communication, as these message can be easily missed.
- WhatsApp should not be used for work purposes and all official messages should be conveyed by email.
- Internal promotions and new staff member bios will be added to the email briefing to welcome all new staff.

Internal Communication – to Students
Communication between staff and students is of imperative importance towards facilitating the teaching and learning process

- **Verbal Communication** – Invariably the majority of communication involving students is made verbally, however, staff should keep in mind that additional visual cues are often useful for ELL students or certain learners. Shouting at students and gesticulating at them aggressively is unacceptable behaviour. Wherever possible, two members of staff should be present if there is a need to discipline a student; following the Behaviour Policy.
- **Written Communication –** Staff use the written form to communicate to students in a variety of ways including: presentations on the IWB, printed task sheets, comments in exercise books, display boards and posts on TEAMs. In addition to the general points already stated, staff should carefully consider the size and font of texts, contrast of colours (text/background), avoid placing images behind texts that affect the readability of a text, ensure handwriting is easily legible and consider layout. Information should be easy to find. The Marking & Feedback Procedures should be respected as well as the display non-negotiables.
- **TEAMS/ Phoenix Classroom** – Assignments should be used to post all homework tasks as well as work to be engaged in during lessons when appropriate. Documents and resources should be saved on files and all other communication should be made on the 'feed'/'chatter': comments, subject content, videos, links, info graphics, etc.

External Communication – to Parents/Guardians

- **Short, Time-Sensitive, Communications of High Importance** – Short urgent messages should be made by telephone if the number of recipients is manageable.
- **Non-Time-Sensitive Communications of High Importance** – If the communication is not time- sensitive it should be sent by email, which ensures a lasting record of the communication made for reference.
- **Communications of Low to Medium Importance** – Staff may elect varying means of making communications of low to medium importance depending on the context; face to face, a general meeting, TEAMS feed, mention on the school website/social media.

- **Communications Involving Sensitive Data** – All communications to parents involving sensitive data should be made face-to-face, or in the case that this isn't possible by phone call. Staff should never address sensitive matters by email.
- **Authorisations** – All authorisations requested from parents should be done so via Microsoft Forms (school trips, residential trips, registrations, data usage, etc).

Additional Points to note:

- Staff should never send a group communication to parents in writing before having it approved by the leadership team (Email or Microsoft Forms).
- Bulk emails to parents must be sent 24 hours before publishing for checking and approval to the leadership team.
- Staff should never send emails to multiple parents without using the 'BCC' function to hide email addresses from others.
- Staff should never communicate with parents (or students) via means of social media.
- When making phone calls to parents, only school landline or school mobile phone numbers should be used (no personal numbers).
- Similarly, to when communicating with students, no political or religious beliefs should be promoted and comments should be as balanced and impartial as the context allows.
- If in doubt, consult a member of the senior leadership team.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Develop close links with the school.
- Participate in meetings in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of the staff and all staff members in the school.
- Collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children.
- Share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos, values and distinctive character.
- Participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting them through Parent Forums.

External Communication – to School (from Parents/Guardians)

- Parents should keep the school up to date with family circumstances which may affect the schooling of their son/daughter(s). In addition, parents have the liberty to contact the school and request a meeting should they have an issue that they wish to discuss. In this scenario, parents should refer to the Parental Concern Escalation and Complaints policy to know which member of the team is the most appropriate person to help them with the specific issue.
- The class/lead teacher will be the first point of communication for parents. A parent can: informally meet after school, book an appointment with the class teacher or email to share information or ask questions.
- In primary, if parents have any concerns about the year group as a whole, the class teacher or are unable to make an appointment with the class teacher, they will talk to the Head of Year. The Head of Year may contact a parent if there are concerns. The Head of Year will send out whole year group specific information for that year group via a weekly newsletter. In secondary, this should be the Head of Subject or the Student Welfare Lead.
- The Head of Primary and Secondary will be the next point of contact after these staff members.
- Any unresolved concerns will then follow the complaints procedure policy.

General Concerns and Complaints – The Parental Concern Escalation and Complaints Policy should be referred to and adhered to.

Additional Points to note:

- Parents should familiarise themselves with the Parental Concern Escalation and Complaints Policy regarding communications outside of the school site. They should specifically keep in mind that concerns or doubts over the sons/daughters of other parents should be addressed to the school (not directly to other parents), that school matters should not be discussed off-site in person, by phone or use of social media, and that the complaints procedure should be adhered to and open forums discussing complaints should not be created.
- Concise and objective communications are appreciated owing to the busy schedule of staff.

- When parents are making communications they are encouraged to consider the global needs of all

Structures in place to facilitate open communication & consultation with parents
- Parent/teacher meetings
- Termly written school reports
- IEP meetings
- Written communication
- Monthly Parent Forums for existing parents who would like to voice concerns, share ideas and ask questions
- Meet the Principal for prospective parents to learn about the school
- Weekly newsletters keep parents up-to-date with school events, holidays and school concerns
- The school website is a source of information
- Parents are invited to events throughout the year e.g. Sports Day, productions and concerts
- SLT Coffee Morning Briefing – weekly opportunity for parents to ask questions and share ideas with the school Principal

Structures in place to facilitate open communication & consultation with students and staff:
- Student Councils
- Prefect Meetings
- Staff Forum
- Surveys

It is vital that the school is immediately informed if family events/situations occur that cause anxiety to your child and therefore may adversely affect his/her education

Confidentiality and Privacy

Refer to the School Data Protection Policy.

Supporting Documents

- The Schools Terms and Conditions
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Home School Agreement Policy

Responsibility

- The School Principal is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy and its accompanying procedure/s.

- The Head of Operations is responsible for maintaining the content of this policy as delegated by the School Principal.

Promulgation & Implementation

The Communications Policy and Procedure will be communicated throughout the School community in the form of:

1. An announcement notice via briefings and email;
2. Distribution of policy via e-mail to all staff to whom this may apply;
3. Inclusion on the school website and parent portal (where applicable) to ensure parents also know of the policy.