

MONTPELLIER PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNICATION POLICY”

RATIONALE:

At Montpellier Primary School we are committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to communication being respectful, measured and constructive. In adhering to these principles we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents / guardians and the school, to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our students.

We acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents / guardians communicating electronically and also understand its shortcomings. This policy is designed to establish clear expectations for both staff and parents / guardians for all communication avenues.

AIMS:

- Clearly articulate the school’s commitment to positive use of Seesaw for communication
- Acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents / guardians communicating via Seesaw, but also understand the shortcomings
- Establish clear expectations for both staff and parents / guardians in the use of Seesaw
- Establish the purpose for each method of communication available for staff and parents / guardians

IMPLEMENTATION:

In order to meet the aims of the policy, Montpellier has outlined positive and effective communication guidelines and expectations for all stakeholders. Staff and parents / guardians are expected to adhere to the guidelines set out in this policy. Failure to do so may lead to Seesaw / Compass access being restricted.

Communication through our Seesaw platform is environmentally friendly and efficient when used effectively. We acknowledge that this is very convenient for parents / guardians who find it difficult to catch up with school staff during regular work hours. Having said that, our school community values face-to-face and telephone conversations, and understands that in some circumstances, these forms of communication are more appropriate than Seesaw.

Seesaw is primarily used for communication between staff and parents / guardians regarding the celebration of student work. Parents / guardians and staff will be able to maintain contact via scheduled meetings or phone calls as well as messaging on Seesaw. Information for families who need support to access Seesaw is available at the School Office.

EXPECTATIONS:

When communicating, staff are expected to adhere to the following protocols:

- Keep communication brief, professional, informative and respectful. Issues or significant concerns that require a level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone.
- Avoid sending confrontational communication. Never say in writing what you wouldn’t say to the recipient’s face in a meeting.
- Understand that the tone or intent of written communication can easily be misunderstood, especially where humour or sarcasm is involved
- Understand that parents / guardians are not expected to respond to communication that is contentious or requires ongoing dialogue. A face-to-face meeting should be arranged in these circumstances.

- Email or messages should not be used to discuss sensitive issues. A face to face meeting should be arranged
- Understand that staff are not to respond to Seesaw messages or Compass emails outside 8.00am - 5.30pm Monday to Friday or out of the School Term
- Acknowledge receipt of a message / email by responding to the parent / guardian by the end of the next business day. Note – in some circumstances this may not be possible.
- Understand that all communication is bound by the Freedom of Information act and information may be requested at any point by an individual involved in a conversation between parent / guardian and staff

When communicating, parents / guardians are expected to adhere to the following protocols:

- Understand that staff will not respond to any confrontations, offensive or abusive communication and must forward them to the school leadership team immediately
- Only send non-vital or non-urgent messages via Seesaw (*e.g. Do not send a message via Seesaw about your child not going to After School Care as the teacher may not see it in time*). In a situation where urgent communication is required, contact or visit the school's office.
- Understand that staff are not expected to respond to emails outside 8.00am - 5.30p.m. Monday to Friday or out of the school term
- Avoid writing or seeking personal information regarding third parties (staff, students or parents / guardians)
- Avoid seeking to discuss in detail your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioural issues via written communication. These are best addressed over the phone or in person. Written communication (for example Seesaw message / Compass email) may be used to flag the concern or set up a meeting, but will not be the forum for discussion or debate.
- Understand that it is the responsibility of every parent to keep the school administration and class teacher up-to-date with current email addresses for Seesaw purposes
- Understand that all written communication sent via email can be shared with the school leadership team at any point
- Understand that all communication is bound by the Freedom of Information act and information may be requested at any point by an individual involved in a conversation between parent / guardian and staff

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2022
Approved by	Principal in conjunction with School Council
Communication and feedback	This policy is always accessible on the school website and feedback from the community can be directed to the school at any time for the School Council to consider.
Next scheduled review date	2025 (3-4 Year Cycle)

If changes from the Department of Education occur or if there is feedback from the community, this policy will be reviewed.