



## Communication Policy

POLICY APPROVED BY COUNCIL:

Interim Approval

DATE OF LAST REVIEW:

New Policy

SCHEDULED FOR REVIEW:

July 2017

### Background

Communication within the College context is multi-faceted and all aspects are essential for the correct and proper operation of the College. It is imperative that all communication within and beyond the College is carried out in a professional manner.

Good communication is the key to good relationships. King's College seeks to establish excellent relationships and to promote good communication with all of its stakeholders. Effective communication facilitates the smooth functioning of the College and assists parents, students and staff to work together effectively.

### Scope

Applies to all students, staff, parents and members of the wider College community.

### Policy

Good communication is the key to good relationships. King's College seeks to establish excellent relationships and to promote good communication with all of its stakeholders. Effective communication facilitates the smooth functioning of the College and assists parents, students and staff to work together effectively.

All staff have an obligation to support the aims and procedures outlined in this document and to assist the College achieve best practice in communicating with parents and the community.

### Aim

The correct conduct and management of effective communications is essential to the God-honouring operation of the College. This policy complements, but does not relate directly to the normal curriculum based communication to be found within a classroom environment that is centred on teaching and learning.

### Protocols

#### *Dissemination of Information*

It is crucial that information is provided to the College community in a timely and punctual manner, and that it is accurate and exhibits a high level of professionalism.

- College website—King's College website ([www.kingscollege.com.au](http://www.kingscollege.com.au)) is a very public source of information about the College. It is updated on a regular basis to ensure that all information is current and correct. The website contains a lot of relevant information for the College community and the general public.

- @King's —The College newsletter is produced fortnightly during term times. These are emailed to parents and also available or via the College website.
- King's Update – a fortnightly event/calendar update. These are emailed to parents and also available or via the College website.
- Information days/evenings—a variety of Information Sessions are held throughout the year. These include, but are not limited to: Early Years Information Morning, Middle Years Open Night (with a Year 7 focus), VCE Information Night, Parents Information Sessions.
- Correspondence— all information that is going home to parents/guardians to advise them about excursions, incursions, visiting speakers, sports days, camps, competitions, class or subject activities is to do so in the approved format on College letterhead. These letters/communication are to be approved by relevant Team Leaders/Deputy Principals before they will be distributed electronically

All such correspondence should be sent to [noteshome@kingscollege.com.au](mailto:noteshome@kingscollege.com.au) for preparation and distribution management by the Administration Team Leader

### **Parent—Teacher Communication**

It is imperative that teachers seek to maintain open lines of honest and timely communication with parents, and vice-versa. This is achieved through diligence and effort on the part of the teacher and is a reflection of the pastoral heart of the teacher concerned.

- *Student Diaries*—the Student Diaries (Middle and Senior Years) are not just a vehicle for students to use to record homework and assessments that need to be done. The diary should be a key means of communication between the parent and the teacher. It is recognized that in many cases email has now replaced the use of the diary.
- *Formal Parent-Teacher Meetings*—these discussions are late in Term 2 for all students following the distribution of Semester 1 reports
- *Informal telephone, email or written communication* - all teachers are expected to make personal contact with parents within the first 3 weeks of a new school year or within 3 weeks of a student enrolling during a year
- *Advice to parents/guardians regarding disciplinary matters* - refer to the Student Management Framework for details about the ways in which parents are advised of matters regarding student discipline.

### **Administrative, Legal & Government Communication**

A number of items of written communication are required to meet College administrative, legal or government regulations. For all of those situations that follow, verbal advice is insufficient. In the event that parents/guardians provide verbal advice, they are required to follow this up with written evidence (in most cases email is adequate) to the College.

- Uniform note—when a student is unable to wear the full correct uniform, for whatever reason, a parent/guardian is required to write a note explaining the reason why correct uniform is not being worn.
- Absence note- when a student is absent from school for all or part of a day, a parent/guardian is required to write a note of explanation. This advice can be emailed to [absent@kingscollege.com.au](mailto:absent@kingscollege.com.au) . For absences of more than two days, VCE students are required to provide a medical certificate to the VCE Coordinator.
- Late arrival/early departure notification - students who arrive late to school or who are departing early from school must be signed in or out at Reception by a parent/guardian/responsible adult. Students departing early should provide a note from a parent/guardian to the classroom teacher explaining the reason for the early departure.
- Advanced notification of **planned** student absences is required. This can help students, families and staff effectively plan and cater for extended absences.
- Advice to the Principal of the intention to withdraw the enrolment of a student - refer to the Enrolment and Attendance Policy for specific requirements.

### College Council

Board members are vitally concerned with the well-being of staff and parents and will often make themselves available to listen. However, staff and parents must note that taking a Council Member into confidence does not short circuit the normal procedures for addressing issues. Correspondence to the Council either on personal or organisational matters will be referred to the Principal without comment.

The College Council should only be contacted directly when a parent is seeking a review of a decision of the Principal (as per the Grievance Policy).

### Principal

It is expected that all parties, whether staff, parents or Council members, will follow the correct procedures as outlined in the Grievances Policy and Procedures if airing concerns or grievances.

At all times we are to aim at honouring Christ and to mirror His way in our lives. All “official” correspondence to and from the College is to be made to the Principal or the Principal’s delegate. Executive staff exercise delegated responsibilities in their area/s.

### College Staff

Staff members are encouraged to discuss any matter or concern with their Team Leader at any time during the year.

For more serious concern staff members like all members of the College community are required to comply with the protocols in the Grievance Policy.

### Students

All staff members are required to ensure that all students in their care are able to address requests for information or concerns to the appropriate person or authority.

- In the case of relational difficulties, either with other students or with staff members, the student should speak with their Pastoral Care/Home Teacher

and/or relevant teacher who will provide assistance in this area. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the student may elect to seek assistance from the Team Leader, Well Being Leader or another staff member.

- There may be issues which need to be brought formally to the attention of the Team Leader or Deputy Principal for resolution or decision if the student is not satisfied with previous attempts. Parental involvement is requested at this level.

## **Media**

All communication with the Media will be through the Principal (or as required, the Chairman of the Council). Staff members are not permitted to make any comment whatsoever regarding the affairs of any student, employee or College related activity to a television, radio, print, internet or other media journalist without prior approval from the Principal. Any public comment that is made on issues relating to education should be such that it cannot be construed as a negative criticism of the College or its students, staff and Council.

## **Other External Organisations**

- There will be many occasions during the execution of staff duties that staff members will have to make contact with external organisations. At all times staff members need to speak and act in a professional and appropriate manner. Examples include:
  - Speaking to suppliers in order to garner relevant information for ordering educational teaching materials or supplies.
  - Making bookings for visiting speakers, excursions and camps. It is imperative that the appropriate Team Leader approval is sought before committing to any of these external providers.
- The College will only collect consensual personal information that is required and will only communicate and disclose information for the purposes for which it was collected.
- Any person seeking information from the College must be directed to the Principal.
- Requests by police and/or other external government agencies for information and interviews must be directed to the Principal.
- All staff, in consultation with the Principal, will comply with court subpoenas to provide information.

## Appendix 1

### Types of Communication

Our College is committed to open and cooperative communication. Communication within and beyond the College community can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- The dissemination of information to the College community and beyond via
  - College website
  - College social media sites (Facebook and Twitter)
  - the fortnightly College newsletter and alternate Update
  - emails home to parents/guardians about excursions, incursions, sports days, camps, competitions, class or subject activities, policies etc
  - Information evenings and events
  - Parents' Club Meeting
- Educational Reporting (refer to Reporting to Parents policies)
  - Semester Reports
  - results of national competitions and NAPLAN testing
- The College Annual Report.
- Parent—Teacher communication via
  - the Student Diaries (Middle Years and Senior Years)
  - formal Parent—Teacher discussions
  - informal telephone, email or written communication
  - advice to parents/guardians regarding disciplinary matters
- Communication required for administrative, legal or government purposes
  - uniform notes/emails
  - absence notes/emails
  - late arrival/early departure notification
  - advanced notification of planned student absences
  - advice to the Principal the intention to withdraw a student.
- Complaints or grievances (refer to the Grievance Policy)
- Communication relating to and with the College Council
- Communication relating to and with the Principal
- Communication with external organisations and bodies including:
  - the media
  - professional bodies, for example ISV, AHISA, AACCS
  - government bodies, for example VCAA, VQRA
  - the general public.

### Review Record

Original Approval Date:

Review Date	Notes on Review
April 2014	Policy Written