

# Overport Primary School COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

## **Rationale:**

It is essential that staff members of the school communicate information in agreeance with established protocols so as to preserve the professionalism of the school, to protect the rights of individuals, to uphold our duty of care to students, and to comply with departmental and legal requirements.

## **Aims:**

To ensure that the communication of information is carried out correctly and in a manner that complies with school, departmental and legal requirements.

To provide parents with opportunities to effectively communicate with school personnel in relation to their child.

To provide feedback to students on their own development, and for them to give and receive feedback.

## **Implementation:**

- Our school has a policy of open and cooperative communication.
- This policy recognises that staff members have legal, departmental, local, professional and social obligations with regards to the communication of information.
- We will provide two written reports for students each year. At the beginning of the year we offer a parent-teacher familiarisation meeting and a Family Forum mid- year. Additional interviews, may be made as required. Staff may be contacted via email during working hours.
- An annual report is developed and provided to the school community via our newsletter and website.
- The school will only collect consensual information that it requires about individuals, and will only communicate and disclose information for the purposes for which it was collected.
- The Information Privacy Act and the Health Records Act 2001 require that schools protect the interests of individuals with regard to their personal information and respect the individual's right to control how their personal information is used, and for what purpose.
- Any person seeking information from the school that falls outside the school's previous practices must be directed to the principal who may require that a formal written Freedom of Information request be made.
- All such Freedom of Information requests will be referred to the Department of Education and Training's Freedom of Information Unit.
- Information sought by police, including interviews of students must be directed to the principal.
- Requests from Department of Health and Human Services personnel regarding students or families will be complied with at all times.
- Department of Education employees are free to make public comment on issues relating to education, but in doing so, must be wary not to make comments that can be construed as negative criticism of our school, School Council, our community, staff or community members.
- As a matter of professional courtesy staff will communicate with the principal before making public comment or formal statement on educational issues or that bears on the organisation or program of the school or place of work. The principal and School Council president will ensure that each other is informed.
- All staff will comply with court subpoenas to provide information at all times.
- Staff are discouraged from having students and parents as friends on their private social media platforms.
- The school has set up its own social media platform which is monitored, and which staff and the community are encouraged to use.

## **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or earlier as required.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

**May 2017**