

Rationale:

At St Mary's School we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment which promotes open communication, respect, fairness and positive relationships. We believe that the relationship between home and school is a very important part of ensuring that children are happy, secure and open to learning. As a school community we are committed to working together to meet the various needs of our school community. Central to achieving this is trust and open, effective communication between all members of the school community. As a Catholic school the Gospel values form the basis for a proactive approach to communication and problem solving.

Aims:

To ensure:

- That effective communication between all school community members takes place
- That all parties communicate respectfully
- That processes are in place which allow for open and honest communication amongst all school community members
- That confidential information is managed in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations
- That clear, positive and fair processes and guidelines are provided which allow issues or concerns to be aired and resolved in a timely, effective and respectful manner
- That a positive, productive and harmonious school environment is maintained
- That where a complaint is evident, clear procedures are in place to respond.

Implementation:

Procedure for contacting a classroom or specialist teacher:

When a parent wishes to contact a member of staff to discuss matters relating to their child, the procedure is to contact the teacher involved, giving a brief outline of the issue. Contact should be made using one of the following approaches:

1. Contact the school, either by phone or coming to the office personally, and ask a school administration officer to arrange for the teacher to contact you to arrange a suitable meeting time. Teachers are not available to answer phone calls or come to the office during teaching time, whilst on yard duty or at meetings. If a message is left at the office for teachers to contact a parent, they will attempt to return the call as soon as possible.
2. Contact the appropriate teacher by email via the office, asking them to organise a suitable meeting time.
3. Speak briefly with the appropriate teacher, either before or after school hours (not at a time when they are teaching or on yard duty), and ask them to arrange a suitable meeting time.

Procedure for contacting other school personnel:

When a parent has a concern or wishes to discuss an issue regarding a situation which they considers affects the whole school, their child's wellbeing or relates to a school policy or matter, the procedure is to contact the Principal, Deputy Principal or a relevant School Leader, using one of the three approaches outlined above.

When parents have a concern or wish to discuss an issue relating to a member of staff or of a sensitive nature, they should make an appointment with the Principal by contacting the school office, either by phone, email or coming to the office personally, and asking the Office Manager or an administration officer to arrange a suitable meeting time.

In all cases if the matter is urgent and/or relates to the possible risk or harm to a student, a member of staff or another member of the school community, the Principal should be informed immediately and the urgency of the matter conveyed. The Principal will determine who is the most appropriate person to deal with the issue and the process to work towards a resolution, as well as ensuring that contact is made as soon as possible.

To be read in conjunction with the Parent Code of Conduct.

Procedure when responding to an issue of complaint:

Refer to Complaints Handling Policy

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's five year review cycle, or as required.

Review date: July 2021