

St Philip's Blackburn North



EMAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY AND PROTOCOLS

VISION AND MISSION

Vision Statement

**Modelling the teachings of Christ,
St Philip's School community aspires to be a place of welcome that provides many learning
environments to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world.**

Mission Statements

Because we believe that Christ is the central focus of our school and we are witnesses to him and his teachings we aim to:

- provide an atmosphere where all are made welcome, where they feel safe and have a sense of belonging
- provide a school environment that is positive and challenges all students to work to the best of their ability
- foster in all a realisation that they are responsible for their own learning
- develop a sense of justice by respecting the opinions and rights of others
- encourage all to be sensitive to others and respect their differences
- encourage all to use their physical environments in a respectful manner
- provide a learning environment that utilises the most effective and current approaches in education.

Rationale

St Philip's Primary School recognises the importance of teachers and parents engaging, collaborating, learning and sharing through a variety of communication tools. We are committed to respectful, measured, sensitive and constructive communication. In adhering to these principles we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents and the school, to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our students.

All members of the St Philip's community are expected to uphold the values of the school in all email interactions. We acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents communicating via email, but also understand its shortcomings. This policy is designed to establish clear expectations for both staff and parents in the use of email as a communication tool.

General Principles

Email is an environmentally friendly way of communicating that can save time when used effectively. We acknowledge that email is very convenient for parents who are working and find it difficult to catch up with school staff during regular work hours. Having said that, our school community values face to face and phone conversations and understands that these forms of communication are preferred in many situations.

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Expectations of Both Staff and Parents

When communicating via email, staff and parents are expected to adhere to email etiquette:

- Emails are at their best when they are brief and informative. Issues that require a level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone.
- Emails should always be respectful and constructive. If the email relates to a concern or problem, it ought to be focussed on understanding the problem and finding a solution.
- Avoid sending negative or confrontational emails. Email is not to be used to vent. We never say in an email what we wouldn't say to the recipient's face.
- Never write about or seek personal information regarding third parties (staff, students or parents). Likewise, emails containing personal or sensitive information should not be passed on to a third party without permission of the sender.
- The tone or intent of emails can easily be misunderstood, especially where humour or sarcasm is involved. Be conscious of this and pick up the phone rather than send an email in this instance.
- Be aware that the use of capitals is considered SHOUTING.
- Staff and parents are not expected to respond to emails that are contentious. A face to face meeting should be arranged in this circumstance.
- Group emails have the potential to waste the time of many, so avoid sending emails to anyone for whom it is not relevant. It is also courteous to avoid time wasting emails, including jokes, chain letters and commercial solicitations.
- Make sure the purpose of your email is clear...do you require specific action or is the email for information only?
- Staff and parents must be careful not to disclose the email addresses of others without permission to do so.
- An email received in error must be notified to the sender immediately and then deleted. This material must not be copied or forwarded to any other party.
- Email requiring a written reply will only be responded to within the work hours of 8:00am to 6:00pm.

Expectations of Staff

- Email should not be used to discuss a sensitive issue which was not initiated by the parent or had not been previously discussed with the parent.
- When an email is received from a parent that requires some time to gather information and reply properly, the staff member should respond acknowledging that the email has been received and indicate when an informed response will be sent.
- Staff will aim to reply to parent emails within two working days.
- When on leave, staff will activate an auto-reply message detailing relevant leave dates.
- Staff are not to respond to abusive emails and should forward them to the school principal.

Expectations of Parents

- Remember to respect staff personal time. Parents shouldn't send emails outside of work hours and expect an immediate response.
- Please only send non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use email to inform a teacher that your child is not to go home on the bus that afternoon, as the teacher may not see the message in time. Remember that given work demands teachers may not get to read emails until late in the day.
- Please don't seek to discuss in detail your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioural issues via email. These are best addressed over the phone or in person.
- Emails that are intended for the office staff should be sent directly to:
office@stphilipbbn.catholic.edu.au
- Emails that are intended for the school Principal should be sent directly to:
principal@stphilipbbn.catholic.edu.au

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IMPLEMENTATION

Informing parents of Teacher Email Addresses – Every term overview throughout the year will include the email addresses of the classroom teacher/s and specialist teachers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff and parents are responsible for using email in accordance with this policy.

It is the responsibility of school leadership to ensure the policy is brought to the attention of:

- Parents on enrolment of their child.
- The whole school community annually.

Policy Review – This policy is to be reviewed annually.

REVIEW

Last reviewed: April 1st 2019

Ratified by the Education Board: April 23rd 2019