IRONSIDE STATE SCHOOL
Communication Policy

At Ironside State School we are committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to communication being respectful, measured, sensitive and constructive. In adhering to these principles, we aim to strengthen the goodwill and the positive partnerships between parents and the school.

Our mental models:

- Partnerships between parents, students and schools promote student learning, wellbeing and high expectations for student success.
- Respectful relationships between students, parents and the school community are valued and enhance the promotion of student learning and wellbeing.
- Effective communication is an exchange between students, parents, communities and schools that is inclusive and involves information sharing (*where appropriate*) and opportunities to learn from each other

Our school will:

- Communicate in a timely manner, through the newsletter, website, Facebook, Instagram, emails, newsflashes, forms and telephone (SMS and calls) and in person.
- Communicate and consult on matters which are operational on a day-to-day basis as well as matters which guide the way our school and school community functions, such as in policy and Strategic Plan development.
- Invite parents to contact us in writing or in person about any matter, to bring up concerns and give feedback through contact with the principal, staff and P&C.
- Ensure the principal and staff are accessible and willing to assist. However, in order to prioritise time correctly, teaching staff should be contacted in the first instance to arrange a suitable time for further conversation. Interviews should not impact on learning and teaching time.

Please note:

- It is the '*manner not the matter*'. Respectful communication is required in all interactions from all parties.
- '*We stay low on the ladder of inference*'. In all interactions, it is important to monitor and manage our language and emotions. Strong emotions and high-modality language impede resolutions.
- Classroom teachers are the case managers for their students. For student matters, teachers are to be contacted in the first instance.
- All parent communication is uploaded as a record of contact against student profiles on OneSchool.
- Teachers are professionals. Accordingly, as you would with any other professional, seeking a mutually agreeable time is a requirement.

The Parent and Community Code of Conduct aims to support schools to clearly communicate the conduct expected of parents, carers and visitors while they're on state school grounds, at school activities, and interacting with others in the school community.

Parent and Community Code of Conduct

Supporting learning, wellbeing and safety in every Queensland state school

We welcome parents[1] and other members of our diverse community into schools across Queensland.

Working together with their school community[2], school staff support the learning and wellbeing of every student, and are entitled to a safe work environment.

Parents and other visitors to schools support safety by ensuring their communications and conduct at the school and school activities is respectful.

Elements of engagement	It is expected that parents and visitors to our school communities will:	Parents and visitors to our school communities demonstrate this by:
Communication	• be polite to others • act as positive role models • recognise and respect personal differences • use the school's communication process to address concerns	• using polite spoken and written language • speaking and behaving respectfully at all times • being compassionate when interacting with others • informing staff if the behaviour of others is negatively impacting them or their family • respecting staff time by accepting they will respond to appropriate communication when they are able • requesting a meeting to discuss any concerns about their child's education — allowing staff time to prepare and appreciating their time may be limited
Collaboration	• (parents) ensure their child attends school ready to learn • support the Student Code of Conduct	• taking responsibility for their child arriving and departing school safely on time every day • reading and encouraging their child to understand and follow the Student Code of Conduct
School Culture	• recognise every student is important to us • contribute to a positive school culture • work together with staff to resolve issues or concerns • respect people's privacy.	• valuing each child's education • acknowledging staff are responsible for supporting the whole school community • speaking positively about the school and its staff • not making negative comments or gossiping about other school community members, including students — in person, in writing or on social media • understanding, at times, compromises may be necessary • considering the privacy of all school community members at all times, and understanding that the school cannot share confidential information.

[1]The term 'parent' refers to parents, carers, guardians and people who exercise parental responsibility for a child.
[2]The term 'school community' refers to staff, students, parents, local business and community organisations and visitors to the school.

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1. Newsletter & Newsflashes

Newsletters and Newsflashes are our main means of informing the school community about what is happening in the school. These are sent out to parents via email every fortnight.

2. Website

Our school website is for the school and wider community to gain an understanding of policies, facilities, programs and projects at Ironside State School.

3. Facebook & Instagram

Our school Facebook page is used to promote the school and associated events, communicate achievements and communicate general information and reminders. Please remember that we want our Facebook page to be used for the right reasons – please be respectful, kind and supportive. Please DO NOT use this page as a discussion forum. If you have a question or feedback, please go through the usual channels (eg. *Contact the classroom teacher of the office*).

The Department of Education sets very clear and concise guidelines around what is and is not allowed on the school's Facebook page.

4. Parent–Teacher Conferences and Reports

Conference times are arranged for parents to meet with their child's teacher to discuss individual progress. Conferences are held in Term 1 and Term 3 in the school hall. We regard these occasions as a vital two-way flow of information concerning children. Home and school mutually benefit from these sessions.

Parent-Teacher conferences are booked via an online portal.
*** Failure to attend the booked session may mean that the teacher is unable to reschedule.*

Achievement in all curriculum areas will be reported on twice a year in written format via the Report Card. These are completed in Term 2 and Term 4.

5. Email

We acknowledge the potential benefits of staff and parents communicating via email. However, there are also shortcomings. We need to be aware of the expectations for both staff and parents in the use of email as a communication tool as outlined below:

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

- 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.

- 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 the permission of the sender.
- The tone of intent of emails can be misunderstood, especially where humour or sarcasm is involved. Be conscious of this.
- Staff and parents are not expected to respond to emails that are contentious. A face-to-face meeting should be arranged in this circumstance.
- Make sure the purpose of your email is clear, for example, 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. Using BCC is required for group emails.

Expectations 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 form 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.
- Staff are not to respond to abusive emails and should forward them to the principal.

Expectations of Parents

- Remember to respect staff personal time. Parents should not send emails outside of work hours and expect an immediate response.
- Please only send non-vital messages by this communication mode. For example, do not use email to inform a teacher that your child is not to go home on the bus this afternoon, as the teacher may not see your email until late in the day.

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
- Staff as part of their induction process

Principal
Ironside State School

P&C President
Tugrul Durali
29/11/2023

School Council President