



Parent Communication and Engagement Policy

This document is for parents/carers and staff of Scotch College Adelaide to ensure that clear and mutual expectations are in place regarding two-way communication processes and practice.

Transparency and Clarity

Scotch College Adelaide recognises the importance of clear and effective communication with parents and carers. We are committed to being transparent and accessible to receive positive feedback and address areas of concern raised by our parent body regarding their child.

Privacy & Security

It is our practice to treat all matters confidentially respectfully and transparently in accordance with the College Privacy policy. This may involve information being shared with other staff in order to effectively resolve a concern. The decision to pass on information is determined by our professional guidelines for staff.

Security of information and communication paramount and, where possible, access to personal information is managed and kept secure using discreet permissions protocols.

All parent/carers' email addresses are kept on a secure data base and updated on a regular basis. At the start of each year all parents are asked to review their contact details. If there is a change in details during the year, please advise the relevant school office or the Accounts department.

Variety

Communications can take a variety of forms; verbal (through meetings or by telephone), and written (through email, letters, Microsoft tools, parent portal, CareMonkey, SEQTA, Seesaw, Facebook sites for specific groups and the College website).

The College does not recommend the use of social media as a formal communication channel between parents / carers and teachers, although recognises that in some instances, Facebook groups are used for general communications.



Torrens Park Campus

The College encourages the use of digital communication with staff. The use of email is preferred for prompt and effective communication to accommodate teachers' classroom and cocurricular commitments, however parents are very welcome to arrange a time for a face to face meeting or phone call with a teacher.

Mitcham Campus

Parents are very welcome to arrange a time to arrange a face to face meeting or phone call with a teacher.

The school is committed to a philosophy of addressing concerns:

- a. at the earliest opportunity;
- b. in the most informal means; and
- c. by the most appropriate people.

This may mean that a most appropriate means of addressing a parent's concerns is inviting the parent to school to speak with the teacher. Experience has shown that both parent and teacher can benefit from a candid and respectful one on one exchange.

Otherwise, the College expects staff to respond to email communication with parents between 8 am and 5 pm weekdays, within 24 hours where practicable. In instances where more time is required to collect relevant information before responding, then a short email (or phone call) to that effect is appropriate. Upon receipt of an email or phone request for information, staff may send a holding email and it is reasonable to expect most queries to be addressed fully within a working week.



Specific Methods of Communication

Communication between parents/carers and staff is comprehensive and happens in the following ways:

1. Information sharing evenings targeting specific audiences (for example, parent teacher interviews, wellbeing information sessions).
2. Care Monkey consent requests for students to participate in extra-ordinary activities (for example, camps, excursions). Care Monkey is also the system which holds shares relevant medical information about a student.
3. Community news publications (for example, information from P&F groups, eNews, Scotch reports, community event invitations).
4. SEQTA Learning Management System, which is the primary medium for communication from Years 7 to 12 regarding a student's academic progress, including the place that student reports can be accessed.
5. The Parent Portal which is specific to each family and allows access to student information, financial information and has the facility for parents to make bookings for events related to their child.
6. The College website which contains general information about the College, including College Policies, allows for parents to book into community events, access the parent portal and find information such as sports fixtures and news updates.
7. SeeSaw which is the primary medium for weekly communication for Prep to Year 6 about events, student work and year level specific information, such curriculum information.
8. Communication book / diary from Prep to Year 6 for homework and general parent/carer and teacher communication

Engagement

Consultation is encouraged between the College and parents/carers. This happens in a variety of ways, including through meetings, surveys, community forums, committees, parent support groups and representatives. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback, even if not sought by the school, if they believe it contributes to our culture of continuous improvement. Whilst not each individual concern may be addressed, conversations at school events, email and phone calls are encouraged as a means of improving the quality of our offering for students.

Grievance Process

If at any stage a parent/carer or staff member feel that there is cause for grievance, individuals are asked to follow the College Grievance policy available on the College website



Email address protocol

All students have a College email address using the protocol
surnamefirstinitial@scotch.sa.edu.au e.g., smithj@scotch.sa.edu.au

All staff are contactable through the College email system using the protocol
firstinitialoffirstnamesurname@scotch.sa.edu.au e.g. jsmith@scotch.sa.edu.au

Communication Protocols for Torrens Park Campus

1. For routine matters regarding your child's general progress or information, parents/caregivers are asked to contact the Homegroup teacher at Year 7 and their House Mentor for years 8-12. For a boarding student, if the matter involves the boarding context, the relevant Head of Boarding should be contacted.
2. For more serious matters parents are asked to contact the relevant Head of House.
3. For academic concerns in the first instance parents are asked to contact the classroom teacher and cc the Head of House and relevant Head of Faculty.
4. Parents requesting a meeting with a Head of School will routinely be asked if the student's Head of House has been alerted to an issue as part of protocol. We do understand that occasionally, complexity or sensitivity of an issue may require a parent to take an issue directly to a Head of School.
5. If a staff member is emailing a parent regarding a student's progress, they will cc in the relevant Head of House.
6. Reports of Concern are provided by subject teachers to Heads of House where behaviour, academic performance or a concern about a child warrants this, who will discuss with the student concerned and if, in their professional judgement, warrants parent involvement, parents will be notified.
7. All matters are treated on an individual basis and group concerns on behalf of other students or parents are not condoned as an appropriate way to progress a conversation about a child's progress in their learning or wellbeing.
8. Some matters are best dealt with face to face and emailing to organise a meeting is considered appropriate. If parents have a genuine and logical concern about their child and you believe it is important for the school to know because it is impacting on their wellbeing and performance, then we ask that communication with the College occurs sooner rather than later.

Communication Protocols for Mitcham Campus (P-6)

1. For matters regarding your child's general progress or information, parents/caregivers are asked to contact the Homegroup teacher from Prep through to Year 6.
 - For a boarding student, if the matter involves the boarding context, the relevant Head of Boarding should be contacted.
 - For matters regarding a child's involvement in the Specialist program (Music, Choir, Chinese, French, PE, Art, Performance Arts etc.), parents/caregivers are asked to contact the relevant teacher directly.
 - For matters regarding a child's involvement in our Learning Strategies programs (supplementary program enrichment or support), parents/caregivers are asked to contact Kerry Kaesler.
2. If you feel that more serious matters haven't been resolved by the Home Group teacher, parents are asked to contact the Deputy Head of Mitcham Campus (pastoral matters) or Teaching and Learning Coach (academic matters) who may direct you to the Head of Mitcham Campus.
3. Parents requesting a meeting with a Head of School will routinely be asked if the student's Home Group teacher has been alerted to an issue as part of protocol. We do understand that occasionally, complexity or sensitivity of an issue may require a parent to take an issue directly to a Head of School.
4. All matters are treated on an individual basis and group concerns on behalf of other students or parents are not condoned as an appropriate way to progress a conversation about a child's progress in their learning or wellbeing.
5. If a matter would require more than a couple of sentences of written correspondence, it is considered most appropriate for parents and staff to organise a meeting by email or to speak by phone.
6. If parents have a genuine and logical concern about their child and you believe it is important for the school to know because it is impacting on their wellbeing and performance, then we ask that communication with the College occurs sooner rather than later.