

School Communication Policy

Effective Date: 03/09/2024

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy is aimed at fostering a strong partnership between the school, parents, and students to support student success. It establishes clear guidelines for effective, respectful, and efficient communication within SKT Riverside Campus. It applies to all staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders involved with the school community to ensure transparency, clarity, and a supportive educational environment.

2. Communication Channels

Email: Official school email accounts must be used for all major school-related communications to ensure professionalism and consistency.

Viber Groups for Each Class: Viber, a popular and easily accessible phone app, is used by the school to communicate urgent news and reminders to staff and parents.

School App - SIS: The SIS school app is utilized for tracking attendance, assessments, behavioral records, and school reports. It serves as a centralized hub for student progress monitoring.

Apps for Homework:

- **Google Classrooms:** Used in Secondary School to encourage students to manage their homework independently.
- **Class Dojo:** Utilized in Primary School to manage homework, with parent involvement encouraged. Homework for primary students is designed to foster independence, with deadlines set for one week.

Social Media: Official school social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Viber, Telegram) will be used to share highlights, achievements, and general updates.

Meetings and Conferences: Face-to-face communication will be facilitated through scheduled parent-teacher conferences, student-led conferences, staff meetings, student assemblies, and special events. These interactions are vital for constant updates and relationship building.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

School Administration: Responsible for the overall communication strategy, dissemination of major announcements, and policy implementation. Ensures alignment with the school's mission and values.

Homeroom teachers: play a vital role in establishing a positive working relationship among the school, students, and parents. They act as primary advisors, guiding students' educational, social, and emotional development while fostering a classroom environment based on mutual trust, respect, and understanding. Homeroom teachers are the first point of contact for parents or students with concerns regarding school-related processes.

Teachers: Communicate with students and parents regarding academic progress, class activities, behavioral expectations, and any concerns related to their subject. They foster an open line of communication for feedback and support.

Student Council: Acts as a liaison between students and the school administration. They encourage students to suggest ways to improve the school, propose the best projects to the administration, and manage student-led activities.

Students: Expected to communicate respectfully with peers, teachers, and staff, and report any issues affecting their learning environment.

Parents/Guardians: Encouraged to communicate regularly with teachers about their child's progress, participate in school activities, and stay informed through designated channels.

4. Communication Protocols

Response Times:

- Emails from parents and students should be acknowledged within 24 hours during school days.
- To respect personal time, messages via Viber and other SKT Communication Tools should be sent before 19:00 and only from Monday to Saturday, unless the matter is urgent.
- Urgent matters (e.g., emergencies, and significant behavioral issues) should be addressed immediately through direct communication channels (phone calls, Viber, and other school communication apps).
- Non-urgent issues should be addressed within 3 school days.

Meeting Requests:

- Meetings with teachers or administrators should be scheduled at least 3 days in advance. Emergency meetings can be requested through the school office.
- If administrators are unavailable for emergency meetings, contact the school's deputy or assistant principal. If neither is available, the school office will coordinate with a designated senior staff member to address the issue as quickly as possible.
- Teachers should only attend meetings with parents during their vacant times, not during class hours. They must be present in their classes to ensure that lesson time is not disrupted.
- Teachers should provide available times for meetings and respect parents' schedules as much as possible.

Addressing concerns and complaints:

Concern: is an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurance is given. It can be dealt with relatively informally. It can be a conversation between the parent or carer of the people involved and the member of staff they feel the concern is around and or somebody they trust within a school community to raise that concern informally.

Complaint: is an expression or statement of dissatisfaction about actions taken or lack of actions taken. The difference between a concern and a complaint is that the complaint follows a more formal process. The formal process must begin when a complaint is put in writing to the Vice Principal or another staff with an appropriate level of seniority (School Principal, related School Committees). The investigation will then take place, evidence will be gathered, witness statements will be gathered, and then there will be an attempt to resolve the issue.

5. Confidentiality and Privacy

Student Information:

- All communication involving sensitive student information must be handled confidentially and in compliance with data protection regulations.
- Complaints involving students, staff, or parents must be documented in writing and securely stored in a designated location.

Parent Inquiries:

- Personal inquiries and discussions regarding individual students should be conducted in private to maintain confidentiality and protect personal information.

6. Language and Tone

All communication should adhere to the following principles:

- **Respectful:** Treat all parties with respect, regardless of the issue being addressed.
- **Clear:** Provide concise, clear, and accurate information to avoid misunderstandings.
- **Professional:** Maintain a professional tone in all school-related communication, reflecting the school's values and standards.

7. Emergency Communication

- **Urgent Announcements:** The school will utilize multiple channels (SMS, email, school app, and social media) to ensure rapid dissemination of urgent information, such as school closures or safety alerts.
- **Emergency Contacts:** Updated emergency contact lists for all students and staff must be maintained and readily accessible.

8. Feedback Mechanisms

- **Surveys:** Conduct periodic surveys to gather feedback from parents, students, and staff on communication effectiveness and areas for improvement.
- **Suggestion Box:** Provide a physical and/or digital suggestion box for anonymous feedback from all stakeholders.
- **Meetings with School Leadership Team:** Organize regular informal meetings where parents can meet with the School Leadership Team. These sessions are aimed to discuss the school's strategy, enabling direct feedback, sharing of ideas, and fostering a stronger school-community relationship in a relaxed setting.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The effectiveness of this communication policy will be reviewed annually. Adjustments will be made based on collected feedback, identified needs, and evolving best communication practices.

10. Training and Awareness

- **Staff Training:** All staff will receive comprehensive training on this policy during orientation and regular refresher sessions. Training will cover effective communication techniques, confidentiality, and appropriate use of communication channels.
- **Stakeholder Awareness:** Parents and students will be informed about this policy at the beginning of each school year through the school's welcome package, or initial parent-teacher meetings.