

Policy Title: Dubai Schools Communication Policy

1 Rationale:

At Dubai Schools we strive for a strong and positive sense of school community where staff, parents and students feel they belong. We believe that good communication between the school and the home is essential. Students achieve more when schools and parents work together. Parents can help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve, and how they can help. This provides a strong foundation upon which to deliver the best possible learning outcomes for our children.

2 Aims:

To ensure that Dubai Schools are thriving, successful school, we must communicate effectively with each other, with our students, with their parents and with other members of the wider community. We aim for communication between all members of the school community to be open, clear, professional, timely and appropriate. Effective communication enables us to share our aims and values through keeping parents well informed about school life. This reinforces the importance of the role that parents play in supporting the schools in educating their children.

3 Policy Statement: Principles:

- Communicating with stakeholders, particularly parents, is a core part of what we do, not an afterthought.
- We will always try to share as much information as possible about any issue.
- If we cannot share information we will explain why.
- We will endeavor to work as transparently as possible by offering clear explanations for major decisions.
- We will communicate in a timely fashion within agreed time-frames and try to avoid parents receiving information about the school from other sources first.
- We will use methods of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience, this includes communication in both English and Arabic.
- We will communicate in a voice which is courteous, jargon free and warm.
- We maintain an environment where people feel their views are valued and respected and where they feel they have been heard.
- Where information relating to the school is available in the public domain, we will direct people to it.
- We acknowledge that some information is of a confidential nature and will always respect that confidentiality.
- We will do our best to communicate with all sectors of the school community.

Communication strategies:

We recognize that the establishment of effective school-home communication has grown more complex as society has changed. This means that it is not possible to rely on a single method of communication that will reach all homes with a given message. It is essential that a variety of strategies are used and adapted to the needs of particular families and their schedules. We also strive to send Arabic and English versions where possible to meet the needs of our community. This includes:

- SMS alerts
- Important notifications on School Voice
- Weekly newsletter on learning for the next week sent every Thursday
- Parent newsletters, Flyers and notices
- Regular 'open house' events
- Curriculum workshops
- Regular 3-way child/parent/teacher conferences
- Parent drop-ins
- Coffee Mornings with leadership team
- Personalized phone calls
- Hotlines including a Homework hotline
- Communications that are focused on fathers as well as mothers
- Notes in student diaries
- Post cards/notes home
- Digital communication via Seesaw/Class Dojo
- Online meetings via Teams, Zoom for new parents who may not yet be connected to Teams)

Each school has a range of staff who will facilitate effective communication between home and school.

Communication Commitments:

- Email: Staff will endeavor to respond to emails usually within 24, but during exceptionally busy periods, this may take 48 hours. Teachers are not permitted to answer emails during teaching time.
- Telephone Calls: Telephone messages for staff should come through the main Reception and will be passed on the day they are received. Office staff should not interrupt teaching for staff to answer a telephone call. Staff will endeavor to call back within 24 hours. Staff are not permitted to use their own mobile phone to call parents.
- Letters: Staff will respond to parents' letters within 48 hours (2 school days). Any letter of complaint must be referred to the Principal immediately and will follow the Complaints Procedures. Formal letters to parents

must be approved by a Senior Leader before they are sent.

- Seesaw/Class Dojo: Teachers will respond to comments from parents regarding a piece of child's work within 24 hours of when the work was due to be submitted
- Social Networking Sites: Designated Administrative staff are the only staff members permitted to communicate via social networking. Teachers are not permitted to communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites or accept them as "friends".
- Student diaries/planners/work: Teachers or designated learning assistants will endeavor to read diaries daily. Short comments will be made as appropriate but for longer messages, a telephone call will be made or an email will be sent.
- Meetings with staff: Staff will always try to be available for short 'chats' at the start and end of the day and will be as flexible as possible in accommodating urgent requests for meetings either face to face or online. For longer meetings, more often than not, it is best to make an appointment. Appointments can be made through the main Reception.

4 Roles and Responsibilities:

Senior leadership will:

- Ensure information is made available to staff and parents in a timely manner and via appropriate channels, where practicable face to face
- Ensure that staff have the relevant information available to communicate with colleagues, parents and students effectively
- Make themselves available for open channels of two-way communication and to listen to feedback and comments
- Keep all stakeholders informed of developments and concerns.

All staff will:

- Communicate regularly with each other, preferably face to face, to ensure information is available and understood within the context of the classroom and working environment.
- Ensure they keep themselves informed of information in order to be as effective as possible in their role and to support their work within the school.
- Make themselves available for open channels of two-way communication in order to keep parents, students and colleagues informed.

Parent are asked to:

- Inform the school if contact details change
- Maintain frequent, positive communication with the school
- Communicate with the school the reason for a child's absence on the first day of the absence
- Raise any questions with the class teacher before making an appointment to see a member of the Leadership Team
- Raise questions or concerns as quickly as possible to avoid unnecessary confusion or anxiety
- Maintain confidentiality by avoiding discussing concerns with other parents, particularly if it involves other children
- Refrain from naming teachers or children on social networking sites

5 Applicable to:

All staff and parents

6 Related Documents:

Complaints Procedures

7 Implementation Date: August 2021

Review Date: As necessary