PURPOSE

It is essential that staff members of the school communicate information in agreement with established protocols so as to preserve the professionalism of the school, to protect the rights of individuals, to uphold our duty of care to students and the comply with departmental and legal requirements.

GUIDELINES

To ensure that the communication of information is carried out correctly and in a manner that complies with school, departmental and legal requirements.

School partnerships acknowledge that the learning, development, health and wellbeing of children and young people are the collective responsibilities of families, community and Government. All families and schools want the best for children and young people.

Regardless of barriers to success, all children and young people have the right to the opportunity to reach their full potential. Sometimes this requires additional or more flexible development and learning opportunities and support.

Partnerships with families, community organisations, businesses, local government or other education providers offer a possible solution to improve the outcomes for students.

An effective education partnership provides opportunities to achieve improved learning, enhance engagement, wellbeing and development and contribute to successful transitions and pathways for children and young people. It is a mutually beneficial relationship that achieves outcomes that extend beyond what organisations can achieve in isolation.

The school has many protocols for contributions to be made to the educational outcomes for all students and to open authentic communication lines for the development of a quality teaching and learning environment.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our school has a policy of open and cooperative communication.

This practice recognises that staff members have legal, departmental, local, professional and social obligations with regards the communication of information. Department of Education employees are free to make public comment on issues relating to education, but in doing so, must be wary not to make comments that can be construed as negative criticism of our school, School Council, our community, staff or community members.

Action may be taken by individuals, the department or organisations against staff members who choose to communicate information improperly.

We will provide annually, two written reports and two parent-teacher interviews for students, additional interviews upon agreement and a community report.

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As a matter of professional courtesy and as a requirement of Section 3.6 of the Teaching Services (Conduct of Duties) Order 1998, staff will communicate with the principal before making public
comment or formal statement on educational issues or that bears on the organisation or program of the school or place of work. The principal and School Council President will ensure that each other is informed.

The Information Privacy Act and the Health Records Act 2001 require that schools protect the interests of individuals with regard to their personal information and respect the individual's right to control how their personal information is used and for what purposes.

The school will only collect consensual information that it requires about individuals, and will only communicate and disclose information for the purposes for which it was collected.

Any person seeking information from the school that falls outside the school’s previous practices must be directed to the principal who may require that a formal written Freedom of Information request be made. The principal will inform School Council of any such requests.

All such Freedom of Information requests will be referred to the Department of Education’s Freedom of Information Unit.

Information sought by police, including interviews of students must be directed to the principal.

Requests from Department of Human Services personnel regarding students or families will be complied with at all times.

The school will comply with court subpoenas to provide information at all times but will not respond to requests from lawyers seeking information without Education Department approval (Legal Branch)

**EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle or earlier as required.

**Reference:**