

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

Brunswick South Primary School

Policy Implementation Date: November 2014	Review Date – October 2018	Responsible for Review Education and Policy Subcommittee
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Rationale:

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 to comply with departmental and legal requirements.

Furthermore, it is recognised that additional members of the school community communicate externally on behalf of the school, particularly for fundraising and marketing purposes. The school aims to encourage this positive communication while ensuring it also preserves the qualities, rights and duties described above.

Any communication officially branded as Brunswick South Primary School requires formal sign off from the principal or assistant principal.

Aims:

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

Implementation:

- Our school has a policy of open and cooperative communication.

Staff:

- 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.
- 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 are informed.

Privacy:

- The Information Privacy Act and the Health Records Act 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 purpose.
- 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.
- 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 child protection unit 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.
- Action may be taken by individuals, the department or organisations against staff members who choose to communicate information improperly.

Student reporting:

- We will provide a minimum of two written reports, two parent-teacher interviews for students, additional interviews upon agreement, a multimedia digital portfolio and a community report for each student annually.

Marketing and Media:

- Also refer to the Social Media Policy
- Communications developed for the purposes of marketing and promotion and using the school branding must be signed off by the principal or assistant principal, including website updates, brochures, fliers, newsletters, media releases, invitations,
- Any media enquires are to be directed to the principal

Fundraising:

- Communications developed for the purposes of marketing fundraising and using the school branding must be reviewed by the Fundraising Committee and signed off by the principal or assistant principal.

Evaluation:

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

Alignment with related school policies

- Social media policy
- Fundraising and Community Events policy
- Student Engagement policy
- Volunteers policy

Ratification and Implementation

Upon ratification by School Council of this policy, it will be distributed via the newsletter and made available on the BPS website for the whole school community. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or earlier as required.