

2019

COMMUNICATION POLICY

AL NOORI MUSLIM SCHOOL

KNOWLEDGE IS
LIGHT

GOOD DEEDS
ARE PIETY



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MUSLIM SCHOOL

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Mandatory Compliance

Manual Reference 3.6.2

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1.0 Policy Statement

Open and effective communication is essential to the health and wellbeing of the School community and for the growth and success of Al Noori Muslim School. Effective communication encompasses the exchange of ideas, where people feel they have been heard and their opinions valued, and where information is clear and accurate.

At Al Noori Muslim school, all communication is timely, relevant, accurate, well targeted, well delivered, clear and concise, open and honest. The school actively promotes the Islamic faith. This is achieved through a commitment to the Islamic teachings and its application to relationships. All relationships within the School should be characterised by courtesy, respect and understanding. This should also be evident in all our dealings with the broader community.

This policy's implementation enhances the quality of Al Noori Muslim School community through:

- providing a framework for effective communication
- promoting understanding and cooperation of the whole School community
- promoting active participation of the whole School community
- contributing to the improved learning outcomes for students
- promoting the principles of effective communication among the whole School community
- providing additional guidance for staff communicating with parents/caregivers about academic, pastoral and discipline issues

In terms of Al Noori Muslim School's Strategic Plan, the policy is targeting the priority area 'Strong and Productive Partnerships'. Effective communication with parents/caregivers and students will enhance academic excellence and the holistic development of each child. It is an identified area in which Al Noori Muslim School will strive to achieve best teaching and workplace excellence.

This policy also provides support for NESA Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Standard 7 – Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community. Every staff member at Al Noori Muslim School strives to:

- communicate effectively with their students, colleagues, parents/caregivers and community members using school procedures to promote students' learning and wellbeing
- establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/caregivers regarding their children's learning and wellbeing
- behave professionally and ethically in all forums
- initiate opportunities for parents/caregivers to be involved either at school or at home in student learning where possible and appropriate

2.0 Rationale

What happens at Al Noori Muslim School and the relationship between home and school is critical in ensuring that:

- students are happy, safe and supported in their learning
- staff are valued, informed and high performing, and
- our school community are supported and engaged

3.0 Key Stakeholders and Communication

The Principal is responsible for managing all school communication (including delegation of communication management). All staff will comply with any directive given by the Principal regarding school communication.

The School Board of Directors communicates with the school community on strategic direction, overall school performance and school satisfaction.

The School Board of Directors communications are limited to School Board business. The Chairman will be in regular contact with the Principal regarding School Board activities. School Board communications with the school community will, at a minimum, be through the Strategic School Plan and Annual Reports.

The School Board will communicate, as needed, to ensure that its role and activities are understood by the school community.

Internal stakeholders	External Stakeholders	
	Local	Broad
Parents/caregivers and families of students	Bankstown/Canterbury Council	NSW Federal and State Government Departments
Staff (teaching and non-teaching)	Neighbouring schools (government and private)	Relevant politicians and community leaders
School Board of Directors	Local Businesses	Education providers (incursion, excursion, sporting groups, etc.)
Prospective Families	Neighbours	Wider Community and Business
Prospective Staff	Users of school facilities	Tertiary institutions
	Childcare providers	Media

4.0 Mechanisms for School Communication

4.1 School Website

The School Website (www.alnoori.nsw.edu.au) provides information about the School, and it's programs and achievements. It also provides links to school policies and procedures which might assist the academic, emotional and social needs of the school community. The School Website also contains a copy of the current year's Annual Report which is forwarded to NESAs in June of every year.

4.2 Social Media

We use our Facebook page and Twitter to publish quick notes, news items, reminders or invitations to public events. Follow us at: facebook@alnoori.nsw.edu.au

Catch our latest tweets at <https://twitter.com/NooriSchool>

4.3 Noticeboards, Electronic Noticeboards & Public Address System (PA)

Noticeboards are located around the school and are used to notify School and community news and information, and to recognise and display student work samples and achievements. The noticeboards also communicate the weekly message of the schools Moral Education Program. The PA system is used to alert parents and visitors of an emergency or lockdown.

4.4 School Newsletter

The School Newsletter is a published document that communicates key events, policies, ideas and achievements to the School community. A printed copy of the School Newsletter is sent home with students and is also published on the School Website.

4.5 School Information Booklets

The School Information Booklets are provided at Parent Information Sessions.

4.6 Parent Information Sessions, meetings, forums and workshops

Parent Information Sessions, meetings and workshops provide ongoing opportunities for parents/caregivers to be involved in and informed of School activities. Every year during Term One, parents with children in Year 1 to Year 10 are invited to attend a Parent Information Session.

Parents with children in Kindergarten are invited to attend an Orientation Session. Parent forums are held to receive parental feedback on issues related to School life.

4.7 Parent/Teacher Interviews and Academic Reports

A formal, comprehensive report of students' academic progress, achievements, social development and work habits is provided to parents every term. Parents/caregivers are also invited to participate in Parent/Teacher interviews which focus on their child's progress, strengths and areas for future development. Students are encouraged to participate in the interview process.

4.8 Student Leadership Team and Student Representative Council (SRC)

Student Leadership Team and SRC meetings are held to communicate with students the activities within and outside of the school that may enhance the School's vision. It also allows for students to make positive contributions to the school community.

4.9 Student Assemblies

Student Assemblies are held to recognise and share achievement and information with students and parents. Assemblies are held every morning.

4.10 Staff and Executive Meetings

Staff meetings are held to provide information, raise issues, plan and discuss school management, activities and programs. All teaching staff are expected to attend the meetings. Executive meetings are held to ensure whole school cohesion, planning and management.

4.11 Stakeholder Surveys

Stakeholder surveys are conducted on an annual basis to survey sections of the School community and to provide opportunity for parties concerned to offer feedback with anonymity.

4.12 Sentral

The Sentral system is used by all staff to access information, notices and school policies.

4.13 SMS

SMS is used to notify parents/caregivers when students are absent without explanation from morning roll call. Parents/caregivers need to ensure that the most up to date mobile phone number is recorded at the school. Contact details can be updated at the Administration Office.

4.14 Email

Email is used at times to send messages home. Parents/caregivers need to ensure that the most up to date email address is recorded at the school. Contact details can be updated at the Administration Office.

5.0 School Communication Procedures

5.1 Parents communicating with classroom teachers or school staff

Parents/caregivers should keep the relevant classroom teacher informed of anything that may impact on the child's emotional wellbeing at school as our class teachers are open and receptive to contact regarding matters of concern. Teachers are available to meet with parents/caregivers by appointment only in the morning before 8.20 am and in the afternoon after 3.45 pm. Parents/caregivers who would like to contact school staff about a matter related to the school should ring 8774 3000. A minimum of two days' notice is required. Appointments will not be scheduled during class instruction time due to the teacher's obligations and duty of care to students. If the matter is urgent, contact is sent to the Welfare Coordinators or Deputy Principal.

If the matter is related to curriculum or class matters, then the request is sent to the classroom teacher. If the classroom teacher is not available and the matter is urgent, contact will be made with the relevant Head of Department.

If the matter is related to a welfare issue, the Welfare Coordinators will be contacted. If they are not available and the matter is urgent, the Deputy Principal or the School Counsellor will be contacted.

Alternatively, a parent could email the staff member direct via the school's email system.

Any parent wishing to discuss concerns with the Principal or Deputy Principal regarding their child's teacher will in most cases need to have addressed the concerns with the teacher first.

When parents have a concern or wish to discuss an issue relating to a member of staff or of a sensitive nature, they should make an appointment with the Principal by contacting the Administration Office, either by phone or coming to the office personally, and asking the Administration staff to arrange a suitable meeting time.

In all cases if the matter is urgent and/or relates to the possible risk or harm to a student, a member of staff or another member of the school community, the Principal should be informed immediately and the urgency of the matter conveyed. The Principal will determine who is the most appropriate person to deal with the issue and the process to work towards a resolution.

5.2 Responding to and following up parents/caregivers enquiries

Where a parent/caregiver has contacted a staff member by phone or personal interview, notes should be taken and all aspects of the conversation should be clarified to the satisfaction of all parties. When the contact is by email or if the staff member was not available to take the initial phone call, the parent/caregiver is responded to as soon as possible from the initial contact. Where some action is agreed on following a meeting or communication, a time-frame should be established to either review progress or resolve the issue.

5.3 Staff communicating with parents/caregivers

Parents/caregivers should be well informed about the academic progress and pastoral wellbeing of their child. The school has many formal and informal communication mechanisms in place. The following information provides guidance for staff when communicating with parents about academic, wellbeing and discipline issues outside the more formal mechanisms, such as Parent/Teacher interviews.

In all dealings with parents/caregivers, communication is professional and open. All staff communicate with empathy, understanding and respect for students and their parents/caregivers.

5.3.1 Academic communication

This section relates to communication with parents/caregivers about academic progress of a student. Regular communication with parents/caregivers will build relationships and generate trust, which will enhance communications when there are more difficult issues to deal with.

- Academic issues in Years K-6, such as missed homework or assignments appropriately begin with a note to parents. Teachers communicate with parents' positive work habits, academic progress or improvements in attitude or effort by a student.
- Academic issues or failure to submit formal assessment tasks in Years 7 - 10 will result in discussions with the student and contact with the parents/caregivers. If the contact is made by the class teacher, it must be discussed with the Head of Department. A copy of any letter issued will be added to the student's file.
- Academic issues and failure to submit formal assessment tasks in Years 11 - 12 will result in interviews with the class teacher and the Head of Department. A meeting with the student is conducted to explain that parents/caregivers will be contacted and a NESA Warning Letter will be sent. A copy of the letters will be added to the student's file. Failure to submit a Formal assessment task ON TIME will be treated similarly, with the exception that the NESA warning letter home will not be necessary.

5.3.2 Pastoral and/or discipline Issues communication

This section relates to communication by staff with parents/caregivers about pastoral issues and ongoing or serious discipline issues of a student. Early and regular communication with parents/caregivers will build relationships and generate trust, which will enhance communications when there are more difficult issues

to deal with. The School will create opportunities for parents/caregivers to meet with or have contact from key staff, particularly when families are new to the school.

For less serious one-off classroom discipline issues, the classroom teacher would apply normal classroom management strategies. Parents/caregivers may be contacted depending on the issue.

Where a classroom teacher or Head of Department has concerns regarding ongoing / serious classroom discipline issues relating to a student, parents/caregivers will be contacted as soon as possible. Notes will be made of any phone contact or face to face interviews and entered on to the Sentral Wellbeing system. A formal warning letter will be sent by the Welfare Coordinator. In cases where serious sanctions need to be applied, such as a suspension or expulsion, then the matter is referred to the Principal. The initial contact with the parents/caregivers will be a phone call, followed by an interview and formal letter sent by the Principal.

For pastoral issues where there may be concern for the welfare of a student, the matter will initially be referred to the Welfare Coordinator. The decision to contact parents/caregivers would be taken following investigations and consultation with the Deputy Principal and School Counsellor. When the pastoral issue is “reportable”, the matter must be reported directly to the Principal. Decisions to contact parents/caregivers would be based on the procedures outlined in the Child Protection Policy.

5.4 School communication with parents/caregivers, members of the school community and the wider community about financial, logistic and/or administrative matters.

All communication with the Media is directly controlled by the Principal.

Brochures, publications, official letters and electronic communication with the wider school community should all conform to the School’s guidelines and contain the school logo.

Should a staff member be directly approached by telephone, email or in person to answer specific factual questions on financial, logistic and/or administrative matters then they should be open, frank and professional in relaying information that has been published by the school and is in the public domain. Should extra details or factual information be required, the staff member should refer the enquiry on to the Principal. Matters of a private or sensitive nature regarding your work or the work of others and questions inviting you to offer judgements or personal views should not be discussed. If questions are not factual but enquire into the area of policy and procedures, reasons or rationale for policies and procedures staff should courteously explain that a member of the Executive would be better equipped to answer the query and refer it on as outlined above.

5.5 Staff to staff communication in the workplace

Communication with colleagues should be conducted in a professional and courteous manner. All forms of communication with colleagues should reflect an understanding, empathy and respect for individual circumstances, differences and needs. Confidentiality and privacy are to be respected and maintained at all times. If staff are uncomfortable or are concerned about matters that have been communicated, implied or suggested, and do not conform to this policy in fact or spirit, they should refer the matter to the Deputy Principal or Principal.

6.0 Complaints and Grievances

From time to time parents/caregivers may encounter difficulties or concerns. When this occurs, parents/caregivers are encouraged to endeavour to resolve the issue informally, initially with the classroom teacher or staff member. It often helps to seek information or an explanation about the concern, or to speak directly to the person involved.

Al Noori Muslim School will deal with all concerns, complaints and issues sensitively, promptly and confidentially. Matters will be investigated and dealt with in a timely manner.

In working through any issues, a resolution which treats all parties with dignity and respect will be sought. Issues and matters which have been raised will be kept in the strictest of confidence and not discussed with any other persons, except those directly involved.

Anonymous complaints will be investigated at a preliminary stage for the purpose of identifying if there is any substance to the complaints. In the absence of clear evidence, anonymous complaints may not be further acted upon.

Contact should be made with the Principal or a Deputy Principal if assistance is required in clarifying an issue of concern or for the making of a formal complaint.

Resolving matters of concern are best achieved through face-to-face contact with the appropriate person. Emails and letters identifying the existence of a complaint and the need for face-to-face contact should be brief (i.e. merely alerting the person to the issue).

Formal meetings will initially be facilitated by the Principal or Deputy Principal, with a view to achieving the resolution of the complaint in an expeditious, equitable and courteous manner. Depending on the circumstances this may involve separate meetings with relevant persons, conciliation or mediation meetings involving relevant parties, or some other format. Formal meetings will be minuted. The principal will refer the final report to the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Where a complaint is resolved, other than at a formal meeting, the resolution of the complaint will be documented and relevant persons informed in writing.

In some cases, where the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation process or resolution, a written statement of the complaint and grievance outlining the reason for their dissatisfaction with the investigative processes and resolution can be sent to the Board of Directors Chairman.

Any correspondence received by Al Noori Muslim School or created in response to the complaint will be kept in a secure, access restricted and confidential file.

7.0 Modes of Communication Summary

Staff to Staff communication

- Staff Meetings are scheduled as per school calendar. It is compulsory for all teaching staff to attend staff meetings. At staff meetings whole school matters are raised such as reporting, curriculum, etc.

- Weekly Outline is distributed weekly and has been found to be a highly successful and effective method of ongoing communication with ALL Staff. It includes:
 - reminders to all staff of planned term events, excursions, upcoming events, scheduled meeting times, etc.
 - professional development for staff with current readings and articles
 - reports by committee leaders outlining current project details and other pertinent information
 - administrative due dates and other matters
- Staff Professional Development sessions take place every term during staff meetings and on pupil free days. Consultants are usually booked in advance to engage staff in various professional development activities relating to curriculum, compliance and pedagogy
- Head of Department KLA Meetings take place fortnightly or whenever necessary. The meetings are chaired by Head of Department Coordinators
- Grade Meetings are held as per school calendar and are chaired by the Grade Coordinators
- Emails, Memos, Letters, Phone calls are utilised to communicate relevant information with specific staff or staff groups
- School Policies and Procedures are centrally located in the main staffroom and library. The policies are also digitally stored in Sentral under <Documents> and are available for download on the school website. These documents are the foundations and fundamental mandated framework of the school's organisation and expectations. Grade Coordinators also have access to all policies and procedures

Staff to Student communication

- Morning Assemblies include announcements by Principal, executives and teachers
- Daily Announcement Reminders involve reinforcement/clarification of announcements by teachers
- Posters on School Notice Boards located in various areas around the school
- Newsletters issued to students
- Training programs
- Teaching/Learning experiences
- Teacher direct communication with student via written feedback and the Weekly Homework outline

Teachers to parents/caregivers and families

- Emails
- Face to Face Interviews
- Parent/Teacher evening
- Parents/caregivers Information sessions – annually at beginning of Term 1
- Notes and Permission Slips
- Website
- Reports – end of every term
- School Newsletter
- School Notice Boards

Parents/caregivers to School

- Emails to classroom teacher / front office
- Phone call to front office. Classroom teachers will be informed of parent / guardian phone calls unless it is inappropriate to do so
- Informal and formal scheduled face to face meetings. Parents / guardians are encouraged to contact and discuss class related issues with the classroom teacher in the first instance

- SMS, written notes, verbal, phone calls for absenteeism notification

School to School / Local / Broader Community

- School's Strategic Plan
- Annual Report
- School Information Booklet
- Website
- Letters, Newsletters and Emails to local community from Principal and School Board Chairman
- Surveys

8.0 Related policies

- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Whole School Discipline Policy and Procedures
- Assessment Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedures