
THE PATCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Communication

Rationale:

It is essential that staff members of the school communicate information in accordance 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.

Aims:

To ensure that the communication of information is carried out correctly and in a manner that complies with school, departmental and legal requirements. The policies and process of The Patch PS guide and describe the main processes, functions and operations of the school. The development and review of policies is part of an agreed process to ensure that key stakeholders are part of the consultation and review process.

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.
- 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.
- 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 DHHS 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.
- We will provide two written semester reports annually, two parent-teacher interviews for students, additional interviews upon agreement, for each student annually.
- *A school Annual report will presented to School Council and the school community annually inline with DET requirements*

The school communicates its policies and procedures via the following platforms which allows the school to receive parent feedback on policy content and approved policies are then published on the school website.

School Information Handbook

School website

Newsletters

Staff Operations Manual

- The policies describe the rationale, aims and implementations of the operations and directions of the school as a whole.
- The process of considering school policies will be managed by the principal and will be a continuous cycle, and will use a transparent and consultative process.
- New policies will be added and modified to reflect the growth and evolution of the new school and new programs.
- All policies will use the school policy layout, meet legislative and compliance requirements, and have a designated review period
- When developing a new policy, the principal will consult with appropriate personnel in order to draft the initial policy statement. The draft policy may be circulated for comment to the appropriate committee/s, to staff members, to parents, to students before ratification by School Council.
- Policies will be developed taking into account DET policies, memos and circulars relating to a particular policy area.
- A database of policies and a review schedule to provide a timeline for reviews either annually or on a five-year basis is to be maintained.
- When reviewing an existing school policy as per the five-year review cycle, the principal will consult with staff and the appropriate Committee/s, and to School Council for ratification.
- Changes as a result of policy developments and / or reviews will be widely advised to students, staff and parents.
- Staff will be given opportunity to provide input into the policy development or review process.
- The focus of all school policies must remain the needs of students and school operations.
- Any concerns relating to the structure of the school should be directed to the principal or School Council president.
- Relevant policies will also be loaded onto the intranet and school website for community observation and comment

Evaluation:

- This policy was originally formed, and will be reviewed in consultation with all members of the wider community (all staff, parents, students, and interested members of the community) as part of the school's five - year review cycle.

References:

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>

Principal



School Council President



Communication Procedures and Schedule for Members of the School Community						
Policy	Staff	Students	Parents	General Community	Policy Date	Review
Excursion, Incursion and Camping Policies & procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief in 1st PL days Staff manual Policy manual Intranet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	March 2012	Reviewed March 2016
Yard Duty / Supervision Policy Duty of Care Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief in 1st PL days Staff manual Policy manual Intranet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	March 2012	Reviewed March 2016
Student Engagement & Attendance Policy Student Welfare Policy Student Management Policy Mandatory Reporting Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief in 1st PL days Staff manual Policy manual Intranet Student engagement workshops – staff meetings Restorative Practices Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student diary (School engagement, attendance and student welfare services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request School website Information Guide (in enrolment pack) Parent Information Night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	All 2010 & 2012 part of annual Wellbeing Review	Reviewed June 2016
Computer & Internet Usage Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief in 1st PL days Staff manual Policy manual Intranet E-learning mtg at start of each year Wednesday PD sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student diary Enrolment pack ICT Student Leaders Assemblies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request School website Enrolment Pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	July 2015 (reviewed/updated yearly)	Reviewed September 2016
Anaphylaxis Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff manual Policy manual Intranet Meeting at start of each semester to review policy and anaphylactic children Twice Yearly mandated training program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual meetings with students and parents of anaphylactic children Classroom discussion re food handling issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request School website Parent Information Night Enrolment Information Individual parent meetings with anaphylactic children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	May 2007 (updated yearly)	Reviewed October 2016

<p>First Aid Policy (incl. Medication and Asthma)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff manual • Policy manual • Intranet • Meeting at start of year to review each policy & provide medical details of students. • Update first aid qualifications, CPR qualifications & asthma procedures • Mentor group teacher briefings • OH&S and Evacuation Planning cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request • School website • Information Guide (in enrolment pack) • Parent Information Night • Parents sent medical information & asthma plans to update at start of each year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School website 	<p>March 2012 Reviewed March 2016</p>
<p>Harassment Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff manual • Policy manual • Intranet • Review of policy and procedures in 1st 3 days of school • Wellbeing Team review of dealing with issues of harassment • Restorative Practices Training program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Diary • Circle Time • Assemblies • Enrolment pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies mentioned in the newsletter and available on request • School website • Information Guide (in enrolment pack) • Parent Information Night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2012 (part of annual Wellbeing Review) Reviewed May 2016
<p>Home Work Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff manual • Policy manual • Intranet • Reviewed in Domain meetings at start of each year • Curriculum Committee overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Diary • Enrolment pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment Pack • School newsletter • School website • Parent Information Night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2008 Reviewed October 2012 August 2016
<p>Emergency Management & Critical Incident Policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff manual • Policy manual • Intranet • Review of policy and procedures in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation drills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School website 	<p>October 2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2015 – annually as part of compliance process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st 3 days of school Evacuation Drill/Lockdown – once per term 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (or after a critical incident)
Student Dress code Uniform Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Manual Policy manual Intranet Staff meetings/briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Diary Circle Time Assemblies Enrolment pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolment Pack School newsletter School website Information Night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 2014– (council annual review) Reviewed August 2016 	
Sunsmart Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff manual Policy manual Intranet Review of policy and procedures in 1st 3 days of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Diary Enrolment pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolment Pack School newsletter School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 2010 Reviewd July 2016 	
Staff Leave Policy Privacy Policy Professional Learning Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff manual Policy manual Intranet Staff meetings Local Agreement implementation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed annually 	
Parent Complaints and Grievances Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff manual Policy manual Intranet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolment Pack School newsletter School website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School website School Newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Septemebr 2008 Reviewed March-August 2016 	