

## Parent and School Communication Policy

### 1. Scope and Definition

- 1.1. Communication between the school and parents<sup>1</sup> is an essential component of successful school life. It is essential to the effectiveness of the educational work.
- 1.2. An important part of communication between school and parents is the participation by parents in school life, including through the Parent Representative Council (PRC), Class Representatives and Parents Association.
- 1.3. The communication at the German International School Sydney is based on respect and transparency. Objective, proactive, confidential and cooperative behaviour forms the foundation for respectful communication.
- 1.4. This policy applies to all school communications between GISS employees and students and parents.
- 1.5. The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is followed by all teaching and admin employees, seeking change as required.

### 2. School policies and procedures: New student and parent information

- a. Information for students and parents on school policies and procedures has to happen as per the Governance Policy.

### 3. Curriculum and student related communication

- 3.1. During the first parents meeting at the **beginning of the school year**, the class teachers, where possible supported by the respective subject teachers, present the scope and sequence of the curriculum in individual subjects for the class.
  - a. Information on methods and criteria of performance measurement is included.
  - b. All parents are provided with the email addresses of their child's teachers. Teachers aim to check their emails once a day (part time teacher: on their working days at school) and respond to emails within three working days.
  - c. Parents are informed about days when a part time teacher is not working.
- 3.2. **Twice a year** the school holds **Parent/Teacher Interview afternoons**.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The term parents in this policy encompasses carers.

<sup>2</sup> Preschool is not participating in these Interview afternoon but appointments with Preschool Staff can be scheduled at any time individually.

- a. The Parent/Teacher interviews are not a substitute for communication which should occur during the school year particularly, if there are problems or emerging issues.
- b. An electronic link is sent to the parents prior to the event to enable the parent to plan their appointments.
- c. Meeting times are usually limited; therefore where required, parents are encouraged to arrange an alternative time to meet with the teachers.

3.3. **Reporting of student achievement** occurs as per the 'Student Assessment and Reporting of Student Achievement Policy' (please refer to policy)

#### 4. General school community and other communication

- 4.1. The school informs the school community about current activities via the **school newsletter** (Gutenberg Post). It is important that parents read and take note of announcements in the Gutenberg Post.
- 4.2. The **GISS admin team** should be the first point of contact for parents on **non-educational questions**. The 'registrar & parent services' person can be used as first point of contact to direct the requests. For complex questions, appointments are recommended.
- 4.3. Following the order of communication should be the basis for all communication between the school and the parents:
  - a. For all matters **concerning the lessons** the respective **subject teacher** should be contacted; for **general class matters**, the **class teacher** should be contacted.
  - b. Only **after communication with the subject and class teacher should the head of the respective school be contacted** (Pre-School, Primary, Secondary, IB). This communication should be guided/held by the parent representative of the class, if the matter concerns the whole class (who can gather further opinions of other class parents as a basis for the discussion).
  - c. Only where parents and their respective class representatives feel their discussion with the heads of school requires further **escalation, shall the school Principal be contacted**.

## 5. Further Communication and Overview

5.1. Additionally to the key communication means laid out above, GISS aims to provide students and parents with further relevant information. An overview is provided in the following table.

Category	Subject	Purpose	Channel	Frequency /Timing	Responsible
School Community	What's on – News - Dates	To provide real-time information that is relevant to the whole GISS community	Gutenberg Post	Fortnightly	Marketing
			GP on Display Board	Fortnightly	Marketing
	Real time Alerts	Provide real time alerts to parents such as traffic, delays etc.	SMS	When required	Management Reception
	News on school developments	Provide parents with first hand information and the possibility of asking questions about the school's further development	Parent Representative Meetings, Information evening	When required (Invitation 3-4 weeks prior)	Management Principal
			Annual General Meeting	Once per year	Principal in alignment with Board
	Important news	To bring important news to everyone's attention but no real time alert	Email	When required	Principal or Business Manager
General information	Information on curriculum delivery, select policies (Anti Bullying, Code of Conduct)	Website		Marketing	
Class / Students	General information	To provide information on <u>curriculum delivery</u> , class lists to the class parents	Parent Teacher Evenings	Beginning of Semester/ On need bases	Class Teacher (parent rep for class list)
	Curriculum delivery	To inform parents about <u>how parents can assist</u> with the delivery of the curriculum (homework, reading assistance, etc.)	Primary: Email & Elternmappe	On need bases and at start of the year	Subject Teachers
			Secondary: Students	On need bases	
	Class updates	Provide a collective and progressive update on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class activities</li> <li>Teacher or curriculum changes</li> <li>Materials,</li> <li>Special Celebrations</li> </ul>	Preschool: Email	Daily	Class teacher
			Primary: Email / / Students	Approximately every fortnight	
			Secondary: Students	As required	
	Individual progress update	To provide information about a particular child	Email or individual meeting	Immediately when required	Subject teacher, Class teacher
			Parent-teacher-interview	Twice a year (Information: two months in advance)	Coordinate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy Principal,</li> <li>Exec. Assistant</li> </ul> Delivery: all subject teachers
	Important incidents	To inform parents about important incidents if the whole class is affected (accidents, ..)	Email	As required	Class teacher
	A query regarding a class matter	Class concerns or questions to class or subject teacher	Email/Discussion	As required	Parent representative
A parent query about an educational matter	Step 1: Contact child's teacher by appointment		On demand – offer of an appointment within three working days	Parent	
	Step 2: Contact the respective head of school by appointment			Parent (together with parent class representative)	
A parent query about an administrative matter	Step 1: Consult the school handbook		On demand – an appointment will be offered within three working days.	Parent	
	Step 2: Contact the student's teacher by appointment			Parent	
	Step 3: Contact the Business Manager by appointment			Parent	
New Students	Governance	GISS Policies and Procedures	Email, Discussion if needed	With student enrolment	Registrar: new parents Class teacher: new students
	General Information	School Handbook, Welcome Pack	Email, Discussion if needed	With student enrolment	

**Document Management**

Policy name	E-02 Parent and School Communication Policy
Version	1.0
Version history	
School responsible	Principal
Board portfolio	E) Parent and Alumni Relations
Related documents	
Status	Approved on 4 February 2017
Approved by	Erhard Seifert (Principal) and Dr. Ralf Dicke (Director)

The information contained in this document is proprietary to the German International School Sydney. Any distribution or copying without the written consent of the German International School Sydney is prohibited.