



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY FOR MARYFIELD COLLEGE

1. Introduction

Maryfield College, a voluntary secondary school for girls, operates within the free secondary education system. Established in 1945 by the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, the school is currently under the governance of the Le Chéile Trust.

2. Aims of this Policy

This Communications Policy aims to:

- Promote positive, respectful communication between all members of our school community.
- Outline procedures for communication between all members of the school community.
- Outline procedures to ensure the safest possible communication and sharing of information.
- Contribute to effective communication within the school, with the Board of Management, parents, and the local community to maintain a good working, social and personal environment. This will promote efficiency and contribute to achieving the objectives of the school.

3. Policy, Context, Legislation

This policy is informed by and should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- The School's Ethos
- The School's Anti-Bullying Policy
- The School's Code of Behaviour
- The School's Educational Technology Usage Policy for students, staff and families
- The School's Acceptable Use Policy
- The School's Child Protection Policy/ Child Safeguarding Statement
- The School's Data Protection Policy
- The School's Critical Incident Policy
- The School's Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- The School's Complaints Procedure

This policy is written in the context of the following legislation:

- GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Education Act, 1998

The Policy also takes account of the following:

- The Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers
- The Teaching Council's Guidance for Registered Teachers about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication

In this policy, the word "*student*" means a student enrolled in the school and the word "*parent*" means a parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the school.

4. Communication between the School and Parents

Maryfield College is committed to creating and maintaining a positive working environment for its staff. School staff are entitled to be treated with dignity by all members of the school community. Integral to this are their interactions with parents. The following principles will apply in this regard:

- Parents are encouraged to participate in meetings and all interactions with the school in a positive and respectful manner, affirming the professional role of teachers and all staff members in the school;
- Subject Teachers, Class Teachers, Year Tutors, Deputy Principals, and the Principal shall contact parents by phone, letter, email or note in the homework journal whenever such contact is warranted.
- Parents may also be contacted by the school via text with regards to attendance, punctuality and general information.
- Any change in the school calendar shall be notified by letter/email/text.
- Parents and staff will communicate using school channels of communication only such as school journal, vs ware, School phone number, School email.
- Parents are required to furnish a note on Vsware to explain any absence of their children from school.
- Parents shall receive formal progress reports at Christmas and Summer (approx. January and June). Parents of sixth-year and third-year students will receive an additional progress report following the pre-exams.
- All parents are encouraged to attend the annual parent-teacher meetings and other events, such as Parents' Association meetings, Open nights, Information nights, etc.
- All parents should 'check in' at reception upon arrival at the school if attending a pre-arranged meeting.
- Times and duration of meetings should be agreed upon beforehand, and these should be respected and adhered to where possible to avoid disruption to other students/classes. Sometimes, an agreed agenda will be of assistance.
- Should a parent wish to communicate with a teacher, a note may be written in the student journal.
- Should a parent require any support, help or advice regarding their child, they should contact their subject teacher or year head.
- Should there be any concern in relation to their children, and the matter cannot be resolved informally, a parent is entitled to make a complaint through the School's agreed Complaints Procedure. The School will not tolerate any other form of publication of matters where this procedure has not been utilised.

- Confidentiality pertaining to all school matters is of paramount importance to all those who work, visit or interact with our school.
- Staff should always be safe at work and free to undertake their duties in a workplace that is free from distress and abusive behaviour of others.
- The School will not tolerate disrespectful or abusive behaviour against staff members.

This policy is ratified by the Board of Management and is the agreed policy of Maryfield College. All teaching staff will be familiar with this policy and aware of any changes implied in school communication procedures.

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated every three years under the direction of the Board of Management. On-going review and evaluation will consider changing information, guidelines, feedback from parents, students and teachers. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school self-evaluation and policy planning.

Ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of:

Signature: Declan Mowlds Date: _____
05/06/2024

Chairperson of the Board of Management