


St Augustine's, Keilor Primary School	System Update: 09.06. 2020	
Version 0.1	Date of Next Review: 09.06.2023	

Email Use Policy and Guidelines

Rationale:

At St Augustine's Primary School we are committed to, and value the learning partnership that exists between staff, students and parents. We acknowledge that, when used well, email is an efficient and effective tool that supports timely communication. It strengthens the goodwill and the positive partnership between parents, students and the school to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our student.

These guidelines are designed to establish clear expectations for staff, students and parents in the use of email as a communication tool.

General principles:

- Email is an environmentally friendly way of communicating that can save time when used effectively
- Email is efficient for teachers and parents who are working and find it difficult to catch up during regular work hours
- Email is not always the best tool for communication - face to face and phone conversations may be more appropriate in some situations

General Expectations:

When communicating via email all parties are expected to adhere to email etiquette.

Emails should:

- Begin and end with an appropriate respectful salutation – Dear Mrs Smith, Hello Peter...with regards
- Be brief and informative but avoid shorthand, overly familiar terms, SMS language and the like
- Have a clear purpose ie: to communicate information between the parties concerned
- Always be respectful, measured, constructive and sensitive
- Respect confidentiality

Emails should not:

- Request information that is readily available elsewhere e.g. School website, newsletter
- Be used to vent
- Seek or divulge personal information regarding third parties (staff, students or parents)
- Be sent to anyone for whom the information is not relevant or breaches confidentiality
- Disclose the email addresses of others without permission to do so

- Be passed on to a third party without the permission of the sender
- Be contentious, inappropriate or contain any offensive language
- Be used to bully, harass or defame
- Include jokes, chain letters or commercial solicitations
- Contain humour or sarcasm because it can easily be misunderstood

Staff Guidelines:

- Staff must use a school provided e-mail account for all communication with parents or students
- Email should not be used to discuss a sensitive issue which was not initiated by the parent or have not been previously discussed with the parent
- When an email is received from a parent that requires some time to gather information, the staff member should respond acknowledging that the email has been received and indicate when an informed response will be sent. Staff will aim to reply to parent emails within 2 working days
- Staff are not required to attend to emails before 8am, after 6pm or on weekends
- Staff are not to respond to abusive emails and should forward them to the school principal
- Emails should be short, to the point and contain only essential facts

Parent Guidelines:

- Be aware that 'out of hours' or 'in class time' emails may not be answered immediately
- Parents should contact the office to inform a teacher of matters of immediate urgency eg. a child needing to go to after care, a change in pick-up arrangements as emails might not be read in time to act upon requirements
- Emails are an efficient way to set up a suitable time to speak to a teacher rather than become a discussion about your child's academic progress, learning expectations or behavioural issues.

Student Guidelines:

- Put a description in the subject line so that your teacher knows what your email is about e.g. homework task, class activity, request for help
- Use your manners and greet the person you are emailing and conclude politely
- In the body of the email, try to be short and to the point
- Re-read your email before you send it - check spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Don't use SMS language
- If you are upset or have a complaint, rather than explain yourself in the email, use email to arrange a meeting with your teacher
- Don't ask for things that you already have access to
- Email for good reasons too, if you are happy about something or you want to pass on good news, your teacher would like to hear about it.

Policy developed in collaboration with the St Augustine's Education Board