

## CONTEXT/BELIEF STATEMENT

### Teacher Work Hours

Mon – Fri 8.30am -  
4.30pm  
Tues 8.30 – 5.00pm

Prospect Primary School is committed to open, honest and timely communication. We are also committed to respectful and constructive communication. In adhering to these principles we aim to strengthen goodwill and positive partnership between parents and school, to enhance the wellbeing and learning opportunities for our students.

### Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

1. clearly articulate the school's commitment to the positive use of email and electronic communication i.e. Seesaw and SkoolBag
2. to acknowledge the potential benefits of communicating via electronic methods, but also understand their limitations
3. establish clear expectations for staff and parents in the use of electronic communications
4. implement a policy which maintains a safe workplace for staff and supports them to effectively balance their work and home life.

### Procedures for implementation

Emails and electronic communication are an environmentally friendly way of communicating that can save time when used effectively. We acknowledge that they are convenient for parents who work and find it difficult to catch up with staff during work hours. Having said that, our school community values face-to-face and telephone conversations, and understands that these forms of communication are preferred in many situations.



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education

## **Expectations of parents and staff**

When communicating electronically, staff and parents are expected to adhere to the following etiquette, including:

1. Electronic communication is best when brief and informative. Issues that require a level of detailed discussion should be dealt with in person or over the phone, where possible
2. Electronic communication should always be respectful and constructive
3. Electronic communication works best when positive. Avoid sending negative or confrontational messages. Never say in an e-communication what you would not say in person
4. Never write about or seek personal information regarding third parties (staff, students or parents). Likewise, messages containing personal or sensitive information should not be passed on to a third party without permission of the sender.
5. The tone or intent of electronic messages can easily be misunderstood, choose appropriate wording and avoid sarcasm or humour
6. Avoid writing in capitals
7. Staff and parents are not expected to respond to electronic communication that is contentious or requires ongoing dialogue. A face-to-face meeting should be arranged in this circumstance
8. Group messages have the potential to waste the time of many, so avoid sending them to anyone for whom it is not relevant. It is also courteous to avoid time wasting communication, including jokes, chain letters and commercial solicitations
9. Make sure the purpose of your message is clear. Do you require specific action(s) or is the email for information only?
10. When messaging a group, staff and parents must ensure they not disclose the email addresses of others without permission to do so, (Blind CC should be utilised).

## **Expectations of staff**

1. Electronic communication should not be used to discuss sensitive issues which were not initiated by the parent or had not been previously discussed with the parent
2. When a message is received from a parent that requires some time to gather information and reply properly, the staff member should respond acknowledging that the message has been received and indicate when an informed response will be sent
3. Staff will aim to reply to parent communication within 2 working days
4. When on leave, staff will inform parents of relevant leave dates
5. Staff may choose to send or respond to work related messages at a time of their own choosing, but there is no expectation to respond to these messages outside of school hours (8:30 am-4:30 pm Monday - Friday).
6. Staff are not to respond to offensive or abusive messages and should forward them to the school principal.



## Expectations of Parents

1. Please only send non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use electronic methods to inform a teacher that your child is not to go to OSHC that afternoon, as the teacher may not see the message in time or it might be a relief teacher without access to email. Remember that given work demands, teachers may not get to read messages until late in the day. If you need an answer more quickly, please telephone the school: 8344 5696
2. Please don't seek to discuss in detail your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioural issues via an electronic message. These are best addressed over the phone or in person.
3. Please keep all contacts professional. Valuable non instruction time is taken up when reading messages
4. Messages intended for the office staff should be sent directly to the school's email address: [dl.0368.info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.0368.info@schools.sa.edu.au)
5. Remember to respect staff personal time, including weekends, holidays, sick days and non-working days. Parents should not expect an immediate response
6. Messages are intended for the recipient only. Do not forward an email or other form of electronic message to a third party.
7. It is the responsibility of every parent to keep the school administration and class teacher up-to-date with current email addresses and phone numbers
8. Please remember that electronic messages are not necessarily confidential and can be subject to FOI (Freedom of Information) regulations. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or personal contact
9. Depending on the nature of the message, you may not receive an electronic reply if the staff member determines it is best to contact parents: by electronic message, phone, or schedule a personal conference.

## Implementation

This policy will be published on the school website.  
It will be reviewed and updated annually.

