COMMUNICATIONS POLICY  (as of 28/02/2019)

This Policy document provides school stakeholders with a comprehensive outline of the school’s communication protocols. Schools are also workplaces and therefore access to teaching staff for pre-arranged appointments is generally 8:00am-8:45 and 3:15-4:00pm. Contact can be made via the Administration, then teaching staff will contact the parent to organise a suitable meeting time, so lesson preparation and teaching are not disrupted.

Note: [It is NOT an expectation that staff will be answering on social media or email, outside of school hours, weekends or vacation periods]

All sensitive communications need to actioned via Administration with the appropriate Deputy Principal or Principal.

Years P/1 – Mr Sheldon Boland  Years 2/3 – Mr Geoff Habel  Years 4/5/6 – Mr Amos Cowling

Principal – Mr Noel Baggs

General Conditions of Communication between classroom teachers and parents

Emergency contact or important information for the classroom teacher MUST be directed via the school’s office administration staff for entry onto OneSchool, the departmental recording system.

Classroom teachers will share key information on upcoming events, student successes and classroom relevant news when appropriate and through chosen mediums, at their discretion.

PHONE

Frequency: Teacher’s Discretion

Users: Teacher to Parent/Carer Only

Emergency and/or urgent messages are to be directed to the school office and where necessary, for the attention of the appropriate Deputy Principal or Principal.

Outside phone calls will not be forwarded to classroom teachers as this disrupts student learning. Internal school processes are in place to manage such calls.

- Parents/carers will not be provided with any personal phone or contact details for staff.

APPROVED SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATIONS (trial in 2019):

- SeeSaw  &  • Class Dojo

Frequency: Teacher’s Discretion

Users: Teacher to Parent/Carer & Parent/Carer to Teacher

It is not a requirement for class teachers to use the above social media applications, rather it is a professional choice. Some teachers will be trialling these applications to engage parents with ‘classroom moments’ and keep parents up to date with current activities. Teachers may share classroom information e.g. upcoming excursions, expectations,
homework, reminders for interviews etc... Classroom learning experiences including photos, videos, and student work samples may also be uploaded to keep parents informed.

Any sensitive communication must be via the Administration.

**EMAIL**

**Frequency:** Teachers’ Discretion.

Response period up to 48 hours, emails generally not responded to during instruction times (9:00am – 3:00pm)

**Users:** Teacher to Parent/Carer & Parent/Carer to Teacher

**Conditions of Use:**

- Only use Education QLD email address of classroom teacher;
- Classroom teachers will reply to your email within 48 hours of email being sent. Up to 72 hours after 3:00pm on a Friday, or on the weekend. Emails sent during vacation periods generally will not be answered until the return of school the following term.

**DIRECT CONTACT / FACE-TO-FACE**

**Frequency:** Teacher Discretion

**Users:** Teacher to Parent/Carer & Parent/Carer to Teacher

- Direct contact meetings will be negotiated between the parent or carer and the classroom teacher. For job shared classrooms, the duty classroom teacher only present on the day, will attend the scheduled meeting;
- Direct contact meetings will not occur at any time between 8:45am and 3:00pm; unless authorised by sector Deputy Principal or Principal;
- No parent access to the classroom learning environment between 9:00am and 3:00pm, teacher instruction times, unless invited for class support and have undertaken school “Induction Training”. Parents/carers and visitors supporting classrooms must sign in at the office, at all times. (Visitors must produce a blue card)

**SCHOOL FACEBOOK**

**Frequency:** Normally daily posting

**Users:** Baringa School Community

The purpose of Baringa State Primary School’s Facebook page is to provide an effective communication and promotional tool to connect with our audience whether that be parents, staff, students and/or community
members. Facebook is used to promote school and student achievements, send friendly reminders to parents and also promote school events.

As per The Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines, students over the age of 13 can like or follow their school’s social media pages but should not send them messages.

Only administrators of the Baringa SPS Facebook site are responsible for responding to comments.

Response to posts

Social media is 24 hour a day, 7 days a week medium. Social media accounts will be monitored after hours, on weekends and on holidays in a restricted capacity, therefore responses may be delayed.

Posting on the Official School Facebook page

Before you post something online, ask yourself if the community or school really need to know this. Is it relevant? Helpful? Positive? Remember the aim of a school Facebook page is to connect people and share school news and upcoming event information. Be a good role model online.

Consider potential consequences

Be mindful of the potential harm you may cause to the reputation and personal wellbeing of yourself, school staff members or other people, including students and parents mentioned on the page. Inappropriate online content may constitute a criminal offence and become a police matter. For example, online content may substantiate the offence of ‘using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence’ (Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) s.474.1). Defamatory content may give rise to litigation under the Defamation Act 2005 (Qld). School staff may contact their union or obtain personal legal advice if they feel that online content seriously impacts their reputation.

Concerns

The appropriate and most effective method of raising any concerns you have in respect of the school or its staff is to discuss the matter with the School’s Principal or Deputy Principals. Raising matters of concern on social media sites will not by itself cause your concerns with the school/staff to be dealt with or responded to.

You should consider the potential of your comments to cause harm to the reputation and personal well-being of any person(s) you have mentioned. You should consider whether your comments may leave you open to legal action by the person(s) involved, which could potentially result in you incurring significant personal legal costs.