

## **Respectful Communication at North Loburn School**

### **Rationale**

To provide guidelines for acceptable communication within the grounds of North Loburn School.

### **Purpose**

North Loburn School expects high standards of behaviour from students within the school grounds. The school operates according to the PRIDE values, which encourage honesty, integrity and respect for others. School staff lead the implementation of PRIDE values within the school, and it is important that to maintain this consistency of purpose throughout the school, that parents, guardians and visitors also behave according to these values when on the school grounds.

This procedure aims to provide guidelines for visitors to the school grounds in order to protect staff, students, and visitors from unacceptable behaviour, while respecting the rights of each party to express their opinion in a considered and open manner. The board of trustees considers that aggressive or intimidating verbal or physical behaviour, or any form of threatening or disrespectful behaviour is unacceptable on the school grounds.

### **Guidelines**

These guidelines are built on the following principles:

- a) each party having a responsibility to recognise the suitability of the timing, location and content of any discussion, and plan the discussion accordingly,
- b) early recognition of a deteriorating situation
- c) each party having an option to reschedule the discussion or invite a third party if desired.

1. The school is a structured place of learning. While staff aim to accommodate unplanned brief discussions with parents\guardians where possible at the beginning and end of each school day, this will not always be possible due to workloads or time constraints. If timing is not suitable for the unplanned conversation to take place, either party may request a more suitable time and\or place for the conversation to be held. Efforts should then be made by both parties to hold this meeting at the earliest mutually agreeable time.

2. Parents\guardians are requested not to visit school to initiate discussions with teachers during class time unless by prior arrangement.

3. If, during the course of a discussion between staff and any parent\guardian, either party feels that the content of the discussion is of a sensitive nature, and this discussion should be held elsewhere out of respect for those nearby or the subject of the conversation, they may call a temporary halt to the discussion. A more suitable location\time shall then be agreed to by both parties and the discussion continued at the earliest mutually agreeable time.

4. Either party may call a halt to the discussion and request a third party attend as a witness or support person at any time.

5. Non-verbal communication (email, text message etc) should remain respectful at all times. If the content requires further discussion, a face-to-face meeting may be requested by either party. Any non-verbal communication of concern may be shared at a senior level.

6. Parents\guardians are encouraged to plan any potentially sensitive or complicated discussion in a manner that will allow both parties to begin the conversation fully informed as to the nature of the issue, therefore maximising the probability that an agreeable outcome may occur. This may mean planning with the principal or staff member concerned a suitable time and location for the meeting, so that each party is prepared, and may bring a support person if required.

7. Parents\guardians or visitors to the school grounds shall recognise that within the school grounds, the Principal and staff are responsible for the behaviour of all students. Visitors to the grounds shall therefore not correct or modify the behaviour of any students without prior approval from a staff member unless

there is an immediate risk to the safety of any student. In the case of an immediate risk to student safety, and action is taken to eliminate the risk, the parent\guardian shall then promptly report this intervention to a staff member.

8. All visitors to the school are required to abide by this procedure. The board of trustees shall be advised of any visitor behaviour falling outside these accepted guidelines, and may take action to protect staff and pupils from further unacceptable behaviour. Any action taken is at the discretion of the board of trustees.

Visitors who believe that a staff member has transgressed the guidelines in this policy are requested to act in accordance with the North Loburn School Complaints Policy.