

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to explain expectations and protocols regarding the types of communications at Brentwood Secondary College.

Scope:

This policy applies to students, staff, parents and carers in our community.

Policy:

Brentwood Secondary College values clear, effective and timely communication with all stakeholders for the following purposes:

1. To build an effective partnership between parents/carers, students and staff.
2. To ensure staff, students, parents/carers and the wider community are informed about key information that relates to them.
3. To provide parents/carers and students helpful and timely responses to common enquiries.
4. To ensure members of our school community are directed to the most appropriate person to assist them.
5. To enable the school to celebrate and recognise achievements.
6. To inform parent/carers and students of their academic progress.

The College is committed to effective, efficient and environmentally friendly forms of communication. Therefore, the use of digital platforms, where appropriate, will be used.

Who to contact for common enquiries:

- The General Office is the first point of contact for all enquiries (Ph: 8545 0300).
- Compass should be used to report a student absence. If this is not possible parents/carers should contact the relevant attendance officer in Junior School (Years 7-9) or Senior School (Years 10–12).
- The classroom teacher is the first point of contact to discuss a student's academic progress, health or wellbeing. Teachers can be contacted via Compass/Email or phone.
- Parents/carers may request to schedule an appointment with staff during normal business hours (8.30 – 4.30pm).
- The Student Manager should be contacted if the matter is of a more serious nature.
- For enquiries regarding camps and excursions, please check Compass in the first instance, and then contact the teacher responsible for the camp as stated on the event information.
- To make a complaint, please refer to the [Managing Complaints Policy](#) available on the College Website.

Requests for information:

Parents/carers are generally entitled to information ordinarily provided to parents/carers, including school reports and newsletters.

Parents/carers seeking information that is not ordinarily provided to them are encouraged to apply for access through the Freedom of Information process, or, if the information is sought for use in court proceedings, by issuing a subpoena.

Freedom of Information requests should be directed to:

Manager – Freedom of Information Unit
 Department of Education and Training
 2 Treasury Place
 EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002
 03 9637 3134
 foi@edumail.vic.gov.au

Communication protocols:

- Staff, parents/carers and students should follow the [Community Code of Conduct Policy](#) in relation to all communications and interactions with each other.
- School communications should be used for school business only.
- Staff, parents/carers and students are not expected to respond to emails after hours (8.30am to 4.30pm).
- School staff will do their best to respond to general queries as soon as possible and ask that parents/carers and students allow 48 hours, excluding non-school days, to provide a detailed response. Should this not occur, a Principal Class member should be notified and they will follow up on behalf of the person making contact.
- If emails are sent after hours allow 48 hours, excluding non-school days, for a reply.
- Staff are encouraged to refrain from sending emails to parents/carers or students that may cause distress or anxiety at a time when parents/carers are unable to clarify information or follow up due to the school being closed.
- Staff will endeavour to acknowledge receipt of students’ work on Compass as soon as possible after the due date. At times this may not be possible, therefore parents/carers and students should wait 48 hours (excluding non-school days) after a Compass due date before contacting the teacher.
- The school will endeavour to respond to urgent matters within 24 hours.

Communication methods and purposes:

The following table outlines the communication methods used by the College and their specific function/s

Communication Medium	Purpose	Audience	Responsibilities
College Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public face of the College. • Information about the College to the community. • Celebrate school events and achievements. • Provide access to the College Newsletter and compliance documents/policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily External. • Secondary source of information for internal community (i.e. Overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of College Operations to manage. • Principal Class to approve all updates and content. • Staff & students invited to contribute.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing. • Curriculum overview/handbooks. 	Calendar with big events).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, carers, students and staff to read.
Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles celebrating events and student achievements. • Enable partnerships with community organisations. • Provide advice to parents/carers and families. • Provide updates on teaching and learning at Brentwood. • Provide updates on College events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily Internal, but available to external audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of College Operations to manage and update. • Students and staff create content. • Parents/carers, students and staff to read & subscribe.
Compass	<p>Internal Communications for Staff, Students and Parents/Carers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsfeed Items • Calendar • Official School Documents • Learning Tasks/Reports/Analytics • Chronicle (Staff Only) • Insights • Payments • Email 	<p>Internal - Brentwood Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcements and Notices • Official Calendar • Official School Documentation • Reporting Student Progress • Staff Only Notes • Feedback & Survey Tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compass is overseen by the Principal Class, with specific staff having responsibilities for particular modules as directed by the Principal.
Facebook Official Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating student achievements. • Information about events. • Increase community engagement in the College. • Engage Alumni in College Community. • Promoting College Events (Advertising). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public – Parent/Carer & Student Engagement. • Connecting with students and ex-students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of College Operations to administer, monitor and post. • Principal Class to make posts.
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link with Facebook. • Increase community engagement. • Sharing educational news • Foster a positive learning climate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External and Internal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of College Operations to administer, monitor and post. • Principal Class to make posts.

Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communication between individuals or groups of a general nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals. Please refer to College Acceptable use of ICT, Community Code of Conduct Policy.
Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communication between individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals. Please refer to College Values and Community Code of Conduct Policy.
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of more personal or sensitive information. • Collaboration. • Discussion. • Student Support Group Meetings. • Student Counselling (Pathways, Behaviour, Wellbeing, Academic etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal (Parents/Carers, Students, Staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals. Please refer to Community Code of Conduct Policy.
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating student Achievements. • Information about events. • Increase community engagement in the College. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of College Operations to administer, monitor and post. • Principal Class to make posts.
Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious issues. • Celebrating success. • When an email or other electronic form of communication is not appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal (Parents/Carers, Students, Staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via approval of Principal Class only when on Brentwood Letterhead.
SMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents/Carers about unexplained student absences. • Emergency management communications. • Risk management tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current parents/Carers (internal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence SMS managed by Head of School Leading Teachers. • Emergency SMS sent by authorisation of Principal Class.

At times, the College may utilise other communication tools for a specific purpose or audience (i.e. school camps). These will be approved as part of the event/program approval process and communicated to the students, staff and parents involved.

Further Information and Resources:

- Community Code of Conduct Policy.
- Digital Technologies Policy
- Use of Student Image Policy & Process.

Review Cycle and Evaluation: 3 Years

Consultation:

- Consultation Committee – June 7, 2018
- Education Council Sub – Committee – June 18, 2018

Approved by Council on: Monday June 25, 2018.