



Communication Policy



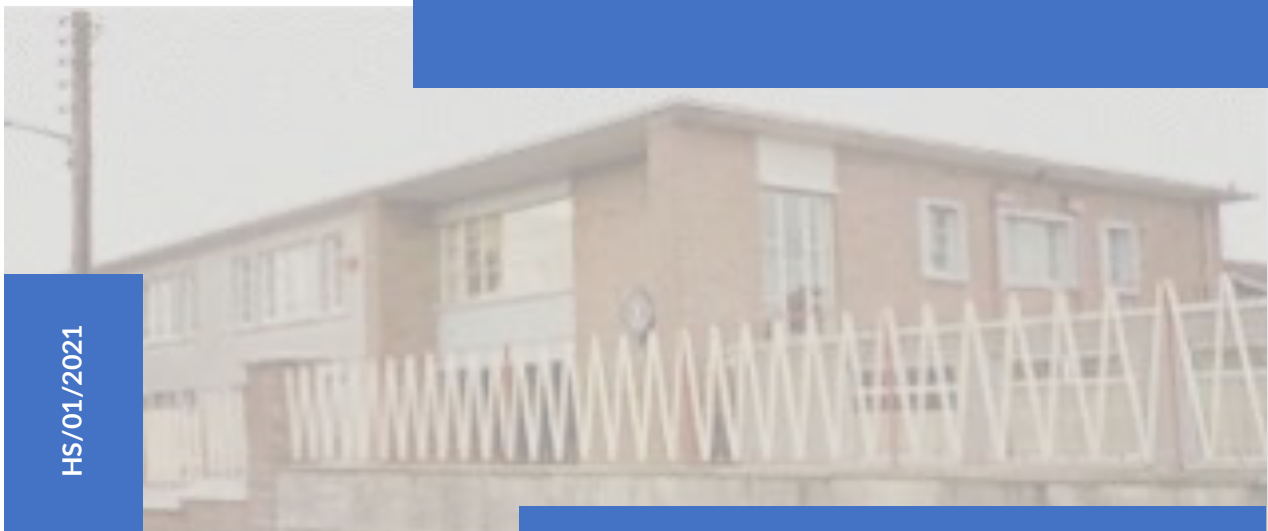
(041) 983 7812



Sunnyside, Drogheda, Co.
Louth.



info@sacredheart.ie



HS/01/2021

APPROVED BY
Board of Management

DATE ISSUED
11 October 2022

Policy

Document Title

Communication Policy

Revisions

No.	Status	Author(s)	Approved By	Office	Issue Date
Rev 01	Release	SHS	BOM		May 2022

Circulation

Position	Office	Issue Date	Method
Principal	Sacred Heart Secondary School	February 2022	Email
Board of Management	Sacred Heart Secondary School	February 2022	Email
Staff	Sacred Heart Secondary School	February 2022	Email
Students	Sacred Heart Secondary School	February 2022	Email
Parents	Sacred Heart Secondary School	February 2022	Email



Table of Contents

1. About Us	4
2. Board of Management	4
3. Organisational Chart	5
4. Introduction.....	6
5. Scope.....	6
6. Rationale	6
7. Relationship with the Mission Statement	7
8. Goals/Objectives.....	7
9. Range of Communication Methods Used:	7
10. Internal Communication.....	8
11. External Communication.....	10
12. Links with other school policies	11
13. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	11
14. Ratification and Communication.....	11



1. About Us



Sacred Heart Secondary School is an all-girls voluntary secondary school with approximately 685 students, under the trusteeship of CEIST, originally established by the Mercy Order.

We have a long history of academic excellence. Our team of talented, dedicated and professional teaching staff create an engaging learning environment for all our students; one where our students are encouraged and nurtured to reach their full potential in all aspects of their academic, personal and social development.

We offer students a broad and balanced curriculum as well as an array of extra-curricular activities, social and spiritual opportunities providing them with a holistic and well-rounded education.

We pride ourselves on the inclusive, warm and caring atmosphere which is evident from the moment you enter our school.

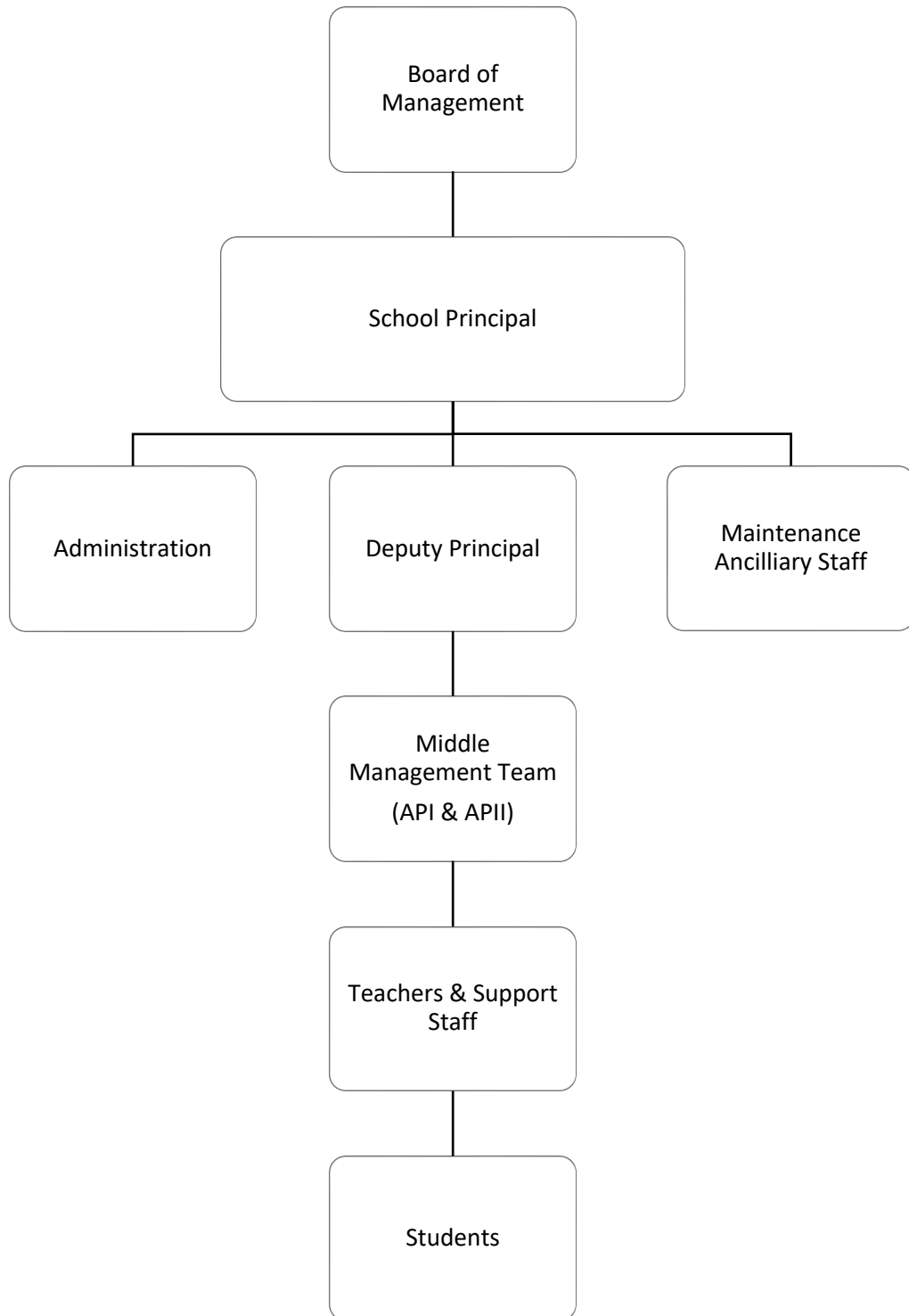
2. Board of Management

Sacred Heart Secondary School is governed by a Board of Management. Boards of Management have been exceptionally successful in the school. This success is due to the generosity, talent and dedication of the various members of the Board and to the leadership of the Chairperson.

There are eight members on a Board of Management: Four nominees of the Trustees (including the chair), two nominees of teachers and two nominees of parents. The Principal is the Secretary to the Board but does not have a vote.

3. Organisational Chart

The school is governed by a board of management. The Principal manages the school including all aspects of the day to day running of the school with the teachers and staff.



4. Introduction



This policy sets out the framework within which the whole school manages to effectively communicate with all its partners.

5. Scope



This policy applies to all those having interest in or dealings with the SHS, i.e. current students, past students, intending students, teachers, support staff, SNAs and all other staff, including the principal and deputy principal, parents, Board of Management members, Patrons, Parents Council members, Department of Education and Skills, inspectors and the local community. Certain parts of the policy apply during school time, but others may apply at any time. SHS Data Protection Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

6. Rationale



The need for this policy has been high-lighted by staff, students and parents. It is necessary for the school to function effectively as a school community and as part of the wider society

7. Relationship with the Mission Statement



In the light of our Mission Statement this policy aims to establish and maintain effective procedures for communication which will:

- foster an atmosphere which promotes self-esteem, honesty, justice and respect
- create a safe, healthy learning environment that nurtures self-discipline and encourages our pupils to take responsibility for their own learning
- promote co-operation, team-work and commitment within the school and community so that all are unified as partners in learning for life

8. Goals/Objectives



In our school we strive to maintain clear and effective communications with all parents and the wider community. Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values, through keeping parents and the wider community well informed about school life. This reinforces the important role that parents and members of the community play in supporting the school.

All communications at SHS should

- keep staff, pupils, parents, SNAs, Board of Management members, CEIST, the Department of Education and other interested parties well informed.
- be open, honest, ethical and professional
- use jargon-free, plain language which aims to be understood by all
- use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience (see list at 9A below)
- take account of all relevant legislation and school policies
- be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Mission Statement

9. Range of Communication Methods Used:



- Electronic communication: Email (Vsware)/Text (Vsware)/School Reports/Vsware behaviours & attendance/Social Media Instagram/Facebook, Office 365 platform to include TEAMS, Sharepoint
- Assembly by principal/deputy principal to students.
- Face to face meetings to include PT meetings, Information evenings, etc.
- Telephone Conversations
- School journal
- Letter home

- TY Newsletter
- School prospectus
- Advertisements, articles or photographs in local paper
- Public access to documents including on our website (e.g. policies available to parents in the school or issued to them from time to time
- School website to include BOM Agreed report
- Staff handbook
- School calendar of meetings, holidays etc.
- Notice boards in staffrooms and along corridors
- Post-box -lockers in staff-room
- Sign-out and in book in reception
- Agendas/Minutes of meetings to include staff, subject, middle management, care team meetings
- Referral systems for services such as TUSLA

N.B. This list is not exhaustive. Also some elements are at the planning stage as policy is being written

10. Internal Communication



- Staff - Staff
- Verbal one to one - as necessary
- Staff briefing - urgent information which needs to be communicated to staff quickly, but where white-board is considered unsuitable and a staff meeting is not necessary.
- Staff meeting- a short meeting for information purposes, for example at breaktime or brief meeting through teams.
- Staff meeting - a meeting of all staff, convened as per articles of management, department circulars and relevant legislation . An electronic draft agenda is shared through Office 365 in advance with an opportunity for staff members to make suggestions for inclusion on the agenda. Minutes of staff meetings shared electronically through teachers group on Teams or Sharepoint.
- Year heads meetings held once a month with Principal and or DP. Year heads communicate with all relevant parties in relation to year group teachers.
- In Staffroom - whiteboard - for day to day information for teachers
- Notice-boards - for on-going information re unions, JCSP, School Development Planning, etc

- Calendar agreed in May prior to academic year. Amendments made to calendar when required.
- Sharepoint/ Teams Teachers group current policies and procedures, staff list, information about the school, etc.
- E-mail (School accounts for all teachers are available)
- Text (Personal, but also to inform staff re closures and of notices to be sent to parents)
- Induction of new staff members will be done by the Deputy Principal or the Principal. All current school policies will be given to them (in a briefing session). They will be introduced to as many staff members as possible, for example at a break-time or a meeting.
- Communication from staff to care-taker or cleaners, if it involves a request for general cleaning or general maintenance work to be done, this should be made in writing in a maintenance book in the staffroom. Any jobs that are need to be carried out with urgency should normally be communicated through the Principal.
- Communication of a formal nature between teachers of Sacred Heart School should normally be done through the Principal.
- Information regarding the starting date of a new student should be shared with staff at a staff meeting or through teachers groups email/teams/vsware. It would be a courtesy if the new pupil were introduced to the class form teacher and Year head on the first day if possible.
- If a circular letter is sent from the school to the parents, it is agreed that a copy be posted on the staff-room notice-board to inform staff.???
- If a teacher is sending a letter to parents (especially on headed paper), it should be authorised or countersigned by the principal.
- If a teacher is taking a group of students out of the school they will seek permission from the Principal. In addition to informing parents, students and ensuring permission slips signed they would normally inform staff by adding it to the school calendar (electronically), inform teachers by email/Vsware/teams and post a reminder and a list (if not a class group) of students involved to teachers.
- If a teacher is removing a student or a group of students from class, he/she will endeavour to inform any teacher affected in advance, except in exceptional circumstances.
- If a student is late to class because he/she is speaking to a member of staff, this member should write a brief note in VSware.
- Referral of a student to the Resource Department in the school may be done verbally.
- When reporting health and safety concerns, this may be done through the Health and Safety Representative, who will bring the matter to the attention of the Principal.

- Any accident or incidence should be reported by filling out an accident report form (found in the DP office) and handed into the DP to be filed. The role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA) is set out in the Special Educational Needs Policy (Please see).
- Staff wishing to have a meeting with the principal may request this verbally or through email/teams/vsware
- If a student is suspended teachers will be notified verbally or electronically. Reasons for absences will be on vsware.
- For matters relating to guidance policy,critical incident, discipline (Code of Behaviour), anti-bullying procedure, etc., please see the relevant school policies.
- N.B. This list is not exhaustive. Also some elements are at the planning stage as policy is being written

11. External Communication



Communication to and from the Board of Management

- The Board of Management of Sacred Heart reports directly to VSS through its minutes which are written by the Principal, who acts as Secretary to the Board.
- Minutes of meetings are kept in the Principal's office.
- It is represented at Committee level by the Chair and the Board members who are also part of the VSS. ????
- There are two staff representatives on the Board, who represent the staff and report back to Staff Council meetings all matters which are not precluded by confidentiality. They also bring to the Board matters which the Staff Council have requested should be raised.
- The Parents' representatives represent the concerns of parents on the Board of Management. They report to meetings of the Parents' Association.
- All of the above are bound by all relevant legislation in force at the time and are subject to abiding within the guidelines for members of VSS articles of management as set out in the VSS manual.

Home-School Communication

- The school communicates to parents through. Email (Vsware)/Text (Vsware)/School Reports/Vsware behaviours & attendance/Social Media Instagram/Facebook, Office 365 platform to include TEAMS, Sharepoint

Communication with Other Schools and Outside Agencies

- The School communicates both formally and informally with a wide number of organisations and agencies. It would be impossible to refer to all of these. All official communication with outside agencies such as Social Services, DES, NEWB, etc., should be done by the principal or with his/her permission. However, it is hoped that all communication from the school would be guided by the principles mentioned in this and other relevant school policies, and be compliant with all relevant legislation.

12. Links with other school policies



This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's current policies and any other policies as they are developed.

13. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation



The Principal will monitor this policy and make changes based on feedback from staff. This policy will be reviewed after two years or sooner if necessitated by legislation or requested by Board of Management.

14. Ratification and Communication



This policy will be ratified by the Board of Management
It will be made available to parents
It will be shared with staff in Sharepoint.

It will be published on the school's website

The SHS Communication Policy will be reviewed annually in light of experience and future developments within the organisation.

Signed: *Gerry Mc Guill*

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: *Leoni Carroll*

Principal

