

Mazenod College Communications policy



Mazenod College is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

Introduction

Mazenod College understands the primacy of communication and the need to be constantly developing into both an authentic Christian community and an effective learning community. Clear, effective and respectful communication among all sections and members is integral to community-building.

Principles

1. Clear and effective communications help inculcate and reinforce the foundational values of the Mazenod Christian learning community.
2. Timely planning and careful preparation of communication items or systems help reduce misunderstanding and confusion.
3. Commonly understood and practical procedures help ensure unity and fair dealings amongst all members.
4. Mazenod College recognises the importance of clear and effective communications with all stakeholders (students, parents and carers, staff, advisory board, the local and wider community outside agencies, etc), and is committed to being open and accessible for all who have an interest in the school.

Aims

The College recognises that engaging and working with parents and carers is vital in providing their son with an excellent education. Parents and carers are offered opportunities throughout the year to convey to us what they expect from and think of the College. Our wish is to involve as many parents and carers in their son's education as possible.

Our aims include the following:

To make the College as welcoming and inclusive as possible.

- Signage will be clear, informative and positive.
- All written and telephone enquiries will be dealt with promptly by staff and parents and carers can expect an acknowledgement within 2 working days.
- A variety of forms of communication with parents and carers for example, telephone contact, email, mail and SMS from Synergetic/Consent2Go.
- Parents and carers are contacted for positive reasons as well as areas of concern.
- Information is given to parents and carers on what their sons will be taught and tips for helping improve their learning.
- Parents and carers will be encouraged to help or support their child's learning at school and at home. Information will be provided in a timely way to enable this support to be effective.

Policy Procedures

1.1 Parents and Carers Communications

MazCom

Parents have access to MazCom Parent Portal through their own unique login username and password. Parents can access their son's unit pages, view reports and see assessment results. Staff can communicate to parents via the message facility.

Letters

Staff will always reply to a letter from parents and carers as quickly as possible. Receipt of correspondence will be acknowledged by telephone, letter or email within **2 working days**, unless the staff member is on leave or working part-time. A full response will be provided within **5 working days**. Letters to parents/carers must be approved by a member of the College Executive Team before posting/emailing. Copies of correspondence with parents and carers will be placed on Synergetic by the Administration Team. Any letters of concern or complaint should be dealt with in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy. The College will use standard templates for letters.

Newsletters

The newsletter acts as a unifying force in the College Community and is emailed fortnightly to parents and staff to keep them informed of activities and news. Students are also keen to see if the College community has acknowledged their particular activity. It is important to submit articles to Administration prior to 4pm on Wednesday. Faculty Heads and members of the College Executive Team also write an article each semester for the newsletter.

Email

Email is a quick, effective way of communicating necessary information and is the College's preferred method of communication. **Emails received will be acknowledged within 2 working days and responded to within 5 working days**, unless the staff member is on leave or working part-time. Emails should be short and clear and the same care and consideration should be given as when sending a letter. Parents and carers may wish to contact the College via email for a general enquiry as an alternative to telephone or letter. The College email address is: frontdesk@mazenod.vic.edu.au. Under no circumstances should staff contact students or parents and carers using their own personal email address.

Salutations

The correct salutations must be used when writing to or emailing parents/carers/partnerships. Communications will be to and from Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr etc. and sign off is always full name Ms/Mrs/Mr/Dr Teacher Surname. Any relevant line manager/Year Level Co-ordinator/Homeroom Teacher must be copied into letters or emails of serious concern.

Telephone Calls

Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers may be teaching full-time and running activities or working with students at lunchtime or after school. In a non-emergency **a return call will be made within 2 working days, with any follow up action from the request/query/problem being dealt with within 5 working days**, unless the staff member is on leave or working part-time. Staff will make a record of a telephone conversation with a parent/carer on Mazcom in 'Pastoral Care – Notes'.

Phone calls to parents should be conducted during College business hours using your assigned office telephone. Staff are highly encouraged to call privately (hide their caller ID) if using their personal mobile phone to contact parents. All contact information of parents of students can be found on MazCom, Synergetic, or SynWeb. If staff notice any incorrect or outdated information, they should advise the administration team.

SMS

Automated SMS from Synergetic are sent to parents/carers (including in the event of an emergency closure of the school) but are not used for general communications from members of staff. Staff should not respond by text to a message received from a parent/carer (but should respond using an alternative means of communication such as email or telephone if appropriate).

Absence

If a student is absent, parents and carers are asked to contact the school as soon as possible on the morning of the absence. For full details please refer to the Attendance Policy (copy available on MazCom).

Meeting with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers wishing to meet a member of staff must contact the school to make an appointment. **This request should be responded to within 2 working days**, unless the staff member is on leave or working part-time. Parents and carers should report to Main Administration prior to meeting with a member of staff. A member of staff may ask a senior colleague to accompany them. Staff should call a meeting to a close in the event of parents or carers becoming angry or abusive. This should be reported immediately to a member of the College Executive Team.

Social Networking

The School has Facebook, Twitter and Instagram social media accounts which are used to provide updates to parents and students who wish to subscribe. It is not compulsory to do so and therefore any key messages will be relayed through formal College communication channels.

Reports and Progress

The College provides rolling, ongoing reporting through MazCom. This means that students and parents are made aware of assessment results and teacher feedback in real-time. Consistent with MACS guidelines, the College collates this information in the form of two semester reports per year, which also indicate progress against the Victorian Curriculum standards.

In addition, parents and carers can meet their son's subject teachers twice a year, at parents/student/teacher evening. Parents and carers should contact the school if issues arise about their son's progress or wellbeing. **The first point of contact should be the Homeroom Teacher or Subject Teacher.** We welcome the presence of any other adult a parent or carer wishes to invite to a school meeting for support or to act as an interpreter.

College Website

The school website provides a range of information about the school. It is used to promote the school to a wider audience and is updated regularly.

College Calendar

The College will publish a calendar at the start of each academic year. The College will always ensure parents and carers are notified of any additional events as soon as possible to ensure parents and carers have adequate time to plan.

Consent2Go

Approval for camps, excursions and critical medical information for students is available on Consent2Go. Parents and carers are asked to regularly monitor and update this information.

Severe Weather and Emergency Closure

In the event of emergency closure, communication will be made to parents and carers via SMS and email. Parents and carers should also tune in to local radio and check the school website and social media channels.

1.2 External Communications

Dealing With The Media

When Mazenod College issues a media release or initiates contact with the media we will nominate individuals who are specifically authorised to talk to the media about the issue at hand. No one else is authorised to speak to the media on behalf of Mazenod College except the nominated spokesperson. When the media approach the College for a story or as part of an investigation, we

need to be careful the right person responds. The staff authorised to speak with the media is the Principal or a nominated spokesperson delegated by the Principal.

Prospective Parents/Carers

The school prospectus is published on the website. Prospective parents and carers may request a printed copy. Prospective parents and carers are invited to Open Evenings and College Tours to enable them to see the school operating.

MOCA

The Mazenod Old Collegians' Association (MOCA) was formed with a view to providing opportunities for former students to maintain contact with each other and with the college as they make their way through life. The Association is run by a Committee made up of former students who are committed to developing initiatives that enable community connectivity and support, while living out the core values.

Communication With Other Schools and Outside Agencies

Prior to students joining Year 7, contact is made with primary schools to gain further information about them to help and support their transition to Mazenod. We recognise that students have diverse needs, and where required we are supported by various agencies and groups of professionals including medical services. We hold information on all students in the College and from time to time we are required to pass some of this information to others for educational purposes. Any information passed on will be in accordance with the Mazenod College Privacy Policy and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS).

2.1 RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND LEGISLATION

2.1 Mazenod College Policy Linkage

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

- Mazenod College Media and Communications Policy
- Mazenod College Privacy Policy
- Mazenod College Attendance Policy
- Mazenod College Responsible User of Technology and Social Media Policy

Copies of all policies are available on MazCom.