Purpose	The purpose of this policy twofold. Firstly, to outline College expectations in relation to communication and interactions between and across stakeholders, including:
	• student to student
	• student to staff/third parties
	• parent to staff/third parties
	Secondly, to provide clarity for parents/guardians and students about communication platforms within the College, clarifying where information can be found, responsibilities for the dissemination of information, and responsibilities for accessing information. The aim of this policy is to reduce unnecessary duplication of work and notifications for students and parents/guardians, and ensure the preservation of meaningful partnerships between home and the College, enhancing student outcomes.

Scope	Students and parents/guardians	
Status	APPROVED	**Supersedes:** Communications Policy
Authorised by	Principal	**Date of Authorisation:** August 2025
References	• Online Safety Act (2021) Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024 • Digital Duty of Care • St Patrick's College Townsville Privacy Policy • St Patrick's College Townsville Media Consent • St Patrick's College Townsville Staff Code of Conduct • St Patrick's College Townsville Critical Incident Plan • St Patrick's College Townsville Academic Integrity Policy • St Patrick's College Townsville AI Governance and Policy • St Patrick's College Townsville Communications Policy Staff • St Patrick's College Townsville Complaints Handling Policy • St Patrick's College Townsville Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedures	
Review Date	Every 2 years	Review Date: January 2028
Policy Owner	St Patrick's College Townsville	

Respectful and effective communication is integral to ensuring productive relationships and quality partnership, both of which are essential in modelling standards of civility to students, and in enhancing educational outcomes for students. St Patrick's College Townsville takes seriously its responsibility to ensure:

- Communication which is clear and accessible
- Communication forums which enable partnership between parents/guardians and staff (across residential and educational contexts)
- Communication which upholds psychological and physical safety of all stakeholders
- Communication which is timely (mindful of the right of all workers to disconnect)

College Responsibilities

- Ensuring clarity in relation to communication platforms at the College, including the purpose and audience for information.
- Ensuring appropriate 'how to' support for stakeholders in accessing College communication platforms.
- Ensuring the functionality and integrity of College platforms and the transparency of up to date information.
- Maintaining appropriate permissions to College platforms to ensure privacy and confidentiality, where appropriate.
- Ensuring support for stakeholders where there are issues with accessibility of information.
- Responsiveness to stakeholder communications and concerns.
- Ensuring timely availability of information.
- Ensure clear protocols are in place for respectful communication and that all members of the College community understand their rights in the event of a breach of respectful communication.

Communication Protocols for Parents/Guardians and Students

- Engagement with the Communications Policy to ensure clarity of understanding about which communications platforms to access, for the information being sought.
- Engagement with information updates, with a particular focus on assessment updates and feedback, reporting, Academic Conferences, parent/guardian information evenings, College event updates, camp updates.
- Work within College platforms, systems, and forums to access information publicly available, including policies and procedures, academic schedules, the College calendar, information relating to extracurricular events, severe weather events.
- Attendance at face-to-face Academic Conferences.
- Respectful and timely communication of concerns in the first instance, with the party or parties concerned.
- Responsiveness to staff/College communications and concerns, including but not limited to:
  - Timely provision of any information requested by the College as necessary for the educational or business operations of the College.
  - Timely provision of any significant information that will assist the College in providing a high-quality education for and ensuring the care and safety of their children. This includes updates on student medical, media consent and legal documents pertaining to custody matters.
  - Timely provision of contact details, medical, media consent and other related matters remains current.
- Student adherence to national legislation in relation to social media age limits, with strong oversight by parents/guardians.
- Requests for information, feedback, or action should be appropriate in nature and allow adequate time for a considered response while ensuring that requests remain balanced and respectful of College responsibilities.

Right to Disconnect

- Staff are not expected to communicate out of hours, or access communications out of hours, unless they are in an 'on call' capacity, managing potentially sensitive and/or urgent matters, that have been escalated to them. The College respects the right of staff to disconnect, including during advertised holiday periods.
- Unless in an emergency, communication within business hours, respecting the right of workers at the College to disconnect after hours and during holiday periods.

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Raising Concerns and Respectful Communication

Where any stakeholder of the College wishes to raise a concern, they should follow the Complaints & Dispute Resolution Process. Members of the College community are asked to refrain from communication which harms partnership. This includes:

- Posting comments on social media forums that are harmful to the reputation of the College, College staff, students, other parents/guardians, third parties, or are procedurally unfair.
- Spreading malicious gossip or rumours which are damaging to reputation and procedurally unfair.
- Adopting a demanding or threatening tone.
- Using demanding or threatening words.

Respectful Communication

A healthy workplace requires that all members of the College community are responsible for ensuring respectful communication (parents/guardians, students, staff, external stakeholders). This requires appropriate consideration of words, tone, place, timing and platform of communications. All interactions at the College, or between stakeholders of the College, should be respectful of the dignity of each person, whether online or face to face.

All stakeholders are required to desist from communications that have the potential to be intimidatory, including, but not limited to:

- standing over any member of the College community or external stakeholder in such a way that impacts psychosocial safety.
- engaging in physical actions such as stomping, fist slamming, throwing items in such a way that impacts psychosocial safety of any member of the College community or external stakeholder.
- the use of pointing gestures which infringe upon the physical space of any member of the College community or external stakeholder, in such a way that impacts on psychosocial safety.
- mocking or mimicking the mannerisms or traits of any member of the College community or external stakeholder, in such a way that minimises the dignity of others or impacts on psychosocial safety.
- using sexual slurs or innuendo to undermine the reputation of a person.
- persistently talking over the top of others, using heightened language/words, speaking in a heightened volume, all of which have the potential to impact on the psycho-social safety of others.
- making explicit or implicit threats to the health or safety of another, or encouraging others to engage in behaviours that contravene College values, such as fair play, respect for opponents, respect for professional judgements.

Where communication patterns of any member of the College community persistently fail to maintain standards of respectful communication, stakeholders have the right to:

- temporarily suspend and withdraw from interactions which become disrespectful, harmful or intimidatory.
- access support.
- refer the matter to the Principal for action, which may include:
  - appointing a delegate to conduct an investigation.
  - suspending access to College systems and communication or social media forums.
  - suspending access to College staff and grounds.
  - withdrawing the enrolment contract of a student or students.
  - referring the matter to the Police
  - pursuing civil action

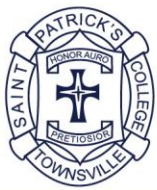| Version Number: | 1.0 | Date Modified: | August 2028 |
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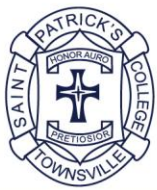
College Communication Platforms and Forums

Recognising that effective communication requires clarity, accessibility and predictability, stakeholders are advised of the College's Communication Platforms below:

Communication Platforms

The College has the following Communication platforms, the audience and purpose for which is indicated below:

Platform	Accessed by	Audience	Purpose
College Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Tik Tok.	Ongoing, regular updates	Parents/guardians and family members (of appropriate age) Students (of appropriate age) Community	Promotional material which celebrates achievements of staff and students across the College.
College Newsletters	Online Communication Twice termly, currently sent by email, in time, to be accessed via the College Website	Parents/guardians Students Teachers	To update stakeholders on College events, matters, issues.
College Website	Online Communication Ongoing, https://www.stpatscollege.qld.edu.au/	Public Prospective families Alumni	To provide information about the College, which should be public facing, including the strategic plan, governance arrangements, annual report and some policies
Learning Hub	Online Communication Ongoing, Unit Pages

Ongoing, Student Dashboard | Students

Students | To provide access to information for students enrolled at the College, including subject course overviews, unit resources, assessment.

To provide access to policies and processes |
| Learning Hub | Online Communication Ongoing, Parent Dashboard, accessed through the College App from 2026 | Parents/guardians | To provide access to information relevant to parents of enrolled students, including: policies, processes, assessment timetables, event plans, calendar of |

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			events, SET planning and subject selection information.
Parent Orbit App	Online App	Parents/guardians	Provides access to: Reporting information Parent Dashboard in Learning Hub Fee Payment Excursion and College Event Approvals Comms regarding: - bus delays - emergency events - last minute updates to logistical arrangements - critical incidents
Reporting and Academic Feedback	Online through Parent Lounge, available on the College App.	Parents/guardians and students	Continuous information in relation to assessment outcomes and feedback per subject, as well as Semester Reports.
REACH	Online communication platform for residential staff	Residential staff, parents/guardians and students	Leave application and approval Information necessary for the care of students
SMS	Messaging via parent individual phone number	Parents/guardians	Individual student unexplained absence, bus delays, weather emergencies, last minute notification to logistical arrangements Critical Incidents
Email/Phone Calls	Messaging via parent individual phone number or email address	Parents/guardians	Notification regarding important events or reminders Further discussion of commendations, supports or concerns To arrange an individual meeting or to summarise outcomes from a meeting. Critical Incidents

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Communication Forums

Forum	Accessed by	Audience	Purpose
Academic Conferences	Face to Face Communication	Teachers Parents/guardians Students	To provide a forum for dialogue between teachers, students and parents/guardians about subject outcomes and areas for improvement/ focussed attention.
Parent/Guardian Information Evenings	Face to face	Parents/guardians	To provide information in relation to College processes, education updates, subject selection, orientation, transition, understanding adolescent wellbeing and care of young people
SET Planning Meetings	Face to face	Year 10 students and their parents/ guardians, with an assigned mentor	To support post school transition planning and Senior school outcomes and subject selection

Communication Platforms – Learning

Parents/guardians are able to access most information pertinent to learning programs, through the College's Learning Hub. This includes:

- Academic policies and processes
- Course overviews
- Assessment schedules
- Student results and task feedback are accessible through the Parent Portal

It is an expectation of the College that parents/guardians work within these platforms. It is unsustainable for staff to personally update each parent of assessment progress.

Media Consent

- Communication between the College and media is guided by the College Media Consent Form which parents/guardians are asked to sign on enrolment and are able to update if circumstances change.
- All media enquiries are to be directed in the first instance to the Director of Engagement, Marketing & Communications or Principal (or delegate) in his/her absence.

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