

# **GrangeCommunity College Communications Policy**

## **Title of Policy :**

Grange Community College Communications Policy

## **1. Introductory Statement**

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

## **2. Scope:**

This policy applies to all those having interest in or dealings with the college, i.e. students both adult and second level, past students, intending students, teachers, SNAs and all other staff, including the principal and deputy principal, parents, Board of Management members, VEC committee members and staff, Department of Education and Skills, inspectors and staff, and the local community. Certain parts of the policy apply during school time, but others may apply at any time. Grange Community College's Data Protection Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## **3. Rationale**

The need for this policy has been high-lighted by staff, students and parents.

It is necessary for health and safety

It is necessary for the school to function effectively as a school community and as part of the wider society

## **4. Relationship to the School's 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
- which will create a safe, healthy learning environment that nurtures self-discipline and encourages our pupils to take responsibility for their own learning

- which will promote co-operation, team-work and commitment within the school and community so that all are unified as partners in learning for life

## **5. 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 Grange Community College should:

- keep staff, pupils, parents, SNAs, Board of Management members, the VEC, 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 6A below)
- take account of all relevant legislation and school policies
- be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Mission Statement.

## **6. Policy Content**

This section is in three parts.

### **6 A. Range of Communication Methods Used:**

Code of Behaviour signed by parents

verbal

telephone call

school journal

meetings (parent/teacher, staff, staff council, assistant principal, subject teacher, care team, etc., or private eg. parent/principal, etc.)

intercom

letter

e-mail

text (including for adult students)

School reports

Behaviour sheets

Yellow/white form

Newsletter

School brochure

Advertisements, articles or photographs in local paper

Public access to documents (eg. policies available to parents in the school or issued to them from time to time)

School website  
 Co Dublin VEC website (including link to Grange)  
 Staff handbook  
 School calendar of meetings, holidays etc.  
 Staff-room calendar  
 Notice boards  
 White board in staff-room  
 Post-box -'Pigeon hole' in staff-room  
 Home Visit by HSCL (See section 6C 2 below)  
 Temporary or permanent registers  
 Sign-out book in the general office  
 Accident/incident book  
 Minutes of staff and other teacher meetings in Deputy Principal's office  
 Parents Association meetings  
 Meetings as per Guidance Plan  
 Letter or report received regarding Child Protection (see Guide lines on  
 Child Protection adopted by school from DES)  
 Any communication with Social Services, DES, NEWB etc.  
 (Intranet) e-portal  
 (Moodle for adult students)  
 An on-line interactive application for adult/general second level students  
 and students applying to SEC  
 N.B. This list is not exhaustive. Also some elements are at the planning  
 stage as policy is being written

## **6 B. Internal Communication**

### **1. 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 Wednesday meetings
- Staff council meeting - a meeting of all staff, convened as per articles of management, department circulars and relevant legislation . An agenda should be posted on the whiteboard in the staff-room in advance with an opportunity for staff members to add items of concern ( Teachers are requested where possible to add items in the form of an initialled proposal, or a report
- Meeting of teachers eg subject group, Care-team, assistant principals, JCSP, or other - as and when required.
- In Staff-room - whiteboard - for day to day information for teachers
  - notice-boards - for on-going information re unions, JCSP, School Development Planning, etc
  - calendar

- pigeon holes -for post,circulars, requested information,

yellow

forms, etc

- Staff handbook current policies and procedures, staff list, information about the school, important telephone numbers, etc.
- Minutes of staff meetings and staff Council meetings - to be kept for information in DPs office
- E-mail (School accounts for all teachers will be 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 work to be done, should normally be done through the Principal.
- Communication of a formal nature between teachers of Grange CC and Colaiste Reachrann should normally be done through the Principals or with their knowledge.
- Information regarding the starting date of a new student should be at a staff briefing (formal/informal), although it would be a courtesy if the new pupil were introduced to the class tutor on the first day
- 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 in addition to informing parents, students, they would normally inform staff at a staff meeting, put event on staffroom calendar and post a reminder and a list of students involved on the whiteboard in the staff-room.
- 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 the journal or accompany the student to the next class in person.
- Referral of a student to the Care-team or 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, or the matter may be brought straight to the Principal. An accident or an incident should be reported in the book in the general office.
- 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 by a message through the secretary.
- If a student is suspended a notice will be put on the whiteboard indicating that the pupil will be absent and indicating the dates of absence. If it is necessary to notify a student's absence on the whiteboard for other reasons, these will be specified.

## **2. Teachers - Adult Students**

Induction Meeting for communicating essential information about the school - All tutors of adult students must use the Adult Induction Policy, which is available in the Adult Ed. office to brief new students when they arrive.

Feedback on assessment is currently verbal

(intranet / moodle may be used for communicating notes to adult students)

Accreditation information is communicated to students in writing

## **3. Teachers - Second-level student**

Communication between teacher and second-level students is on an on-going, daily basis, for example, assemblies, roll-call, etc.

For matters relating to guidance policy, critical incident, discipline (Code of Behaviour), anti-bullying procedure, etc., please see the relevant school policies.

## **C. External Communication**

### **C 1. Communication to and from the Board of Management**

The Board of Management of Grange Community College is a sub-committee of the County Dublin VEC and as such reports directly to the VEC through its minutes which are written by the Principal, who acts as Secretary to the Board.

Minutes of meetings are kept in the Deputy Principal's office.

It is represented at Committee level by the Chair and the Board members who are also part of the VEC.

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 VEC Boards of Management as set out in the VEC manual.

### **C 2. Home-School Communication**

The school communicates to parents through the school journal, school reports, parent-teacher meetings, letters, texts, newsletters, and telephone.

### **C 3. Home School Community Liaison**

Grange Community College has a full-time HSCL

The aims of the HSCL are:

- To work with the parents to help each student get the most out of school
- To work with parents and the community so that students stay in school to Leaving Cert and beyond
- To give information and support to parents
- To visit the parents and keep them in touch with the school
- To invite the parents to play an active part in their child's education

### **C 4. School Communications with Adult Learners**

The school uses advertisements, letters and telephone calls

Text-messaging system is used, as for second level, for information on school closures, the cancellation of a class, or other relevant items

The school website is being up-dated to include an information area for adult students.

### **C 5. 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.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of staff will be responsible for the implementation of the policy.

## **8. 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.

## **9. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

Under the direction of the Principal the policy will be monitored by the committee which drew it up.

This policy will be reviewed after two years or sooner if necessitated by legislation or requested by Staff Council or the Board of Management.

## **10. Ratification and Communication**

This policy will be ratified by the Board of Management

It will be made available to parents

It will be published in the Staff booklet for current staff and a copy of this booklet will be given to new teachers coming into the school

It will be published on the school's website

## **11. Implementation Date**

This policy will come into effect after being signed by the Board of Management

Signed..... Date.....  
Chairperson of Board of Management

## Appendix

Definition:

Parent - In this policy where parent is mentioned, it refers to parent(s), guardian(s),

foster parent(s), or the primary carer for a student, as applicable.