



EMINENCE PRIVATE SCHOOL مدرسة أيميننس الخاصة

Communication Policy

Version 4.0





POLICY		COMMUNICATION POLICY	
STATUS		Implemented	
FOCUS		Expectations from stakeholders when it comes to communication	
RESPONSIBILITY		School leadership	
APPLICABILITY		School Community	
DATE OF REVIEW		FIRST REVIEW: Nov 2020 SECOND REVIEW: March 2021 THIRD REVIEW: March 2022 FOURTH REVIEW: June 2023 NEXT REVIEW: June 2024	



Policy Objective

The main objective of this policy is to ensure and promote efficient, effective and safe communication among the school staff, Parents/guardians, students and others.

Rationale

Effective communication is the key to the success of an organization. In today's world, when most of this communication happens online, it is also essential to make sure it is safe. Thus, the communication policy of Eminence Private School works towards bringing in clarity in processes and expectations when it comes to etiquette, rules and safety so as to contribute to a positive learning community.

Scope

The scope of this policy is the whole school community. This policy would be reviewed half yearly.

Roles and Responsibilities

The School Leadership is primarily responsible for the effective implementation of the policy.

General Communication Etiquette

General principles that Eminence expects its community adheres to while communicating include:

- All communications among staff, parents and students should be polite and respectful.
- As far as possible correspondences should be kept short and to the point.
- Avoid using all Caps in emails, circulars or messages as it could be considered as a sign of anger.
- The subject of the communication (if emails) should be mentioned and kept short and must relate directly to the content.
- All attachments should be scanned for virus before they are sent or downloaded.
- Make sure that all text/graphics in electronic communications are large enough to be seen or read.
- Run spell/grammar check on all electronic communications
- All written communication is jargon free, clear and succinct.

Applicable UAE Law on Misusing Communication Channels

It is important for staff and parents to be aware of the laws prevalent in UAE in relation to the use of electronic media. Certain acts like cybercrimes and triggering discrimination and hatred are punishable as per the law.



Key provisions relevant to schools - excerpts of Federal Decree-Law no. 5:

Article 21---- Invasion of privacy, including photographing others, or creating, transferring, disclosing, copying or saving electronic photos (just taking a photo or video of someone without their permission, or saving a photo they have posted, is enough). Defamation. Publishing news, photos, scenes, comments, statements or information, even if true and correct. Amending or processing a record, photo or scene for the purpose of defamation of or offending another person or for attacking or invading his privacy--- Up to 6 months' imprisonment +/- fine of AED 150k

Key provisions relevant to school – excerpt from Federal Decree Law No 2

Article 6 ----Any person, who commits any act of discrimination of any form by any means of expression or by any other means, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a period not less than five years, and by a fine not less than five hundred thousand dirhams and not exceeding one million dirhams or either one of these two penalties,

Guidelines

Multiple mediums are used in Eminence for communication and includes:

- Emails
- Telephone
- Face -to face (physical or online through video conferencing)
- School's Social Network Pages
- School Website
- School's Mobile Communication App
- School's ERP

Emails

All official communication from the school including important notices shall be communicated via email from the school's official email ID to registered email ID of parents as well as the school provided student IDs (where it is for the eyes of students also), keeping to the relevant provisions of the school's acceptable use policy (EPS AUP).

- When emailing a group from the school (For example Parents) blind copy (bcc) should be utilized so as to protect the privacy of the email addresses being used.
- All staff emails must have standardized signature as provided by the school (Ref: School AUP).

Staff and Internal Email

It is expected that emails are checked within a 24-hour period during working says.

Staff may choose to send and respond to work related emails at a time of their choosing, but there is no expectation to respond to these emails outside of school hours, unless the matter is of utmost urgency.

Staff may avoid responding to rude or abusive emails; and such emails can be forwarded to the HR department and/or immediate supervisor in for further action.



Staff and External Email

When staff corresponds with parents, students or any other external party, the following needs to be followed:

- Emails should be used only for official communication.
- Always mark a copy to the concerned department head when responding to parents' concerns.
- Avoid sending serious concerns about students over an email. For such matters, arrange a face-to-face discussion (virtual / physical) as far as possible.

Parents to School Email

- When emailing the school, parents are to ensure to include the student's full name and class.
- Emails can be used to request information on a simple matter or to request a time for a telephone call or meeting for more detailed or complex matters or to report any incident or complaint or for queries.
- Parents are required to use polite language in their emails and maintain a certain level of decorum.
- The email sent by parents shall be reverted to during the working hours of the school. Staff may choose to respond to work related emails outside of school hours, but there is no professional expectation to do so.

Students to staff

- Students may email staff from their school provided email account in relation to their learning. All students shall follow the below mentioned e-mail protocol as instructed in their class:
- Provide proper subject line
- Use Ms/Mrs/Mr and Surname or "Ma'am" / "Sir" as salutation
- Use standard English
- Avoid abbreviations or colloquial usages
- Sign off with a Thank you and/or Kind Regards

Telephone (staff)

Though telephone is one of the easier modes of communication, the school does not encourage this mode unless it is unavoidable. No staff is obliged to answer their personal mobiles when at work. Parents always have the option of calling on the school landline and requesting to speak to the staff. However, the school reserves the right to postpone or deny such request depending on the availability of the staff or depending on the gravity of the matter.

While using telephone as a means of communication staff are required to follow the below mentioned points:

- If the call is from the side of the staff or based on an appointment, write down everything needed to communicate regarding the topic for which the call is being made.
- Keep a phone log. Record the date, time, and reason for calling that parent or reason for accepting the call from the parent.
- If a call is made from the school's side and the parent is unable to talk to you at that time, politely ask when a good time would be to call again as per the mutually agreed time.



- If leaving a voice mail; identify who you are, what you are calling about, and leave information for them to return the phone call.
- If the call is regarding a matter which does not concern that staff or for a matter to which staff does not have enough information, politely ask for time to revert and alert the school leadership for addressing the matter.

Face- to face communication (staff)

Face to face communication can happen virtually or physically from the school. These are individual meetings that could be with one parent, both parents, guardians and the whole family. These could also be with outside people for specific needs. There are various occasions where this mode is used:

- Parent teacher meetings
- Parent requested meetings
- Admissions
- Poor performance in academics
- Addressing various school related and/or behavioral issues
- Fee default
- Discussions with external entities
- Others (as deemed fit by the school authorities for the face to face)

While carrying out face to face interactions, the following points need to be considered:

- Arrange the meeting at a time and through a medium that is mutually agreed on.
- Be attentive and listen.
- Always start and end the conference on a positive note.
- Be prepared! Have your agenda ready as well as supporting evidence or documents as per the focus of the communication.
- Never talk about other students or staff
- When talking to parents, let the parent know you care about their child.
- Keep a face-to-face meeting journal. Record the date, time, reason, and key points discussed in the conference.
- If in any meeting, the situation becomes difficult, call the office for assistance immediately.

Social Media Pages (School)

The School's Social networking platforms is used to provide relevant updates on school activities/events and key elements. Any key messages except enquiries will be accepted through these. School's social networking communication shall be:

- True and precise
- Shall not contain any information that can be deemed offensive to any religion, nation or individual.
- Shall follow all the guidelines that are set in the Social Media guidelines of the school.



School Website (school)

School website is mainly used by the school to communicate to the outer world about the school. Hence Eminence shall make sure that in the school website:

- Only information that is true and precise will be shown
- There will be nothing that could be deemed as misleading

Mobile Communication App (Staff and parents)

A Parent-Teacher communication channel for day-to-day communication is in place through the school's mobile communication app. This acts as a replacement of the school diary at Eminence and is also used instead of WhatsApp. WhatsApp communication is not encouraged in the school.

- All daily class related circulars and announcements that generally go in a school diary shall be informed using this app.
- Parents can also send teachers messages on this when they need to communicate.

Enterprise Resource Planning Software (Staff)

This is the software that Eminence uses for academic and administration management in the school. All important information about the child is easily communicated via ERP which include timetables, Zoom links (for online classes), quizzes and tests, academic transcripts, fee payments, attendance, homework and projects are all available in ERP. The system is also used for sending important announcements. When communicating through the ERP below given guidelines should be followed:

- ERP should only be used to deliver important information, and documents for students and parents.
- Student's E-diary with daily schedule, academic transcripts, fee payments, and other school related documents are to be uploaded on to the Students/Parents portal.
- ERP Should not be used for any private conversations.
- The documents made available in ERP has to be approved by the respective compartment heads.
- Personal data stored in the ERP shall be made available only as per the Data Protection Policy of Eminence and shall not be shared with any external entities.

General Guidelines for Staff while Communicating to Parents

- Approach discussion in an open, courteous and respectful manner.
- Listen attentively to the concerns of parents, seeking clarification where necessary.
- Present their own or the school's point of view in professional and objective terms.
- Take into consideration cultural and personal sensitivities and protocols when dealing with the school community
- Make available materials and information for a parent who lives apart from the child/ren upon request.



Strategies for Unacceptable Use

Inappropriate communication shall be admonished with strict actions which include warning letters and in worst cases termination when it comes to staff. In any case, staff are subjected to such situations from an outside party / parent, they shall report to the immediate supervisor without delay.

According to the school's behavior policy (for both students and staff), Acceptable use policy and MoE Behavior Policy these are the actions to be taken whenever unacceptable communication occurs from the side of students and staff:

Students

Degree Upon Committing	First Action Plan	First Repetition	Second Repetition	Third or More Repetition
Low Severity – Simple Offence – Behavior marks that can be deducted = 4	Verbal Warning	Inform the Parent/written warning	Call the parent If no response written warning to parent and undertaking to not repeat signed by parent	Refer to Counsellor Implement a set of strategies to reduce the misconduct Convert the offences to medium severity offence if it repeats and take necessary action
Medium Severity – Behavior marks that can be deducted = 8	Call parent and agreement for reforming child's behavior to be signed Written warning Monitor behavior	Get the signature of parent on a warning letter	Suspend the student from online classes for 2 days	Suspend the student from online classes for 3 days with a warning. Refer to school counsellor and if still persists convert to high severity offence.
High Severity Offence – Behavior marks that can be deducted =12	School leadership along with online safety group reach a decision Immediate suspension from online platform for 2 days.	Recurrence: Suspension from online platform Immediate summon to parent and signing the decision and expulsion from school.		

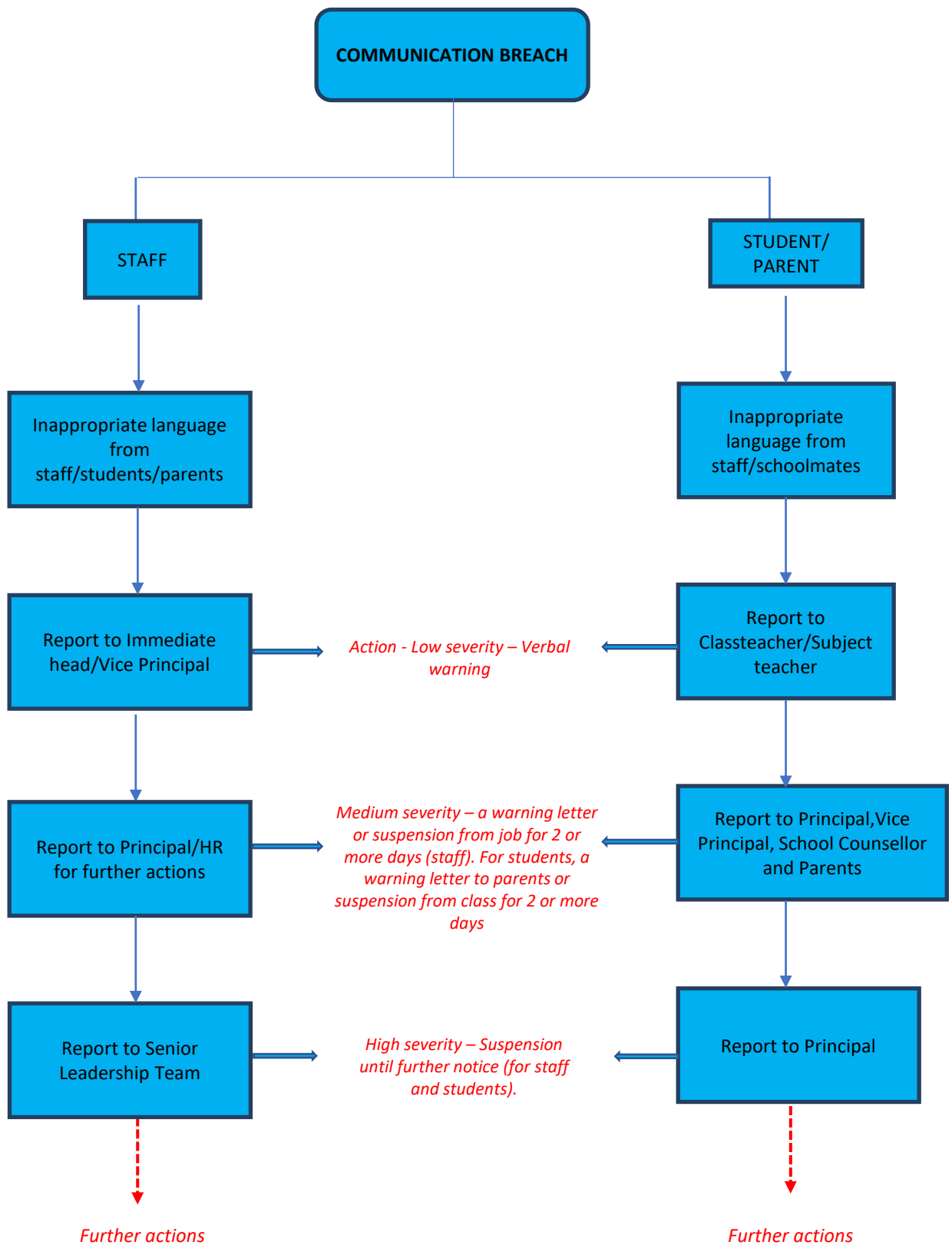


Staff

Degree Upon Committing	First Action Plan	First Repetition	Second Repetition	Third or More Repetition
Low Severity	Report to immediate Head	Report to school Counselor and HR	A written memo from Principal	A written warning letter from Principal
Medium Severity	Report to immediate Head and HR	Warning letter from Principal	Suspension from job for 2 Days	Suspension from job until further notice
High Severity Offence	School leadership, HR along with online safety group reach a decision. Immediate termination from job			

Reporting

The flow chart showing the reporting structure of communication breach followed in Eminence school. Based on the severity the action taken by school also incorporated in this.





Cross Reference

The following policies are also linked to the School's online safety practice.

- Acceptable Use Policy
- MOE Student behavior Management – Distance learning Policy
- Behavior Policy (Staff and Student)
- Online Safety Policy