

# DOMINIC COLLEGE

*A Catholic School in the Salesian Tradition*



## COMMUNICATION POLICY

Date	October 2023
Responsible Position	College Leadership Team
Approved By	College Board
Next Review Date	2028
Related Documents	Archbishop's Charter for Catholic Schools Australian Privacy Principles Privacy Act Mobile Device Policy Salesian Charter for Australian Schools WHS Act

# Table of Contents

<b>1. OUR PHILOSOPHY</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2. RATIONALE</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>3. THE SALESIAN CHARTER</b> .....	<b>3</b>
A HOME THAT WELCOMES .....	3
A PARISH THAT EVANGELISES .....	4
A SCHOOL THAT PREPARES FOR LIFE .....	4
A PLAYGROUND WHERE FRIENDS MEET .....	4
<b>4. MOBILE DEVICES</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5. EMAIL</b> .....	<b>5</b>
MUTUAL EMAIL EXPECTATIONS .....	5
EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF.....	6
EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS .....	6

## 1. OUR PHILOSOPHY

---

Dominic College, as a Salesian school, adheres to both the Archbishop's Charter for Catholic Schools and the Salesian Charter.

The Archbishop's Charter identifies four domains:

- Catholic identity
- Learning
- Leadership
- Mission

The Salesian Charter guides how Dominic College enacts these domains with a focus on:

- A HOME that welcomes
- A PARISH that evangelises
- A SCHOOL that prepares for life
- A PLAYGROUND where friends meet

These Charters have a significant impact on how we communicate with each other in speech, in writing, electronically, and in actions.

## 2. RATIONALE

---

Dominic College is committed to open, respectful, and timely communication that is measured, sensitive and constructive. In adhering to this commitment, we aim to strengthen our communication through goodwill and positive relationships between members of the College community to enhance shared commitment to the mission and vision of the College.

Guided by the four central pillars in the Salesian Charter, the purpose of this policy is to outline how the College expects all community members to communicate with each other regardless of the communication method used.

## 3. THE SALESIAN CHARTER

---

Living out the Salesian Charter requires us to communicate in certain ways.

### A HOME THAT WELCOMES

Being a HOME that welcomes means that we will:

- Be respectful, courteous, and positive in our communications
- Use inclusive language and actions
- Demonstrate openness and respect for diversity and for new and differing points of view

## A PARISH THAT EVANGELISES

Being a PARISH that evangelises means that we will:

- Avoid blasphemy and profanity
- Reflect Christ's love for all through respectful open communication
- Show respect for the Catholic Salesian traditions of the College

## A SCHOOL THAT PREPARES FOR LIFE

Being a SCHOOL that prepares for life means we will:

- Embrace professional communication and be respectful of the time and opinions of others
- Respond to communications in a timely manner and be aware of work and leave schedules
- Communicate at appropriate times and places and through appropriate means
- Embrace communication that encourages sharing and development of a common understanding
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and follow legal requirements as set out in various acts, laws, and legislation
- Ensure special attention is paid to the handling of personal information, including health and sensitive information, and the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of all in accordance with the:
  - a. The Privacy Act and the Australian Privacy Principles
  - b. Workplace Health and Safety Act

## A PLAYGROUND WHERE FRIENDS MEET

The Salesian focus on love for one another encourages the building and development of friendship. Being a PLAYGROUND where friends meet means that communication between friends should be:

- Respectful of each person's roles, responsibilities, and abilities
- Recognise the value of each person in the communication methods and language used.
- Be open, honest, and focused on improvement and growth of a closer relationship.

## 4. MOBILE DEVICES

---

Use of mobile phones, smart watches, iPads, music players and other electronic devices should align with and acknowledge the purpose of Dominic College as an educational facility.

Staff should not be on their mobile device during meetings, when on duty, when doing yard assistance, or when supervising students.

Students should not be on their mobile device once school commences until after dismissal.

Students with health issues reliant on mobile technology are excepted.

Community members should ensure that their use of devices does not breach privacy, child protection, and our conduct and behaviour expectations.

## 5. EMAIL

---

Dominic College uses email communication extensively to support communications between the College and members of our community. The College provides each student and staff member with individual Dominic email accounts to support this capability.

Whilst email is an excellent, valuable, and a readily available communication tool, our community values all opportunities to engage face-to-face and in conversation, and these may be preferred in some situations.

All email sent or received to or from a Dominic address, and/or held on Dominic systems, are given to be owned by Dominic College, confidential and proprietary.

### MUTUAL EMAIL EXPECTATIONS

- Protect the privacy of recipients to ensure you do not disclose email addresses without permission, particularly when emailing a group or separated parents.
- Do not pass on personal or sensitive information in an email to a third party without the permission of the sender. College staff may be permitted to provide certain information under the College Privacy Policy.
- Be cognisant that members of the College community manage their email in different ways and can be dependent on their work commitments, organisational role and or workload. This effects when they read emails, when they respond to emails, and what communication method they use to respond.
- Follow appropriate email etiquette when communicating via email, including:
  - Use a formal salutation (e.g., Dear...).
  - Be brief but informative.
  - Be mindful of areas that may require a level of detailed discussion and consider if these should be dealt with in person or by telephone.
  - Be respectful and constructive.
  - Include only relevant persons in the email distribution.
  - Respect personal time, weekends, public holidays, and holiday periods.
- Aim to respond to emails within two working days where possible.
- When an email requires time to gather information, consult with others and reply appropriately, the recipient should respond to the sender acknowledging that the email has been received and indicate when an informed response might be expected.

- Consider whether email is the best method of communication, particularly if the matter is of a sensitive nature.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

- When absent from the College for an extended period of time, activate an 'out-of-office' message detailing a return date and who to contact in their absence.
- Staff may choose to send or respond to work related emails at a time of their own choosing, but there is no expectation to respond to these emails outside of business hours.
- Staff who are in designated Positions of Responsibility are expected to check their email regularly other than when they are on Personal Leave, Annual Leave, or Long Service Leave.
- Staff will not respond to offensive or abusive emails and will forward them to their immediate supervisor who will assist in determining the appropriate course of action.
- Use centralised staff communications such as the Daily Staff Bulletin and Weekly Staff Bulletin to convey messages to staff in order to streamline communications and reduce cognitive load.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Provide the College with an active personal email account to use as the primary communication address to facilitate regular and reliable communications to and from the College.
- Check their email account regularly.
- Keep the College informed at all times of any change to their email address.
- Ensure the parent/guardian supplied email account is secure and maintained so that College communications are received in a timely manner and read only by those persons for whom the communication was intended.
- Respond to requests for information and permission requests (e.g. excursions) by the requested deadline.
- Understand that personal messages to be passed onto children are not part of the College's communications system.