

E-mail Guidelines for Teacher and Parent Communication

St. Valentine School recognizes that electronic mail (e-mail) is a valuable communication tool that is widely used across our society. Staff members have e-mail accounts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication both within the organization and with the broader community.

Although e-mail has become a valuable communication tool, it is important to remember that it is not always a completely secure and confidential method of communication. We are concerned about maintaining privacy laws, especially as they relate to student records.

When using email –

- Please send only non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use e-mail to inform a teacher that your child is to be picked up at dismissal by someone else. A teacher may not have time to read your message in a timely fashion. Instead use the telephone to be sure your message is received and clearly understood.
- Your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioral issues are best addressed through a telephone conversation or by scheduling a personal conference with your child's teacher. An e-mail message on these matters is not appropriate.
- Please identify yourself in the subject line of your e-mail message and, if appropriate, the name of your child.
- Please keep all contacts professional. Jokes, amusing or special stories, chain letters, or commercial solicitations are inappropriate and reduce valuable teaching time.

General E-mail Guidelines for Parent Communication

- E-mail should be used for general information such as; class activities, curriculum, assignments, tests, deadlines and special events.
- E-mail may be used to arrange for a meeting/telephone call regarding a student issue including a general description of the issue (e.g. I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss my child's test.)
- Follow-up on an issue that has previously been discussed.

Unacceptable Use of Parent Communication

E-mail should not include:

- Any discussion related to other students.
- Personal information about other students.
- Specifics about a sensitive student issue which was not initiated by the parent or had not previously been discussed with the parent.
- Any discussion related to other staff.
- Any sensitive student information that would normally be discussed face-to-face or by phone.

Remember that e-mail is a quick way to send a message, but it is not necessarily the best way to get a quick reply.