**RBSC Communication**

Rose Bay Secondary College values parent communication and recognises the importance of having an effective system in place to assist this process. The following document has been produced with the aim of assisting parents to be able to identify who to talk to at Rose Bay Secondary College when they feel that they need assistance with a matter. In each instance if a parent does not have the teacher’s direct email they can address the enquiry to the email below stating their child’s name and class in the subject heading.

**rosebay-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au**

*Please note that there is a considerable amount of time and effort ensuring that every child is placed into the class where they can achieve their personal best. We do not move students from one class to another unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.*

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| **Position at RBSC** | **Matters that they deal with.**  |
| Classroom Teacher | First contact for anything pertaining to that individual subject. This may include class work, homework, assignments or a specific incident that occurred in that classroom. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening in the classroom or at home in relation to that topic. |
| Head Teacher KLA  | If a parent has worked with their child’s classroom teacher and feel that their needs should be further addressed. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening in the classroom or at home in relation to that topic.  |
| Head Teacher Teaching, Learning and Support  | If a parent feels that their child needs some support in the classroom due to diverse learning needs - gifted and talented or learning difficulties. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening in the classroom or at home in relation to their child’s learning.  |
| Year Adviser | Can assist with matters that are occurring outside of the classroom and with wellbeing concerns. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening at school or at home in relation to their child.  |
| Head Teacher Wellbeing (Careers Adviser) | Can assist with matters that are occurring outside the classroom and with wellbeing concerns that are serious in nature. Can also assist with serious ongoing medical condition notifications (diabetes, anaphylaxis). If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening at school or at home in relation to their child.  |
| Sports Coordinator  | Can assist with all matters pertaining to afternoon sport, external sport, Sports Committee and representative sport. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening at school or at home in relation to their child’s experience in sport.  |
| School Counsellors | Can assist with wellbeing and mental health concerns. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening at school or at home in relation to their child.  |
| Deputy Principal  | To be notified directly with serious concerns that a parent feels cannot be dealt with by other staff at the school. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening at school or at home in relation to their child.  |
| Principal | To be notified directly with serious concerns that a parent feels cannot be dealt with by the Deputy Principal. If a parent would like to share some positive experiences that are happening at school or at home in relation to their child.  |

**More information to ensure a positive experience for you and your child at RBSC.**

It is common for children to have difficulties at school. Most problems are minor, and you and your child can discuss them at home. But some issues need parent-teacher cooperation and problem-solving. Here’s how to make it work.

***Minor school problems: what to do***

It is normal for children to have some problems at school – for example, problems with school routines, making friends or schoolwork.

The first thing is to stop and think about the problem. How big is the problem? Can you let it go? Can you sort it out at home? Or do you need to talk to the teacher?

There are some problems that you can just let go. Sometimes your child just needs you to listen and understand, but not to act. For example, ‘I got a word wrong in my spelling test today’, or ‘I missed out on the SRC’. You can listen, give your child a hug and tell your child that everyone makes mistakes or misses out on things they want.

Children can build resilience and learn to cope with disappointment by learning to let smaller problems go.

There might be some minor problems that you and your child can sort out at home. You can encourage your child’s own problem-solving abilities by asking her what she could do to solve the problem.

You could also teach your child a useful strategy for handling these problems themselves. For example, if your child is forgetting to take his PE uniform to school, a useful strategy might be for him to put it into his bag the night before as you have suggested that he read his timetable the night before and prepare accordingly.

Solving small problems at home builds problem-solving skills and helps your child become more independent and responsible.

Other problems might need help from the teacher. For example, your child might state that they have too much or too little homework. After you look at your child’s book and see the amount of work being completed and the RBSC website that has the assessments tasks due for the term (this is the link <http://www.rosebay-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/assessment-planners>) if there is still cause for concern then email the classroom teacher.

***Persistent or complex problems: what to do***

If a problem won’t go away or is more complicated, you might need to work on the problem with your child’s teacher. For example, your child might be having ongoing difficulties in the playground with another child and your home strategies haven’t worked.

In this situation, a calm and positive approach is more likely to get a positive outcome for your child. Here’s what to do.

**Pause to calm down**

If something has just happened to upset your child, this can upset you too. But try to take some time to calm down before you do anything. This will help you avoid doing something you might regret later, like sending an angry email.

You could say, ‘I see you’re very upset about this, and I’m upset too. We need to calm down so we can think about what to do’. Saying this will help your child to learn this strategy too.

**Use it as a teaching opportunity**

Even with a serious problem, you can model positive problem-solving for your child by being positive, thinking about solutions and talking about working with the teacher. This is better than complaining or being aggressive.

You could say something like, ‘Let’s ask your Year Adviser if they have any ideas about how we can sort out this problem’. This kind of approach shows your child that you value the teacher’s opinion.

**Speak respectfully**

No matter what you think, it’s important to speak positively and respectfully about your child’s teacher and school in front of your child. If you complain or criticise the teacher, your child will do the same.

**Go through the right channels**

This usually means talking directly to your child’s teacher to start with. It’s best to send an email expressing your concern to right contact. Going straight to the principal can make the problem bigger than it is.

**Avoid defensiveness**

When there are problems, people sometimes feel defensive. For example, if either you or the teacher feels criticised, you could both end up feeling defensive.

But defensiveness can get in the way of problem-solving, so it’s good to try seeing the teacher’s perspective and to help the teacher see your perspective too. For example, ‘I can see it’s unrealistic to expect you to spend lunch time in the playground helping Ethan, but I’m worried because he’s lonely and has nobody to play with. How can we both help him with this?’

**Parent-teacher problem-solving steps**

If you decide you need to have a meeting with your child’s teacher about a serious problem, the following steps can help you and the teacher work together to get a positive outcome.

*1. Identify the problem*

Be clear and specific about what the problem is – for example, what’s happening, how often and who’s involved. It can help to use a question. For example, the problem of “How can we stop Jon insulting Jane” is easier to solve than “Jon never stops harassing Jane”.

It’s also helpful to ask your child’s teacher about the problem. This way you’ll hear about the situation from another person’s point of view. For example, “Jane has mentioned that Jon is insulting her. Have you witnessed this occurring?”

*2. Identify wants, needs and concerns*

Allow everyone to identify their needs, wants and concerns. If you want your child’s teacher to appreciate your concerns, it’ll help if you show that you appreciate the teacher’s position.

Use sentences such as ‘I understand…’, ‘I’m concerned about …’, ‘I need ….’ and ‘I want …’. For example, ‘I understand that it’s a big class, but I’m concerned that Alistair is falling behind because he doesn’t understand this maths’.

*3. Come up with solutions*

Work with the teacher to come up with as many potential solutions to the problem as you can. Your child’s teacher probably has a lot of experience dealing with school problems and will have strategies that have worked in the past. It’s very important not to judge ideas at this point. This increases the chances of finding the right solution to your problem.

*4. Evaluate the solutions*

Once you and the teacher have listed as many ideas as possible, think about the advantages and disadvantages of each solution. If a solution has more disadvantages than advantages, cross it off your list. Keep doing this until only useful and possible solutions remain.

When you’re doing this, it’s important to be realistic. For example, it’s not reasonable to expect a teacher to sit with your child during difficult activities, but it is reasonable to expect the teacher to check in with your child every so often.

*5. Choose one and give it a go*

Pick the best idea, or a combination of ideas, to try out. Write down what you and the teacher have agreed, who will do what and when. Decide when you’ll meet again to look at how the solution is working. Give the solution 1-2 weeks to work before you talk about it again.

*6. Assess how it went*

Consider everyone’s opinions and acknowledge everyone’s efforts when you look at how well the solution has worked:

What has worked well?

What hasn’t worked as well?

What could we do differently to help the solution work better?

If the problem still hasn’t gone away, you might need to get others involved to help generate possible solutions. These people might include the Head Teacher Wellbeing or the Deputy Principal. It’s a good idea to let the teacher know you’d like to talk with other staff members.

Adapted from: <http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/school_relationship.html>