Communication with Separated Parents

- All of Brighton Grammar School’s policies are intended to be up to date and be consistent with all relevant laws.
- Employees and Contractors are expected to comply with all applicable policies.
- Various parts of the policies require managers and staff to exercise discretion and the policies are not intended to be applied in a legalistic or prescriptive manner.
- These policies may be varied by Brighton Grammar School from time to time, in its absolute discretion.
- The policies do not form part of an employee’s contract of employment.

Brighton Grammar School is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that communication with separated parents is conducted in a sensitive and fair manner, both as a matter of justice and in the interest of the child. In order to facilitate and support this process, the following policy applies.

Primary and Alternate Contact Details

For practical reasons the School requests that families nominate one parent as the Primary Contact (usually the Parent with whom the child mostly resides) and the other parent will be listed as the Alternate Contact. Where the Application for Admission for the School is only signed by one parent, by default that parent will be treated as the Primary Contact.

The provision of personal student information by the School will be subject to any legal considerations including the wishes of the specific student, family arrangements, the School’s Privacy Policy and the Commonwealth Privacy Act.

General Information

Information regarding contact details will initially be drawn from the Application for Admission and thereafter from the Confirmation of Student Details Form which is updated at the commencement of the academic year. Only the Primary Contact will receive the Confirmation of Student Details Form. Upon request at the beginning of each year, a separate Confirmation of Student Details Form can be sent to the Alternate Contact to confirm information currently on the database regarding communication.

A Notice of Intent (Confirmation of Enrolment Status for the following year) is distributed in June and addressed to the Primary Contact. If there was a change in status of the enrolment, then the Alternate Contact would be contacted. There is an expectation that parents will communicate with each other regarding the enrolment status for the following year.

Both the Primary and the Alternate Contact will be provided with the following:

- School Portal Access;
- Newsletters;
- Parent/Teacher Interviews;
- Student Reports; and
- Parent Information Nights.
For those communications that are delivered to the home by the student (including camp forms and excursion notices), it is the responsibility of the student to inform his parent of such information and it is the responsibility of the parents to share this information with each other. Separate copies will not be distributed. This also applies for School photographs which will be sent home with the student.

Where parental consent is required, the School will accept the signature of either the Primary or the Alternate Contact, if both signatures appear on the Application for Admission. Where only one parent has signed the Application for Admission, consent will only be recognised by the signature of that person.

If communication to parents is via email, those emails will go to both parents in the first instance, but as separate emails. A response to a query from one parent will only receive a response to that parent. It is expected that parents communicate with each other to give a consistent response to the teacher.

**Illness**

If a student requires medical treatment or needs to be sent home from school due to illness, the designated Primary Contact will be contacted in the first instance. If they are unavailable, the Alternate Contact will be contacted. In the event of a serious illness or injury, it is expected that the parent contacted will communicate with the other parent.

For serious medical conditions, management plans will be sent to the Primary Contact for completion. It is the responsibility of the Primary Contact to share this information with the other parent. Normally these are completed at the beginning of each school year.

**Absence**

It is the responsibility of parents to contact the School if their child will be absent. In the event of such an explained absence, the School will not notify the other parent and it is expected that parents take responsibility for sharing this information with each other. In the event of an unexplained absence, the designated Primary Contact will be the person contacted.

**Disciplinary Matters**

In the event of a serious disciplinary matter that may involve suspension or expulsion, both the Primary and the Alternate Contact will be contacted.

**School Fees**

Payment of School Fees will remain the legal responsibility of all parents/guardians that sign the Application for Admission unless otherwise agreed in writing with the School.

**Exceptions**

If any parent requires specific communication arrangements outside of this policy, a request must be made in writing to the Headmaster detailing the reason behind the request.
Expectation of Parents

Parents are required to notify the School of the terms of any Court Order, including a Family Court parenting order, that contains residence or specific issues orders that may affect the manner in which the School is to communicate with either or both parents. The School will not act as an intermediary between parents.

Any dispute between parents in relation to matters affecting the educational welfare of their child should be resolved between the parents or by the appropriate Court. The School will endeavour to meet the requirements in its responsibility towards the child as a student of the School.