

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING POLICY

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RICHMOND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

مدرسة ريتشموند الدولية

Communication and Information Sharing Policy

Contents

1 Purpose and policy status	2
2 Scope.....	2
3 Core communication principles.....	2
4 Roles and responsibilities	3
5 Approved communication channels	4
6 Standards for written and verbal communication	5
7 Communication with parents and carers	6
8 Response standards	7
9 Safeguarding and child protection communication.....	7
10 Confidentiality data protection and information sharing.....	8
11 Digital platforms and professional boundaries.....	8
12 Social media website photography and media enquiries	9
13 Internal staff communication	9
14 Emergency crisis and business continuity communication	10
15 Accessible multilingual and inclusive communication.....	10
16 Meetings with parents and external professionals	11
17 Concerns complaints abusive communication and escalation	11
18 Communication records and evidence.....	11
19 Training monitoring and review.....	12
20 Related policies and documents.....	12



1 Purpose and policy status

Richmond International School and Richmond International Kindergarten are committed to communication that is clear, accurate, respectful, accessible and proportionate. Effective communication supports pupils' learning and wellbeing, strengthens partnership with families, protects confidential information and enables the school and kindergarten to respond safely when concerns or emergencies arise.

This policy sets the shared standards for internal and external communication. It gives practical effect to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Professional and Ethical Charter for Nurseries, Kindergartens and Private Schools Second Edition 2025, including the values of responsibility, quality and effective communication, and must be read with applicable Qatar laws, Ministry circulars and official instructions.

Where this policy conflicts with an applicable law or official Ministry instruction, the law or instruction takes precedence and the policy will be amended as soon as practicable. This policy does not replace safeguarding, complaints, emergency, data-protection or employment procedures.

2 Scope

This policy applies to the Board of Directors, Executive Principal, Kindergarten Principal, leaders, teachers, support and administrative staff, counsellor, nurse, site and transport teams, security officers, contractors, volunteers, pupils and parents or carers. It covers verbal, written, electronic, visual and public communication relating to either setting, whether sent on site, remotely or during an authorised activity.

3 Core communication principles

- The child's safety, dignity, learning and best interests guide communication decisions.
- Information is accurate, necessary, audience-appropriate and shared through an approved channel.
- Communication is courteous and culturally respectful and reflects the values, customs and laws of Qatar.
- Confidential or personal information is shared only with authorised people who need it for a legitimate purpose.
- The sender checks recipients, attachments, names, dates, permissions and factual accuracy before sending.
- Important decisions, agreements, incidents and actions are recorded in an appropriate school record.
- Families are treated fairly. Translation, explanation or a reasonable alternative format is provided where practicable.
- Safeguarding, safety and emergency information is escalated immediately and is never delayed by routine response times.
- Staff maintain professional boundaries and do not use communication to pursue personal, financial or private relationships with pupils or families.



4 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Key responsibilities
Board of Directors	Approves the policy, provides governance oversight and receives significant compliance or reputational concerns through the Executive Principal.
Executive Principal	Owns the policy; approves whole-setting, sensitive, media and crisis communications; determines escalation; authorises official statements; monitors implementation across both settings.
Kindergarten Principal	Implements the policy within RIK, assures the quality of parent communication and escalates safeguarding, complaints, safety and reputational matters.
SLT and MLT	Model the standards, check communications within their remit, ensure actions are followed through and retain appropriate records.
HR Manager and Admin Manager Registrar	Maintains accurate contact and registration information, manages authorised administrative communication and protects personnel and pupil records.
IT Manager	Maintains approved systems, access controls and account security; supports technical incidents; shares control of official social-media accounts with the Executive Principal.
Site Manager Transport and Maintenance Manager	Coordinates operational, transport, maintenance and site-safety communication and oversees relevant instructions to security officers.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Controls safeguarding information-sharing and referrals, maintains confidential records and advises staff on safe communication.
All staff	Use approved channels, communicate professionally, verify information, protect confidentiality, respond within expectations and report concerns promptly.
Parents and carers	Keep contact details current, use official channels respectfully, read communications, respond when requested and raise concerns through the correct route.



Role	Key responsibilities
Pupils	Communicate respectfully, use digital platforms safely and report unsafe, harmful or inappropriate communication.

5 Approved communication channels

The purpose and sensitivity of a message determine the channel. A convenient channel is not automatically a suitable channel.

Channel	Approved use	Key controls
Official school email	Formal notices, reports, meeting confirmations, individual pupil matters and communication requiring an auditable record.	Use school accounts; check recipients and attachments; use blind copy for unrelated group recipients where appropriate.
ClassDojo	EYFS learning updates, routine class information, extended learning and appropriate parent messages.	No urgent safeguarding, medical or confidential case management; staff follow the ClassDojo Policy.
Microsoft Teams	Years 1-6 curriculum communication, resources, announcements and extended learning.	Use school accounts and approved groups; no confidential pupil case discussions in open channels.
Telephone or meeting	Discussion, clarification and sensitive matters best handled directly.	Confirm significant decisions or agreed actions in writing and record them appropriately.
School MIS and approved records	Attendance, registration, contact details, incidents, progress and authorised administrative records.	Role-based access; factual entries; prompt updates; no informal commentary.
Website and official social media	Public information, approved celebration of learning and community engagement.	Only authorised account holders publish; apply consent, safeguarding and approval controls.
SMS or approved mass message	Urgent operational notices, closures, transport disruption and emergency instructions.	Authorised sender; concise verified message; protect privacy; direct families to the official update channel.



Channel	Approved use	Key controls
Staff WhatsApp group	Brief operational reminders where authorised by leadership.	Not the formal record for safeguarding, complaints, pupil cases, HR matters or confidential data.
Letters and printed notices	Formal or accessible communication where a hard copy is appropriate.	Approved template, accurate translation where required, controlled distribution and retained copy.
In person at reception	Routine enquiries, document collection and arranged meetings.	Protect privacy; do not discuss a pupil or staff member where others can overhear.

6 Standards for written and verbal communication

- Use plain, professional language and a clear subject line. State the purpose, required action, responsible person and deadline where relevant.
- Communicate facts as facts. Clearly identify professional judgement, an allegation, an unverified report or a decision awaiting approval.
- Do not use insulting, dismissive, threatening, discriminatory or inflammatory language. Do not label a pupil or family.
- Do not make promises outside the sender's authority. Refer decisions on admissions, fees, employment, safeguarding, discipline or exceptions to the authorised leader.
- For difficult conversations, remain calm, listen actively, summarise the concern, explain the next step and agree how follow-up will occur.
- If communication becomes abusive or unsafe, staff may end the conversation professionally, record what occurred and refer the matter to a leader.
- Staff must not discuss confidential matters in corridors, public areas, lifts, transport, social events or other places where they may be overheard.



7 Communication with parents and carers

Richmond values parents as partners. Staff provide accurate information about pupils' learning, progress, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing in accordance with their role and approved procedures. Parents are encouraged to raise routine matters first with the relevant class teacher, unless the concern is serious, safeguarding-related or concerns that member of staff.

Matter	First contact	Escalation
Class learning or routine concern	Class teacher	Year or phase leader, then relevant senior leader
EYFS communication	Class teacher through ClassDojo or official contact	Kindergarten Principal
Years 1-6 learning platform	Class or subject teacher through Teams or official email	Phase leader or relevant coordinator
Attendance or punctuality	Administration or class teacher	SLT and attendance procedure
Behaviour or bullying	Class teacher or relevant leader	SLT, DSL or Executive Principal according to risk
Safeguarding concern	DSL or Executive Principal immediately	External referral or Ministry process where required
Transport or site matter	Site Transport and Maintenance Manager	Executive Principal
Formal complaint	Named contact under the Complaints Policy	Stages and review route in that policy

Parents must not enter classrooms to pursue unscheduled discussions during teaching or collection. Meetings should be arranged through the school or kindergarten office. Staff should not be expected to conduct substantial case discussions at the gate, in reception, through a child's account or through an informal group chat.



8 Response standards

The following are Richmond service standards and do not override a shorter statutory, Ministry, safeguarding or emergency deadline. Working days are days on which the relevant setting is open.

Communication type	Expected response
Immediate danger, safeguarding disclosure, missing pupil, serious medical or security issue	Report immediately by the emergency or safeguarding route; do not wait for email.
Urgent same-day operational matter	Telephone reception or the designated operational contact. The receiving staff member escalates promptly.
Routine parent or external enquiry	Acknowledge within two working days and provide a substantive response within five working days where reasonably possible.
Complex matter requiring investigation	Acknowledge within two working days, name the lead contact and provide an update or realistic response date.
Formal complaint	Follow the acknowledgement, investigation and review timescales in the Complaints Policy.
Staff internal action	Respond by the stated deadline; if none is given, acknowledge promptly and clarify ownership.
Non-working hours	No routine response is expected. Emergency and safeguarding routes remain available as separately notified.

9 Safeguarding and child protection communication

- A safeguarding concern, disclosure or allegation must be reported immediately to the DSL or deputy using the approved reporting procedure. Staff must not investigate, promise secrecy or circulate details.
- Use the minimum necessary information. Record the child's words accurately, distinguish fact from opinion and identify the source of information.
- Sensitive safeguarding information must not be sent through open groups, personal accounts, social media, ClassDojo or an ordinary class channel.
- Communication with parents may be delayed or restricted where informing them could increase risk, prejudice an investigation or conflict with advice from the competent authority.
- Allegations concerning an adult must be referred through the safeguarding and safer-recruitment procedures and not discussed with colleagues who have no role in the case.



10 Confidentiality data protection and information sharing

Personal information is collected, accessed, used, retained and disclosed only for an authorised educational, safeguarding, health, employment, legal or operational purpose. Consent is used where it is the appropriate lawful and ethical basis; safeguarding information may be shared without consent where necessary to protect a child or meet an official duty.

- Verify identity before discussing or releasing information. Do not rely solely on a display name, informal message or unverified telephone number.
- Use role-based access and the least amount of personal information needed for the task.
- Do not send group emails in a way that exposes private addresses. Use blind copy or an approved distribution system where recipients are unrelated.
- Do not place pupil, parent or staff data on personal cloud storage or unapproved applications.
- Report a misdirected email, lost device, exposed record, suspicious link or unauthorised access immediately to the IT Manager and relevant leader. Do not conceal or privately resolve a data incident.
- Records must be accurate, dated, attributable and retained or disposed of under the school's records schedule and applicable requirements.

11 Digital platforms and professional boundaries

- Staff use school-issued or school-approved accounts when communicating in their professional role.
- Staff must not add, follow, friend or privately message current pupils through personal social-media accounts, and must never share personal account details with pupils.
- Staff should maintain private and discreet personal social-media accounts and remain mindful that public or shared content may affect professional trust and the reputation or safety of the Richmond community.
- Personal telephone numbers should not be used for routine pupil or parent communication unless specifically authorised for a defined operational reason. The authorisation and boundaries must be clear.
- One-to-one digital communication with a pupil must be educationally necessary, visible through an approved system and consistent with safeguarding procedures.
- Screenshots, recordings and forwarding do not remove confidentiality duties. Staff and pupils must not record meetings, calls or lessons without authorisation and any required consent.



12 Social media website photography and media enquiries

The Executive Principal and IT Manager hold access to the official Richmond social-media accounts and approve or upload content. No other person may post on behalf of RIS or RIK without explicit authorisation.

- Pupil images or identifying information may be published only where the school's current records show that the parent has not withdrawn the relevant consent and the proposed use is safe and appropriate.
- Consent is checked for each intended type of use. Withdrawal is respected for future publication as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Posts must not reveal sensitive personal information, live locations, safeguarding details, transport routines or information that could place a pupil at risk.
- Staff must not respond publicly to complaints, incidents or hostile comments. These are captured where necessary and referred to the Executive Principal.
- Media enquiries, requests for statements and communication on behalf of Richmond are referred to the Executive Principal. Staff must not speak as an authorised representative unless appointed to do so.

13 Internal staff communication

Leaders use the most appropriate approved channel and avoid unnecessary duplication. Instructions that affect safeguarding, employment, policy, compliance or significant operational practice must be issued or confirmed through a formal record. Staff are responsible for checking official communication during working time and completing actions by the stated deadline.

- Meeting agendas are shared where practicable; decisions, named actions and deadlines are recorded.
- Confidential pupil or HR matters are discussed only with staff who need the information to perform their role.
- Operational changes are communicated early enough for implementation wherever circumstances permit.
- Concerns about a colleague's conduct are raised through the appropriate leadership, safeguarding, grievance or whistleblowing route rather than informal discussion or group messaging.
- Communication must remain respectful across roles and cultures. Disagreement is addressed professionally and without public criticism or humiliation.



14 Emergency crisis and business continuity communication

During an emergency, the Incident Commander or authorised nominee controls external communication. Messages are based on verified information and official advice. They state what recipients must do, what they must avoid, and where the next verified update will appear.

- Staff do not publish, livestream, photograph or share tactical details, pupil locations, access arrangements or unverified reports.
- Parents are instructed not to approach the site where doing so could obstruct emergency services or increase risk.
- Reunification, closure, remote-learning and return-to-site information is issued only after authorisation.
- Sensitive casualty, injury or identity information is not released through a general message.
- The school maintains more than one method of urgent communication and records significant messages and decisions for post-incident review.

15 Accessible multilingual and inclusive communication

Richmond serves an international community of more than 50 nationalities. The school and kindergarten aim to make essential information understandable without lowering accuracy or safeguarding standards.

- Major community notices, urgent instructions and information required for access to education should be provided in English and Arabic where appropriate and practicable.
- A parent may request clarification, translation support or an alternative format. The school will consider the request reasonably, taking account of urgency, complexity and available resources.
- Children must not be used to interpret sensitive safeguarding, medical, disciplinary, financial or legal conversations.
- Communication about disability, learning need, language acquisition, culture or family circumstances must be respectful, relevant and confidential.
- Important translated communication should be checked by a competent person or reliable approved process before issue.



16 Meetings with parents and external professionals

- Meetings are arranged with a clear purpose and the appropriate staff present. A second staff member may attend where the matter is sensitive, contested or poses a professional-boundary risk.
- Identity and authority are verified before information is shared with a separated parent, representative, therapist, tutor, lawyer or other external professional.
- A concise record is kept of significant information, decisions, actions, responsibilities and review dates.
- External reports or records are shared only with appropriate authority, consent or another valid basis and through a secure method.
- Visitors and contractors are not given access to pupil information beyond what is necessary for their authorised task.

17 Concerns complaints abusive communication and escalation

Routine concerns should be addressed early and at the lowest appropriate level. A concern becomes a formal complaint when the parent requests formal consideration or when the nature of the issue requires the Complaints Policy. Safeguarding, whistleblowing, staff grievance and disciplinary matters follow their specialist procedures.

- All parties are expected to communicate respectfully. Persistent harassment, threats, discriminatory abuse, excessive messaging or unauthorised recording may lead to communication boundaries or other proportionate action.
- Any restriction must preserve a reasonable route for essential communication about the child and must not obstruct safeguarding reporting or legal rights.
- A staff member receiving a concern outside their authority acknowledges it, avoids offering an outcome and refers it promptly to the correct person.
- No person will be disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern in good faith. Deliberately false or malicious communication may be managed under the relevant procedure.

18 Communication records and evidence

The school and kindergarten maintain evidence sufficient to demonstrate that communication is systematic, responsive and effective. Depending on the matter, evidence may include approved notices, email records, meeting minutes, parent acknowledgements, translated communications, contact logs, consent records, incident reports, survey outcomes, complaints records, platform reports and action follow-up.

Records must be stored in the designated location rather than only in an individual inbox or device. Leaders periodically sample communication and follow-up to identify delay, inconsistency, recurring concerns, accessibility needs and opportunities for improvement.



19 Training monitoring and review

- New staff receive induction on approved channels, confidentiality, safeguarding escalation and professional boundaries.
- Relevant staff receive refresher guidance when systems, Ministry instructions or school procedures change.
- The Executive Principal reviews implementation through complaints and incident trends, response times, parent and staff feedback, safeguarding audits, digital-platform oversight and samples of communication records.
- The policy is reviewed annually and after a serious incident, significant complaint, data breach, new platform, organisational change or relevant legal or Ministry update.

20 Related policies and documents

- Professional and Ethical Charter for Nurseries, Kindergartens and Private Schools Second Edition 2025
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- ClassDojo Policy
- e-Safety Policy
- Social Media and Social Networking Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Data Protection and Records procedures
- Crisis and Emergency Management Plan
- Staff Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures
- Admissions Policy
- Operations Plan