



# Communication Policy

## Montana International School Uganda (MISU) Communication Policy

### Policy Statement:

At Montana International School Uganda (MISU), effective, transparent, and respectful communication is fundamental to fostering a thriving school community and supporting our vision of enabling every individual to achieve their full potential. This policy outlines the principles, channels, and expectations for communication among all stakeholders – students, staff, parents/guardians, and the wider community – to ensure clarity, consistency, and positive engagement within our British-style, Cambridge International School environment.

### Guiding Principles:

- **Clarity and Timeliness:** Communication should be clear, concise, accurate, and delivered promptly to ensure all relevant parties are informed.
- **Respect and Professionalism:** All communication must be conducted with courtesy, professionalism, and mutual respect, upholding the values of kindness and integrity.
- **Transparency:** While respecting privacy and confidentiality, MISU is committed to open and honest communication regarding school matters.
- **Appropriate Channels:** The most effective and appropriate communication channel should be chosen for the message being conveyed.
- **Partnership:** Effective communication is a two-way process that strengthens the partnership between the school and home, essential for student success.
- **Confidentiality:** Sensitive and personal information will be handled with strict confidentiality, shared only on a "need-to-know" basis, in line with our Data Protection and Safeguarding policies.

### Scope:

This policy applies to all forms of communication (verbal, written, electronic, and digital) originating from or directed to MISU, involving students (Years 7-13), staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, contractors, and visitors, both on and off campus.

### 1. Communication Channels and Their Use

MISU utilizes a range of communication channels to serve different purposes:

- **Official School Website (<https://www.montanainternationalschool.com/>)** The primary source for general school information, policies, curriculum details, term dates, events calendar, and news. Regularly updated and accessible to the public.

- **School Management Information System (MIS) / Parent Portal** (e.g., Whatsapp, Engage, or similar):

**Purpose:** Secure platform for sharing individual student-specific information (grades, attendance, reports, and disciplinary notes), secure messaging between parents and teachers, daily notices, and consent forms.

**Audience:** Parents/Guardians, Students (for their specific data), Staff.

- **Email:**

**Purpose:** Formal and timely communication of important updates, specific inquiries, and responses. All official school correspondence via email will use MISU's domain.

**Audience:** MISU community.

**Expectation:** Responses to emails will generally be provided within 24-48 school hours. For urgent matters, alternative contact methods should be used.

- **Newsletters:**

**Purpose:** Regular updates on school activities, achievements, upcoming events, important reminders, and insights from school leadership and departments.

**Frequency:** Termly.

**Audience:** All parents/guardians, staff, and potentially wider community members.

- **School App / Messaging System:**

**Purpose:** Quick alerts, urgent notifications, and short reminders.

**Audience:** Parents/Guardians, Staff, and Students

- **Direct Phone Calls:**

**Purpose:** Urgent matters, sensitive discussions, or when a quick response is needed.

**Expectation:** Non-urgent calls to teachers should be scheduled or during non-teaching hours.

- **Scheduled Meetings (In-person or Virtual):**

**Purpose:** Detailed discussions regarding student progress, pastoral concerns, policy discussions, or parent-teacher conferences.

**Expectation:** Meetings should be scheduled in advance via the appropriate channel (e.g., email to the relevant staff member or school office).

- **Social Media (Official School Accounts):**

**Purpose:** Celebrating school life, achievements, events, and community building.

**Expectation:** Comments and interactions must always be respectful and constructive. MISU's official social media platforms are not for raising individual student concerns or grievances. These should be directed through the appropriate internal channels.

- **Student Planners/Diaries (Years 7-9):**

**Purpose:** Daily communication regarding homework, behaviour, and short messages between home and school.

**Expectation:** Checked regularly by students and parents.

- **Notice Boards:** For on-site, general information for students and visitors.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities in Communication

- **Principal:** Responsible for overall communication strategy, key policy announcements, and crisis communication.
- **Curriculum Coordinator / Heads of Department:** Oversee academic communication within their respective areas, including curriculum information and learning objectives.
- **Form Tutors:** Primary point of contact for routine student academic progress and pastoral care concerns for their respective year groups/form classes.
- **Boarding Staff (Head of Boarding, House Parents):** Primary contact for boarding student-specific communication, well-being, and routines.
- **Teachers:** Communicate about classroom learning, homework, and individual student progress (academic and behavioural) to students and parents.
- **Administrative Staff:** Handle general inquiries, manage school records, and support communication logistics.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Responsible for confidential communication regarding child protection and safeguarding concerns.
- **Students:**
  - a) Responsible for conveying important school messages home (e.g., permission slips, notices).
  - b) Communicate respectfully with peers and staff.
  - c) Understand and adhere to the E-Safety Policy for online communication.
- **Parents/Guardians:**
  - a) Responsible for reading and responding to school communications promptly.
  - b) Provide up-to-date contact information to the school.
  - c) Communicate any concerns regarding their child's well-being or academic progress through the appropriate channels, starting with the relevant teacher or Form Tutor.
  - d) Adhere to the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct in all communications.

## 3. Communication Protocols and Expectations

- **Chain of Communication:**
  - Academic/Classroom Concerns:** Teacher > Head of Department > Curriculum Coordinator > Head of School.
  - Pastoral/Well-being Concerns:** Form Tutor/Head of Year > Head of Pastoral Care/Curriculum Coordinator > Head of School > Designated Safeguarding Lead (if safeguarding concern).
  - Boarding Concerns:** House Parent > Head of Boarding > Principal.

**General Inquiries:** School Office > Relevant Staff Member.

Adhering to this chain ensures your query is directed to the person best placed to assist efficiently.

- Confidentiality:
- Personal student information, staff details, or sensitive school matters will not be discussed with unauthorized individuals.
- Concerns about individual students should never be discussed on public forums, social media, or with other parents. Use the school's private and confidential channels.
- **Conflict Resolution:**
  - a) In the event of a concern or disagreement, parents/guardians are encouraged to first seek a meeting or discussion with the directly involved staff member to resolve the matter.
  - b) If unresolved, the matter should be escalated through the appropriate chain of communication.
  - c) All interactions, even in challenging situations, must remain respectful and constructive. Aggressive, abusive, or defamatory communication is unacceptable and will be addressed under the Code of Conduct.
- **Use of Personal Contact Details:** Staff personal contact details (e.g., personal mobile numbers, private social media accounts) should not be used for school-related communication with parents or students. All official communication must be through school-provided channels.
- **Responding to Communications:** All official communication from the school requires a response within the stated timeframe, especially for consent forms or urgent matters.

#### **4. Review and Monitoring**

This Communication Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of School, in consultation with the relevant school leadership, to ensure its effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with MISU's values and any evolving communication practices or technological advancements. Feedback from students, staff, and parents will be considered during this review.

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a strong school community. By adhering to these guidelines, we can ensure that Montana International School Uganda remains a place of clarity, mutual respect, and positive partnership.