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SHERMITEX GLOBAL ACADEMY COMMUNICATION POLICY

1. **INTRODUCTION:**
The use of a communications policy document within Shermitex Global Academy is essential to ensure efficient and effective communication between teachers and parents and to provide a clear framework for all stakeholders to work within. Good communication between teachers and parents is imperative to the quality of education provided by Shermitex Global Academy. Within the service of educating young people there are bound to be differing opinions between home and school. Where these are smoothly managed the process continues to grow in a positive manner. Where the relationship is damaged due to intolerance, disrespect or other unacceptable behavior, the growth of the child can be adversely affected.

2. OBJECTIVE:
The objective of this policy is to ensure all parents and teachers understand the procedures for communicating issues which affect the education of the children. The teachers have a need to communicate with the parents at regular intervals and the parents are invited to communicate with the teachers as and when it may be required.

3. DEFINITIONS:
MD: Managing Directors
SMT: Senior Management Team
GDE: Gauteng Department of Education Parent: A parent as defined in the South African Schools Act, 1996

4. ACCEPTABLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS:
• All legitimate and fair concerns need to be addressed between parents and teachers in the following manner:
• A polite telephone call via the School office;
• A polite letter or note in the learner's communication book or homework diary; or • A pre-arranged meeting at the School.
• Where confidential or sensitive information is communicated it must be sent in a sealed envelope to the recipient.
• Interview requests via communication book or homework diary must be cordial and respectful without divulging information that could be harmful.
• Telephonic contact via the School office is acceptable provided the parents understand that teachers cannot return calls immediately. Calls will be returned as soon as possible.
• The people in the front office will convey to the parents from the teachers the approximate expected time of the return call.
• The people in the front office will facilitate communications between parents but do not wish to be informed about the issue. Academic issues should never be discussed with the office staff.

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• When dealing with an issue, the appropriate channels must be followed. In this regard, refer to sub-heading “Channels”.

5. UNACCEPTABLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS:

• Communication which is demeaning and derogatory in nature. • Notes on scrap paper will not be accepted nor responded to.
• Interviews will not be conducted in the classroom without a prior appointment.
• Confidentiality will be observed by the people in the front office when making appointments.
• Rude remarks in the communication book or homework diary are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
• Sending sensitive messages in the communication book, homework diary or anywhere else where children are able to view the information is unacceptable.
• Whilst cell phones facilitate better communication between people they do invade privacy. Cell phones (whether an SMS or a call) should be used with discretion and for urgent issues only and should not be used during lessons.
• A parent should never contact a teacher on his/her cell phone or home telephone unless expressly invited to do so by a teacher in a specific instance.
• Interviews will be arranged at times that suit both parties. Where either party is unable to attend the interview the other party needs to be notified timeously. Should the interview be missed an appropriate apology to the other party must be offered.

6. TEACHERS WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

• Listen.
• Always be calm and professional.
• Respect parents and their concerns.
• Meet the needs of the children first.
• Never victimize a child after a meeting.
• Return calls as soon as possible.
• Make themselves available for communication.
• Reply to messages in communication books or homework diaries.
• Respond to letters provided the “Kiddie post” system works.
• Provide professional follow-ups should it be required.
• Keep their appointments.
• Use sealed envelopes for contentious or sensitive responses to parents.

7. TEACHERS WILL NOT:

• Accept verbal abuse.
• Discuss children or their parents publicly.
• Accept parent’s excuses for their child’s responsibility.

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• Be rude in responding to parents.
• Ignore messages (when received).
• Victimize a child.
• Ignore genuine concerns.
• Tolerate classroom interruptions.
• Wait for more than 10 minutes past the allocated time of appointments.
• Respond to any anonymous letters but, will pass them to HOD's for their information purposes only.

8. PARENTS WILL ENDEAVOUR TO
• Recognize and respect the' professional status of teachers.
• Treat teachers and teachers' assistants with respect at all times, especially in the presence of children.
• Communicate with teachers and teachers' assistants in a courteous and dignified manner.
• Keep all appointments.
• Avoid discussing their individual concerns with other parents or third parties.
• Refrain from entering teaching areas during school time, unless invited to do so for purposes of a pre-arranged meeting with a teacher. In all instances, a parent must first report to the school's reception.

9. CHANNELS FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS:
1. Meet teachers to discuss matters irrespective of what issue is being discussed (in difficult matters, the teacher may request the Grade Head to attend).
2. Grade Heads.
3. Relevant HODs depending on what Phase the child is in.
4. Operations Manager.
5. Deputy Principal.
6. Principal.
7. Director.

If, in relation to a particular matter, a parent believes that it would be inappropriate to follow the aforesaid channels, the parent must discuss the matter with the Principal who will then decide on the process to be followed.

10. MINUTES
In every meeting a written minute will be kept of the meeting for record.