

# HKIS Community Partnership and Communication Guidelines

## **HKIS Mission Statement:**

*Dedicating our minds to inquiry, our hearts to compassion,  
our lives to service and global understanding.*

**An American style education grounded in the Christian faith and  
respecting the spiritual lives of all.**

## **Introduction**

HKIS as a community is committed to building and sustaining a welcoming and secure learning environment in which individuals can fully realize their potential in a climate of mutual respect. HKIS believes that parents and educators share the responsibility for creating a partnership that fosters children's learning. Together we play a formative role in the development of a child's sense of justice, equity and the worth of all members of our school community.

It is our hope that these guidelines will provide a useful framework to promote effective and appropriate communication within the HKIS community, and will support the HKIS policy on *Harassment* [Policy 3170, included below].

## **Working in Partnership**

We recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.

The responsibility of the school (Teachers, Administrators and Support Staff) is to:

- Provide a safe environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes, habits and values that are consistent with the mission of the school.
- Provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive environment.
- Encourage students' growth as responsible, independent and respectful individuals.
- Model integrity, academic curiosity, responsibility and creativity.
- Communicate and work with parents as partners in ensuring student achievement reflective of the HKIS Mission and Student Learning Results.
- Provide timely and clear information about school programs and events.

The Teacher's responsibility is to:

- Explain the curriculum and approach to learning in the classroom, expectations, methods of assessment and reporting of learning to students and their families.
- Report student progress regularly to parents (the frequency of communication is determined by each division).
- When appropriate, work with parents, counselors or learning specialists to provide a team approach to support for students.
- Communicate how parents can support what is going on in the classroom.
- Share observations, interests and concerns during emails, meetings and parent-teacher and student conferences.
- Invite parent involvement in the learning process. For example: participating in class activities, attendance at school events, invitation for guest speakers or connecting with the wider HK community.
- Respect family needs and values e.g. family time.
- Invite input and feedback from parents.
- Respond in a timely fashion to emails or phone calls from parents.

The Parent's responsibility is to:

- Provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes, habits and values that are consistent with those of the school.
- Play an active part in their child's learning e.g. monitoring attendance, homework completion.
- Help their child capitalize upon successes and learn from setbacks and failures as part of his or her growth process.
- Review, with the child, information provided by the school that provides insight into student learning and growth. For example: assignment feedback, report cards, conference information, emails.
- Communicate with the teacher, as developmentally appropriate, if the child is having problems with learning.
- Inform the school of any family or home situation that may affect a child's learning or behavior.
- Participate in the decisions about their child's education.
- Be responsive to requests for input, feedback or opinion.
- Stay informed by reading the school newsletter, class updates or accessing the website.
- Attend, as family responsibilities allow, parents events or education evenings. These include: parent coffees, division parent forums, parent-to-parent meetings, curriculum nights and parent feedback.
- Participate, as family responsibilities allow, in school organizations such as P.F.O., P.A.G. and Booster Club and events.
- Respect a teacher's academic efforts by minimizing a child's absence from school for non-critical reasons.

### **Expectations for Communication at HKIS**

It is expected that all members of the HKIS adult community will abide by the following principles for verbal and non-verbal, written and oral communication at HKIS

- All communications demonstrate the assumption of good intent and the goal to be constructive.
- The tone of all communications demonstrates care, respect for others and sensitivity for diversity.
- Email is the preferred form of contact, unless an issue is urgent or would be better addressed through face to face or phone contact.
- Reasonable time is allowed for responses to communications.
- Confidentiality is respected.

### **Sequence of Communication channels for Parents**

- Contact the teacher directly if you have questions or concerns about your child or the instructional program in your child's class.
- Contact the Principal or Associate Principal if the teacher's response to your first contact does not sufficiently address your concern or if your concern is at the school level.
- Contact the Head of School or Associate Head of School if the Administrator's response does not address your concern.

### **Addressing Disagreements**

Dealing with disagreements requires respect and discretion by both the school and parents. Both parties should respectfully seek to gather accurate information and resolve problems through appropriate channels of communication. Each adult shares the responsibility to provide a collaborative decision making model in the best interest of the child – be prepared

to listen, contribute, negotiate and support decisions and operate from the assumption of good intent.

Confidentiality contributes to maintaining trust between parents, teachers and administrators. All adults should use discretion about when, where and with whom issues are discussed. It is important that all adults not discuss individual children, teachers or families in inappropriate public and social situations.

**The HKIS Board of Managers and HKIS Policy on “Harassment”** The HKIS Board of Managers is primarily focused on setting overall strategic direction consistent with the HKIS Mission statement; supporting, encouraging and evaluating the Head of School and providing stewardship of the school’s resources.

**HKIS Policy on “Harassment” (Policy 3170)**

***“Hong Kong International School is committed to building and sustaining a culture of respect, care and safety that is free from any form of harassment, bullying and intimidation. All members of our community – students, parents, faculty, staff and visitors – have a right to feel safe and protected and share the responsibility to build and maintain an environment in which everyone feels respected.***

***Offensive, harassing, bullying or intimidating behaviors will not be tolerated or ignored and will be dealt with appropriately and expeditiously.***

***Across the school, both prevention and intervention strategies are in place for our student and adult community, and will be published and reviewed annually, to encourage empathy and respect and to respond appropriately to any acts of bullying and harassment”.***

[As approved by HKIS Board of Managers, June 7, 2008]