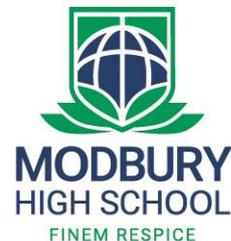


PARENT REQUESTS TO MEET/CONTACT STUDENTS ON SITE POLICY



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RATIONALE

Sometimes parents or guardians try to use Modbury High School (MHS) for personal contact with their child during school hours. For example, phoning the school and asking to speak to their child, or visiting the school during lunch. This is usually not appropriate.

OBJECTIVES

These procedures are in place to ensure all students and their families are treated equally, within the bounds of the law. It also keeps staff safe as it fulfils the legal requirements of the Department for Education.

PROCEDURE

PARENTS SHOULD NOT USE SCHOOLS OR PRESCHOOLS FOR PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THEIR CHILD.

It is not appropriate for a parent to call a school or preschool to speak to their child. They may of course contact the front office and request that a message be passed to their child. It's also not appropriate for a parent to visit Modbury High School to spend time with their child during school hours. This applies regardless of whether the family is separated and regardless of whether there are Family Court orders in place.

SITUATIONS WHERE PERSONAL CONTACT IS ACCEPTABLE.

There are some situations where parents phoning or visiting the school to contact their child is okay. Valid reasons for this include:

- passing on information in an emergency
- collecting a child for an appointment
- attending special events
- educational meetings
- assembly, sports day and similar school or preschool events
- volunteering or working at the school or preschool.

Aside from these reasons, parents must not be permitted to disrupt their child's learning. Contact should only occur subject to any applicable Family Court orders or intervention orders. Always check Daymap for alerts regarding Family Court orders or intervention orders and refer to the senior leader for the year level if you are uncomfortable dealing with the situation.

STAY NEUTRAL AND DON'T GET INVOLVED IN FAMILY MATTERS

Departmental employees must maintain a neutral position and should not become involved in private family matters.

ALL STAFF - POLITELY DECLINE REQUESTS TO CONTACT CHILDREN.

Sometimes parents will ask MHS to allow phone calls or visits between the parent and their child during school hours (including break times). You should politely decline the request if its purpose is for the parent to obtain contact with their child.



ALL STAFF - EXPLAIN THAT SCHOOLS OR PRESCHOOLS SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR PERSONAL CONTACT.

Explain to parents that providing parents with a place to make personal contact with their child is not the school's purpose. Schools have a duty of care for students and must remain child-focused at all time. This means maintaining a learning environment free from pressure or interference from private family matters. Personal contact with parents can disrupt this environment, interfere with learning, and cause distress.

ALL STAFF – IF THE PARENT INSISTS OR PUSHES THE MATTER FURTHER REFER THE PARENT TO THE SENIOR LEADER FOR THE YEAR LEVEL AND INFORM THE SENIOR LEADER FOR THE APPROPRIATE YEAR LEVEL OF THE SITUATION

SENIOR LEADER – REITERATE THE POINT AS ABOVE AND CONSIDER SENDING A LETTER TO THE PARENT.

If a parent has tried to contact their child at MHS, you may wish to send them a letter explaining why the school doesn't allow it. The letter should:

- confirm MHS's position on private family matters
- explain MHS's expectations of all parents.

Before sending the letter, forward it to Education.LegalServices@sa.gov.au for review.

UNHAPPY PARENTS CAN SEEK INDEPENDENT LEGAL ADVICE OR LODGE A COMPLAINT

If a parent is unhappy, encourage them to seek independent legal advice on how to address their concerns through mediation or the Courts. You should also let them know that they can lodge a complaint with the department's Customer Feedback unit:

Phone: 1800 677 435

Email: Education.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au.

CONTACT SAPOL IF THE PARENT EXHIBITS AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

If at any point in time the parent exhibits aggressive behaviour, immediately contact SAPOL on 131 444.

Policy review

The school council and staff will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy (at least every three years) and revise the policy when required.