



## COMMUNICATION BY TEXT MESSAGE AND SMARTPHONE APP

South East Region Learning Centre is bringing you the next generation in school-parent communications. Personalised SMS text messages sent direct to and from your mobile phone are the best solution for student safety attendance management and significant event reminders.

Parents and caregivers with iPhones or Android phones can also benefit by installing School Star, a highly secure, easy to use smartphone app. School Star gives you a Facebook-style news feed to keep you up-to-date on the latest school news, as well as allowing you to receive and reply to important messages from the school for free.

### Benefiting You and Your Child

**1. *You have the right to know that your child is safe.***

If your child has not arrived at school, you need to know immediately. A personalised text message will be sent by the school to your mobile phone. This is the fastest, most reliable way of reaching you, discretely, wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

**2. *Your child deserves the best possible chance of success.***

Regular attendance is a key factor in school success. If your child shows any sign of poor attendance, SMS or in-app text messaging will immediately inform you that a problem may exist, allowing swift intervention.

**3. *You deserve the most responsive delivery system available.***

Letters are slow and can be intercepted. Phone calls can be intrusive and may not reach parents in time. A text message direct to your mobile phone is fast, effective and discrete.

For parents with School Star, message delivery is first attempted as a notification through the app. However, if the in-app message isn't opened within a few minutes, the system automatically sends an SMS, to ensure that the important message reaches you, no matter what.

**4. *You must have immediate notification in times of crisis.***

There may be times when the school will need to reach a large number of parents instantly. It could be because the school bus is late returning from an excursion, or it might be something much more serious. In any case, a broadcast text message is by far the most effective solution.

**5. *You deserve a communication tool which fits your busy lifestyle.***

Sending a text or School Star message to the school is the most cost and time effective option for busy parents. The message is sent from wherever you are located directly to the appropriate school staff member – no telephone delays, no recorded message instructions, and no answering machines.

### Working Together For Our Children: What Parents Must Do

Your child's school is taking important steps to benefit your child. This is a shared responsibility, and parents must also help the school.

**1. *Keep your mobile phone details up to date.***

Make sure the school has your current mobile phone number, and notify the school immediately if this number changes.

**2. *Notify the school in advance when your child is absent.***

If you notify the school as soon as you know your child will be absent, the school will know your child is safe, and will not need to contact you. An SMS or School Star text message sent to the school is the best way to do this.

**3. *Respond to messages from the school.***

If you receive an absence message from the school, please respond via return SMS or through School Star. The school needs to know why your child is absent.

***If you don't have a mobile phone...***

Details of low-cost phone plans ideal for parents who want to benefit from the new system are available from mobile phone providers. The school will maintain its existing contact methods for parents who do not have mobile phones.

We are encouraging all parents to download School Star for free on their iPhone or Android device. Installing School Star is easy. Just follow the instructions below to download and install the app.

**iPhone users:**

1. Open the App Store on your iPhone by tapping its icon.
2. Search the App Store for "MGM School Star".
3. Tap the button that says "+GET", then "INSTALL".
4. If asked, enter your Apple ID password.
5. The "INSTALL" button will turn into an indicator that shows the progress of the download.
6. Once the download has finished, tap "OPEN" to launch School Star.

**Android users:**

1. Open the Play Store on your Android Phone by tapping its icon.
2. Search the Play Store for "MGM School Star", and tap the search result in the list.
3. Tap the button marked "INSTALL".
4. The "INSTALL" button will turn into an indicator that shows the progress of the download.
5. Once the download has finished, tap "OPEN" to launch School Star.

After you register a new account, School Star will automatically detect your school and configure your news feed.

We hope you enjoy using School Star. Watch this space for updates and new features that will make communicating with the school even easier. We look forward to improving our communication with you.