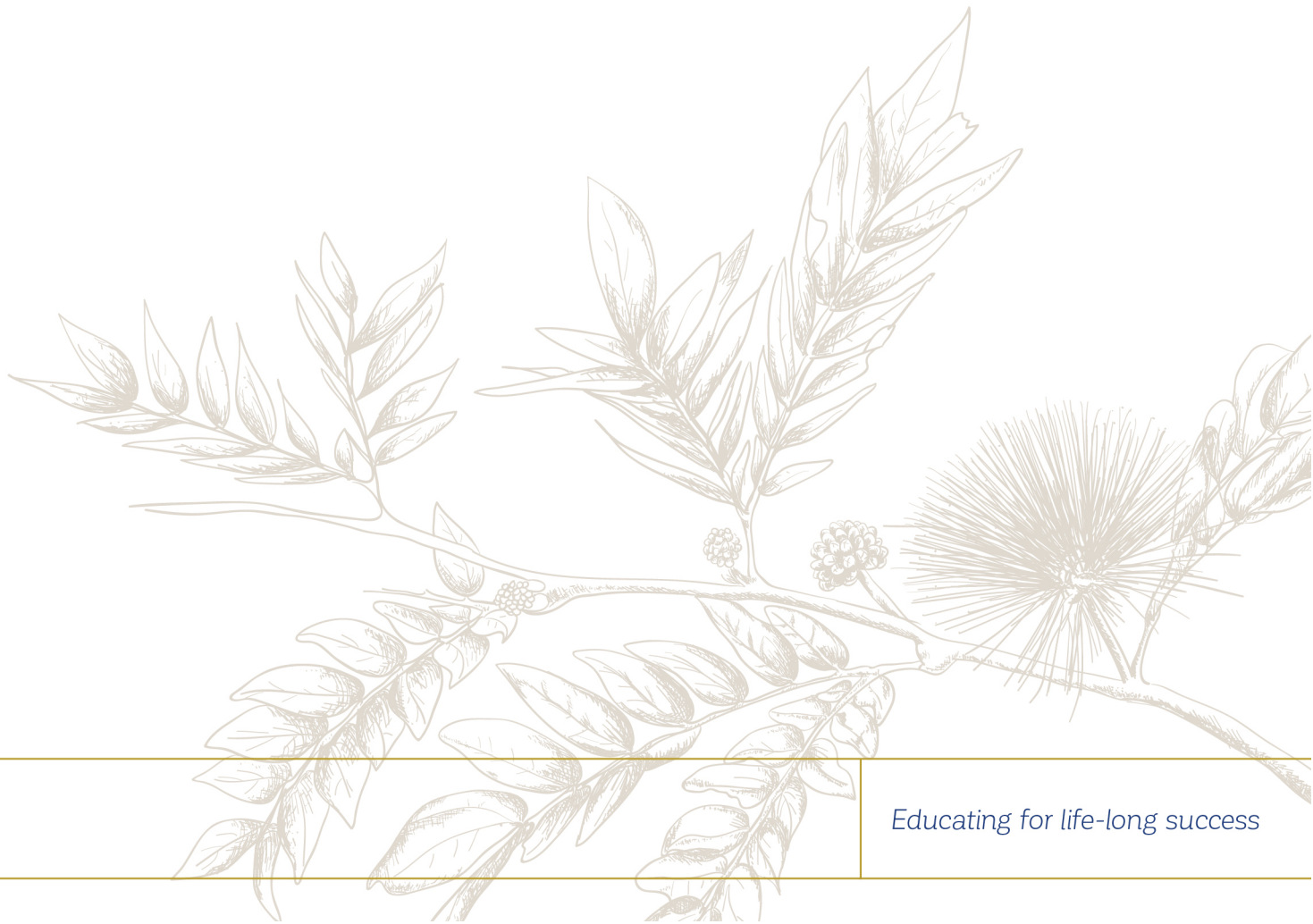




Founded 1917

The Cathedral School
of St Anne & St James
T O W N S V I L L E

Parent Code of Conduct



Educating for life-long success

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

GOVERNANCE



The Cathedral School
of St Anne & St James
T O W N S V I L L E

The Cathedral School community consists of a wide variety of individuals and groups who strive to work together to educate students to become confident and well-educated young adults who are prepared to lead happy, successful lives and make contributions to local and global communities. Shared community values enable the members of our community to work together and enjoy the fellowship that arises from their collaborative efforts.

SCHOOL VALUES

One of our school's stated aims is that we are educating our students to be discerning, sensitive, and responsible young people. It follows that we expect these qualities from the adults in our community.

ABOUT THIS PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In developing this Parent Code of Conduct, the school recognises that parents want the best for their children. However, the school also expects parents to recognise that it must ultimately balance the interests of all the school's stakeholders including not only students and parents, but also the school's staff and their right to a safe working environment.

SCOPE

This Parent Code of Conduct applies to all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, caregivers, and any others while involved in activities or communication related to the school. For the purpose of this document, the term "parent" refers to all as listed above.

AIM

The Parent Code of Conduct does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of a parent's interactions with the school and the school community. Rather, it sets out five general expectations related to parent support, involvement, conduct and communication, as well as how to resolve a complaint. As such, this Parent Code of Conduct is intended to be practical, non-adversarial and non-legal.

SUMMARY

The five key expectations of parents, expanded on the following pages, are as follows:

1. SUPPORT THE ETHOS AND VALUES OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are expected to visibly support the ethos and values of the school, and role model responsible and safe behaviours for their children and others in the community.

2. BEHAVE RESPECTFULLY TO ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Parents should behave respectfully at all times towards the school's staff (including employees, contractors, and volunteers), students and other parents.

3. USE TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA APPROPRIATELY

Parents are expected to be respectful in their communication with others, be mindful of privacy and safety in publishing information online, and ensure confidential information is not shared without permission.

4. BE A RESPONSIBLE VISITOR AND PARTICIPANT

Parents must respect the school's risk-management procedures when visiting the school and attending school activities and events off-campus.

5. RAISE COMPLAINTS APPROPRIATELY AND PRODUCTIVELY

Parents should raise genuine complaints they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive, and respectful forum.

Support the ethos and values of the school

Parents are expected to support the ethos and values of the school, model appropriate behaviours for their children to learn from, and work with the school as it educates and provides pastoral support to all students.

Parents can support the school and be positive role models by doing, for example, the following:

- a) Comply with the school's codes of conduct, directions policies, procedures, rules, and regulations, and ensure their children do the same.
- b) Respect (and show to their children that they respect) that the school is inclusive and welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds, and with different needs.
- c) Respond to school communications (e.g., by completing forms and providing permissions in a timely manner) when requested to do so by the school.
- d) Encourage their children to actively participate in the life of the school, including in the classroom and the many sporting and extracurricular activities available (noting that some extracurricular activities are compulsory).
- e) Support the school's commitment to developing students' initiative, independence, and sense of responsibility for their own lives and actions.
- f) Support the school's approach to student behavioural concerns, which can include a range of outcomes (including those which are educational, pastoral, or disciplinary in nature).
- g) Be responsive to concerns raised by the school about their own child, including by being cooperative, providing information, and attending meetings when required.
- h) Raise complaints directly with the school and in a timely manner.
- i) Keep the school informed about a child's needs (including but not limited to their behavioural, educational, personal, and physical or mental health needs). This includes providing updated medical information, family developments and other like information as it becomes available. Parents need to also appreciate that while the school will take into account any new information and comply with its legal obligations, the school cannot necessarily accommodate every need.
- j) Keep the school informed about a child's parenting arrangements, including any court orders that may be in place. Parents should not, however, involve the school in parenting disputes, or expect the school to act as the go-between for estranged parents.

- k) Recognise the damage that gossip can do within a school community, and avoid unconstructive commentary (including criticism, uninformed or malicious rumour or speculation) with other parents or students, including on social media.

Parents are expected to be role models for responsible and safe behaviours. This includes ensuring the health and safety of all members of our school community (including staff, students, parents, and alumni) and the wider community. Parents are expected to ensure that other individuals involved in their child's life, such as other relatives and carers, also comply with this Parent Code of Conduct.

Behave respectfully towards members of our community

The school expects that parents will behave courteously and respectfully at all times towards other members of the school community. This applies not only to words used, but also to tone and body language, and similar expectations are embedded in the school's codes of conduct for staff and students.

'Respect' is intentionally a broad concept. The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that are not respectful:

- a) Rude or insulting behaviour, including passive-aggressive, intimidating, abusive or derogatory language or conduct. This includes raising your voice and wearing clothing or showing tattoos or jewellery, etc., with offensive language or insignia.
- b) Bullying, intimidation, discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation, and child abuse. Please note that in addition to being a breach of this Parent Code of Conduct, such behaviour may also be unlawful.
- c) Actual or threatened aggression (verbal or non-verbal) or violence. This includes abusive language.
- d) Behaviour that causes a risk to a person's health and well-being.
- e) Defamatory or disrespectful comments.
- f) Gossip, rumour, and innuendo.
- g) Raising one's voice, or using offensive language or actions, while communicating.
- h) Age-inappropriate language when communicating with or about children.
- i) Vexatious complaints.

Use technology and social media appropriately

Social media can be defined as how we use technology to communicate and connect with others. Despite the range of positive uses for social media, there are also a number of ethical and legal issues associated with its use. Many people may hold the mistaken belief that anything published online will be without legal consequences. However, parents should be aware that there are a number of potential legal liabilities that may arise, particularly in relation to issues pertaining to reputational damage, and defamation.

As a result, the expectations set out in this Parent Code of Conduct also apply to the way a parent uses technology and behaves online.

For example, parents should:

- a) Respect a staff member's professional and personal boundaries, by not using their personal online presence to raise school matters (or otherwise engage in disrespectful behaviour).
- b) Not discuss confidential or sensitive school matters, including in relation to complaints about a particular staff member or student, online.

- c) Not take photos, videos or other recordings of a staff member or parent without their consent, or of a student without their parent's consent, and not publish information (including personal details, contact information, images, and recordings) concerning a staff member, parent, student, or other member of the school community online without express consent.
- d) Avoid publishing information which may bring the school (or any of its staff, students, parents, and other members of the school community) into disrepute. This may include an image or recording which shows a student in school uniform, or a member of the school community at the school or at a school activity or event, behaving inappropriately. The school, its staff and members of its community should not be mentioned or discussed in a negative or defamatory way.
- e) Not communicate with students from another family via technology, including by email or on social media, without prior consent from that student's parent(s).
- f) Obtain express permission to use the school's name or insignia in the title of any online website, forum, or group, or printed or online publication. In addition, no suggestion should be made that any such platform or material is operated or sanctioned by the school.
- g) Comply with the requirements of the school's Social Media Terms of Use Procedure when using social media channels administered by the school.

Be a responsible visitor and participant

Parents must respect the school's risk-management procedures when visiting the school. Parents should immediately proceed to Reception upon arrival to sign in and should only enter a classroom or other student environment when invited to do so by a staff member. This requirement does not apply when visiting the school to:

- a) Attend an activity or event to which all members of the school community have been invited.
- b) Visit the boarding houses or school uniform shop.
- c) Drop off or collect a child from school.

When visiting the school, or attending school activities and events, parents should model appropriate and respectful behaviours, and uphold the school's values. This includes:

- a) Demonstrating good sporting conduct and fair play when attending the school's performing arts and sporting events.
- b) Ensuring that physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of, and relationship with, the student.
- c) Complying with applicable occupation, student and workplace health and safety and risk-management procedures.
- d) Complying with any reasonable directions given by the school's staff.
- e) Dressing appropriately for the occasion.
- f) Not possessing alcohol on school grounds unless the event has been sanctioned by the school.
- g) Not being under the influence of drugs or alcohol (and otherwise not engaging in the possession, sale, or supply of the same at the school).
- h) Showing appropriate care and regard for the school's property and the property of other members of the school community. Any damage should be promptly reported to the school.

- i) Behaving lawfully on school grounds whether at events hosted by or connected to the school, whether conducted on-site or otherwise. This includes observing the terms of any parenting plan or court order, obligation or undertaking, and not smoking on school grounds or within five metres of the school boundary.

When dropping off and picking up students from the school, parents are expected to ensure the health and safety of all members of our school community, as well as the wider community, at all times.

Parents must comply with all traffic rules and any school traffic management system in place. This includes adhering to applicable speed limits, observing all traffic signs, limiting the use of car horns (unless indicating imminent danger), and parking appropriately and safely.

Parents must also comply with any government-issued health orders or directions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes adhering to vaccination, social distancing, and face mask requirements.

Raise complaints appropriately and productively

The school is committed to the care, education, and well-being of each student. It is therefore critical that parents are able to raise genuine complaints they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive, and respectful forum.

The school's Complaint Management Procedure sets out how complaints may be raised with the school; who they should be raised with; and how the school will deal with these in a respectful and timely manner. Parents with complaints should consult this Procedure.

In terms of raising complaints appropriately and productively:

- a) Parents should take care with volume, tone and vocabulary when communicating with another family's child.
- b) Parents should not communicate with another student about an issue concerning their own child. In particular, parents should refrain from any attempt to discipline a student who is not their child, unless they are attempting to restrain a student from causing a risk to themselves or others.
- c) Parents should raise their complaints with their child's teacher or Tutor Teacher in the first instance. More serious concerns or complaints, including where a parent is dissatisfied with a teacher's response to a complaint, may be raised with the appropriate Head of School, Deputy Principal, or Principal (as set out in the Procedure).

What parents can expect from a staff member if communication becomes inappropriate

In cases where a parent does not interact civilly or appropriately with staff, either in person in or outside of the school grounds, during a phone call, or via email, the staff member may take one of the following actions:

- Request that the parent cease their inappropriate communication in order to allow the communication to proceed.
- Inform the parent that unless the inappropriate communication ceases, the staff member may put an end to the phone call, meeting, or discussion.
- Request another staff member be present for the remainder of the meeting, if deemed necessary to proceed as such.
- Lodge a complaint against the offending parent.

What parents can expect from the school

The school takes seriously any issues that are brought to its attention. If parents express their concerns to the school, they can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect in order to try and resolve the matter.

Feedback can also be provided via the school's website on the Contact Us page. Feedback is valuable to the school community to improve our services and investigate and respond to any issues or concerns.

Each situation will be considered as it arises and based on the issues.

In terms of dealing with parent complaints, the school will act in accordance with its Complaints Management Procedure.

Additionally:

- a) Parents should respect that the school employs experienced educators and other professionals who are well-trained in making academic, disciplinary, extracurricular, pastoral and wellbeing decisions every day. Please understand that while the school will always take into account the interests of the parent's child, the school must ultimately make decisions that take into account the interests of all students (and others who may be affected by the school's decisions).
- b) Parents should recognise that just as the school will seek to respect each student's privacy, the school will also respect the privacy of other members of the school community. This means there are limits to what information the school will share with a parent when issues arise. This does not mean that the school is not taking an issue or situation seriously or hiding information from a parent.
- c) The school respects a parent's right to invoke any formal complaint-resolution procedures which may exist. However, parents who refuse to engage in constructive processes that may resolve their complaints, or who choose to publicly air their complaints about the school (and in particular about staff or students) on social media, are not welcome.

CONSEQUENCES FOR BREACH OF THIS CODE

The Principal will have absolute discretion in deciding how to best respond to concerns about a parent's compliance with the Parent Code of Conduct.

Where the Principal considers that a parent has breached the Parent Code of Conduct, the Principal may implement one or more of the following consequences:

- Asking the parent or relevant person to immediately cease the conduct
- Sending a written warning to a parent or relevant person
- Banning a parent or another relevant person from the school grounds, either for a particular period of time or permanently.
- Banning a parent or another relevant person from school activities or events.
- Directing that a parent or other relevant person only communicates with members of staff through a nominated school representative.
- Involving other authorities, where appropriate.
- Taking other such steps as appropriate according to the nature of the breach.
- Termination of the enrolment of a parent's child(ren).