

Section: Welfare - Students  
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# CODE OF CONDUCT - PARENTS

## PREFACE

At Peter Moyes Anglican Community School, we aim to provide an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all. We believe that parents are valuable contributors in the life of our School.

Our School Values are outlined in the School Website, which has been developed with the School Council, members of the School Executive and Staff and members of the School community.

## INTRODUCTION

Respect – we want our community to recognise and appreciate diversity, to value the contributions of others and to cooperate with and care for others.

Sense of Community – we want our community to promote partnerships between all members of our community and to interact positively with the negotiated rights and responsibilities of the school.

The Parent Code of Conduct outlines the way in which our community requires all parents and family members to conduct themselves when visiting our school, participating in school activities and communicating with members of our school community (including students, school staff, other parents and visitors to our school).

## WHO HAS TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT?

This code applies to all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, babysitters and any others while involved in activities or communication related to Peter Moyes Anglican Community School. For convenience, the term 'parents' will be used throughout the document.

## OTHER LEGISLATION THAT MAY BE RELEVANT TO PARENT CONDUCT

- Working with Children Act
- Privacy Act

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES THAT ALWAYS APPLY

- a) Communication – Parents will use courteous and acceptable written and spoken language in all communications including all forms of social media with students, staff and other parents and members of the school community. No profane, insulting, harassing, threatening, aggressive or otherwise offensive language may be used.

- b) Ethical Conduct – Parents will act in the best interests of students, their families and staff members. They will not engage in malicious or judgemental gossip, and should ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful.
- c) Respect – We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own and all members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification towards any member of the School community.

## WHEN VISITING THE SCHOOL

- a) At PMACS we require all visitors to the school during school hours to sign in on an electronic Visitors' Register located at the Main School office or each sub-school office, so that their presence in the school is recorded in the event of an emergency.
- b) Parents will comply with all safety and emergency procedures in place at our School and in the event of an emergency while they are on school grounds, an excursion and/or School camps they will follow the instructions given by a member of staff.
- c) When attending any kind of school assembly or public meeting parents will listen respectfully, in the same manner required of students and staff, and will refrain from creating noise or disturbances during performances or speeches by students, staff or visitors. Interruption/heckling will not be tolerated and a parent who interrupts/heckles may be asked to leave.
- d) Photography and videoing of students and parents. As in policies for Photographs of Students 2.32 and Publications and Media 2.29
- e) Parents will treat all other visitors to our school, including Members of Parliament and representation of the ASC, with courtesy and respect.
- f) A parent may not interrupt or distract a teacher while classroom instruction or learning activities are underway.
- g) A parent may not discipline a child inside or outside of the School who is not theirs or speak to a child who is not theirs about their behaviour. This is the role of the School. Being approached by an adult they do not know can be distressing for our students. Parents should therefore raise any behavioural, bullying or peer group issues with a member of the teaching staff and it is the teacher's responsibility to deal with these issues. (Common sense would apply in an emergency where a child is at risk of harm or where apparent is supervising a small group of students on an excursion.)
- h) When visiting a classroom parents accept the authority of the teacher (or teachers) and that they attend on the teacher's terms. Teachers value parental involvement and assistance, but they may ask a parent to leave the classroom or class activity for any reason, but not limited to:
  - I. Parental assistance not being required at the time;
  - II. Parental presence in the classroom or if the activity is disturbing or distracting to any student or teacher;
  - III. The parent is not in control of their emotions.

## WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL STAFF

- a) All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our students as well as staff themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety.
- b) The priority for school staff is the welfare and education of all students in the school. School staff are therefore not required to respond to emails and telephone calls instantaneously. Normal service standards suggest that an acceptable response time for emails is 2 working days. Responses are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays unless it is an emergency.
- c) The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt the classroom. Parents should be mindful of the teacher's time, communicate the reason for the meeting and allow the teacher time to prepare, unless there is a genuine emergency that needs to be discussed.

## WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL COUNCIL

- a) School Council members welcome feedback from parents. However, School Council members are volunteers and engaged in their own work and activities during business hours. When parents communicate with School Council members, they should therefore establish that it is a convenient time, or ask to speak at a convenient time. Calling someone when they are at work may be assumed an inconvenient time.
- b) Correspondence to School Council may be forwarded to the school's email address. It will then be circulated to all the School Council members through their meeting papers and the correspondence folder. It will be discussed at the next school council meeting and a response will be sent after the next school council meeting.
- c) Parents should allow School Council members an opportunity to discuss their correspondence at a properly constituted meeting of School Council and therefore refrain from demanding an urgent response to their letter, sending the same letter multiple times on the same subject or otherwise harassing School Council members when they have not yet had an opportunity to discuss correspondence.
- d) Parents are welcome to participate in School Council meetings. The basis upon which parents may attend and speak at School Council meeting is set out in the School Council Standing Agreement. Parents are expected to comply with those Standing Orders and the rulings of the chairperson.

## WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH OTHER PARENTS

- a) Parents will respect the privacy of other parents' email addresses and will not send unsolicited emails or 'spam' or the use of any form of social media to school parents or forward unsolicited emails or spam they receive to other parents. Parents will not forward other parents' email addresses without permission. Parents provide their email address to the school in order to receive communications from the school about school related matters and their child. The school will not give out the email address of parents to other parents without permission. Parents give their email addresses to class representatives in order to receive communications about class activities, Social events, gatherings for their child's class, and to

establish rosters for classroom help, fundraising activities and so on. Class representatives will not pass on parent email addresses to other parents without permission.

- b) Parents who act as class representatives, P and F organisers and so on, are valued volunteers who play a critical role in our community and commit a great deal of time for the benefit of all. Apart from the general principles that always apply, parents should be particularly sensitive about the manner in which they provide feedback and ask questions of hardworking volunteers.

## WHEN MAKING A COMPLAINT

Parents have the right to raise issues and concerns related to the education of their child or school matters. Parents should ensure that they raise their issues and concerns with the right person and follow the correct communication channels. When making a complaint parents should refer to:

- a) The Schools Complaints Policy, which is available on the School Website; and
- b) The ASC Complaints policy, which is available on its website. A link can be found from the School Complaints Policy on the School Website.

Parents must follow the procedures outline in (a) and (b) above. It is a breach of this Parent Code of Conduct to make a complaint in a way that is not consistent with the School Complaints Policy. This is especially the case when the complaint is about a teacher or member of school staff.

## CONSEQUENCES OF A BREACH OF PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Any parent, member of school staff or student may notify the Principal or Associate Principal of a possible breach of the Parent Code of Conduct. The Principal or Associate Principal will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred:

- a) Provide a first and final warning that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated;
- b) Determine whether a breach may be rectified by the parent making a private or public apology, depending on the circumstance, to an individual or group of individuals;
- c) Where the breach concerned is unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the school, issue a trespass warning to the parent, which, if the behaviour continues, may accelerate to a trespass notice requiring the parent to stay away from the school unless on the school grounds with the express permission of the Principal or Associate Principal.

Correspondence that is in a breach of this Code of Conduct, because of the language and expression used or the manner, in which it is sent or delivered, will not be responded to.

Correspondence which is defined as 'vexatious' according to the Complaints Policy will not be responded to.

Nothing in this Policy precludes any person from exercising their individual legal rights in respect of obtaining restraining and intervention orders; reporting assault; bringing action for defamation; exercising rights under vilification or discrimination, or in any other way.

## REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed in 2019.

## RELATED POLICIES

2.16A Complaints Register

2.17 Electronic Communication Policy

2.32 Photographs of Students (linked with 2.29 Publications & Media Policy)

2.33 Privacy Policy

2.43 Social Media Policy

2.45 Staff – Parent Communications 6.6 Police Clearance and Working with Children Policy

2.47 Supervision of Parent Assistance with Students at the School

3B.21 Volunteers Policy

6.6 Police Clearance and Working with Children Policy