

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS OF SYSTEMIC CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE DIOCESE OF TOWNSVILLE

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INTRODUCTION:

“Teach Me Your Ways O Lord” (Psalm 86)

This Code of Conduct applies to all parents, volunteers and visitors who interact with our systemic schools and Catholic Education in the Diocese of Townsville. It also applies to all parents, volunteers and visitors who are present at school and school sponsored activities/meetings/functions within and outside of school hours. As parents, volunteers and visitors there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Townsville.

The school is a complex organisation comprising a diversity of populations that have different relationships to one another.

Relationships are at the very core of our Christian belief in our Triune (three persons in one) God. The Holy Trinity is God in relationship! This beautiful theology inspires all of us in Catholic schools to endeavour to be a living Christian community in relationship with God and others. It is essential in such a community that all members recognise and respect their own rights and responsibilities, as well as those of other members of the community and of the school itself.

The responsibility for promoting and upholding these core values of the school community must fall on those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions. Therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers/volunteers model acceptable behaviour at all times within the school and at school sponsored activities.

As a parent, celebrate that you play a formative role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equity and worth. You are one of the most influential role models within your child's life. Let us all strive to build a harmonious community where students can flourish.

This Code is designed to guide parents, caregivers, guardians and volunteers in their dealings with staff, other parents, students and the wider school community. All staff and students at our Catholic schools are guided by similar codes. The Code is written in line with the school's values and

expectations. The Code stands beside but does not exclude or replace the rights and obligations of individuals under common law. It is also supported by State laws and regulations ensuring good order on school sites such as the *Australian Education Act 2013*. All systemic Catholic schools are private property owned by the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation for the Diocese of Townsville.

This Code applies to all Catholic Schools and Colleges, Kindergartens, Outside School Hours Care and other facilities/programs under the guidance of the Townsville Catholic Education Office.

OUR GOSPEL VALUES:

We are called to emulate Jesus' call to love God and to love each other. We look to the values taught to us in scripture and the Christian tradition to guide us:

- Love (1 John 4:7-19)
- Promoting Life in Abundance (John 10:10)
- Inclusion (Luke 19:1-10)
- Reconciliation (Luke 15:11-32)
- Compassion (Luke 10:30-37)
- Justice (Matthew 25:31-46)
- Liberation (Luke 4:16-21)
- Community (John 15)
- Hope (Luke 24:13-35)

In living out these Gospel values we strive to develop:

- An inclusive approach including a non-judgemental and welcoming attitude towards all people
- An ability to understand the situation of others
- A co-operative attitude in working with others
- Open, positive and honest communication
- The ability to work respectfully with other people
- Reverence for Creation
- Trusting relationships
- Responsible actions.

As a parent/guardian/caregiver/volunteer we ask that you:

- Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education
- Work in partnership with the school for the common goal of achieving what is best for all
- Support your child in all educational endeavours by giving praise and showing interest in school activities
- Help your child to discover it is more the process that is experienced, rather than the end product, that makes it all worthwhile
- Model resilience – encourage healthy problem solving
- Help your child to understand that 'giving of your very best' is what matters rather than always comparing yourself against the capabilities or achievements of others
- Listen to your child, but remember that a different version of the event may be interpreted by others
- Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to your school in a constructive and appropriate manner
- Demonstrate that both parents and teachers work together for the benefit of the child
- Adhere to the school's policies, as outlined on the school website and/or the school's parent handbook and endeavour to support them in the home

- Co-operate where your child's behaviour has overstepped accepted school standards, as outlined in Student Code of Conduct, Student Diary or similar documents and follow specified protocol for communication with staff members
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Discourage gossip and hearsay by communicating with the school and always model good manners for your child
- Maintain a positive and co-operative attitude and interact positively with other parents and members of the school community
- Encourage community building with other parents in your year level and across the school
- Value the school community and its reputation especially when engaging with social media
- Do not smoke on school premises in accordance with Queensland legislation.

Parent/guardian/caregiver/volunteer rights:

- To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students and other parents
- To be listened to, and clearly communicated with by the school, in regard to your child's education and development
- To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by staff
- To be treated in a caring and polite manner
- To have a timely response to concerns raised
- To be treated with professionalism by all staff members.

Parent/guardian/caregiver/volunteer responsibilities:

- Value and champion your school and its reputation. Be mindful of the hurt and damage social media may cause to staff members and other parents
- Respect the reputation of teachers and be mindful of communications especially social media; e.g. tone of emails
- Under no circumstances approach another child whilst in the care of the school to address, discuss or chastise them because of actions towards your own child
- Respect the rights of staff members and other individuals
- Follow the correct procedures to resolve a conflict or make a complaint
- Respect teachers' preparation time before school and make an appointment for long discussions at a mutually convenient time. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please do not expect a meeting before school unless pre-arranged
- To protect our children, do not discuss any grievances or perceived failings in front them regarding the school
- On excursions, helping in class or on camps, follow the instructions and directions of the teacher. A parent may remind students of the rules but at no time issue consequences and refer them to the teacher if the behaviour continues
- As valued members of the school community, attend and participate appropriately in school liturgies or special events including sporting carnivals, interschool sport, academic and cultural events

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Townsville Catholic Education will adopt the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice throughout the complaint management process. This requires a fair and proper procedure to be used, which involves disclosure, a reasonable opportunity to respond and impartiality to reach a fair and correct decision. It is important that all complaints:

- Are handled in a positive and transparent way

- Are recorded at every level, properly documented and reported to the Principal or delegated person as soon as practicable
- Documents related to the complaint are kept and stored in accordance with Townsville Catholic Education Office procedures
- Can be made directly to the Principal or their delegate of the school/college or to Townsville Catholic Education Office if the complaint involves a Principal
- Are resolved with mutual respect and clear communication
- Where possible, are resolved at the first point of contact. If this does not occur, the receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within five working days by telephone, in person, by email, or in writing.

Complaints management in schools is also underpinned by Section 7 of the *Education Accreditation (Non-State Schools) Act Qld, and Regulations 2017*.

The Townsville Catholic Education Procedure for Management of Complaints can be found on all school websites and at www.tsv.catholic.edu.au. It outlines the procedures to make a complaint and how to manage complaints for schools, colleges, outside hours school care and other facilities/programs in the Townsville Catholic Education system.

Parents accept this Code of Conduct when signing and accepting the school's policies in the Enrolment Application Form and by the act of accepting enrolment at a systemic Townsville Catholic School.