

Parent Code of Conduct

1. PURPOSE

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Similarly, Kingswood College cannot provide the best education for a child, or help equip that child with the skills required for a fulfilling adult life, without cooperation and support.

To ensure such cooperation and support, this Code of Conduct outlines the College's expectations for all parents and guardians (collectively, **Parents**) with students enrolled at the College.

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

This Code of Conduct operates in addition to any other College policies and procedures. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on what is acceptable behavior by Parents.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the Kingswood College Community.

3. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE POLICY

3.1 Being a positive role model and supporting the College

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

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

- 1 Comply with the College's policies, procedures and directions, and ensure their children do the same.
- 2 Respect (and show to their children they respect) that the College is inclusive and welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds, and with different needs.
- 3 Complete forms and provide permissions in a timely manner when requested to do so by the College.
- 4 Encourage their children to actively participate in the life of the College, including in the many sporting and extracurricular activities available (noting that some will be compulsory).
- 5 Be responsive to concerns raised by the College about their own child, including by being cooperative, providing information and attending meetings when required.
- 6 Keep the College informed about a child's behavioural or educational needs, including by providing updated medical information as it becomes available. However, Parents need to also appreciate that while the College will take into account any new information, the College cannot accommodate every need.

- 7 Keep the College informed about a child's parenting arrangements, including any court orders that may be in place. Note that Parents should not involve the College in parenting disputes, or expect the College to act as the go-between for estranged Parents.
- 8 Recognise the damage that gossip can do within a College community, and avoid unconstructive commentary (including criticism, uninformed rumour or speculation) with other Parents, including on social media.

3.2 Behaving respectfully towards members of our community

The College expects that Parents will always behave respectfully towards the College's staff (including employees, contractors and volunteers), students and other Parents. This applies not only to words used, but also to tone and body language.

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

- 1 Bullying, intimidation, discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and child abuse.
- 2 Actual or threatened aggression or violence.
- 3 Behaviour that causes a risk to a person's health and wellbeing.
- 4 Defamatory or disrespectful comments.
- 5 Gossip, rumour, and innuendo.
- 6 Raising one's voice, or using offensive language, while communicating.
- 7 Age-inappropriate language when communicating with children.
- 8 Inappropriate or harmful behaviour which targets a vulnerable person or group based on: their cultural or linguistically diverse background (especially Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, and international students or families); a disability; an inability to live at home; their identity, or the identity of their family members, as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students or families experiencing risk or vulnerability.

Racism and homophobia are not tolerated at our school.

3.3 Use of technology and social media

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

For example, Parents should:

- 1 Respect a staff member's professional and personal boundaries, by not using their personal online presence to raise College matters (or otherwise engage in disrespectful behaviour).
- 2 Not publish information (including personal details, contact information, images and recordings) concerning a staff member, Parent, student or other member of the College community online without express consent.

- 3 Avoid publishing information which may bring the College (or any of its staff, students, Parents and other members of the College community) into disrepute. This includes where an image or recording shows a student in College uniform behaving inappropriately.
- 4 Not communicate with other students outside of the College, including by email or on social media, without prior consent from that student's Parent(s).
- 5 Not discuss confidential or sensitive College matters, including in relation to grievances about a particular staff member or student, online.
- 6 Not set up any online website, forum or group which features the College's name in its title, or which may suggest that it is operated or sanctioned by the College.

3.4 When visiting College grounds, or attending College activities and events

Parents must respect the College's risk-management procedures when visiting the College. 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. Parents must never use student toilets. Staff toilets are provided for your convenience.

Parents do not need to sign in if they are visiting the College only to:

- (a) attend an activity or event to which all members of the College community have been invited;
- (b) visit the College uniform shop; or
- (c) drop off or collect a child from College.

When visiting the College, or attending College activities and events, Parents should model appropriate and respectful behaviours. This includes:

- 1 Demonstrating good sporting conduct and fair play when attending the College's art, drama and sporting events.
- 2 Complying with applicable occupational health and safety and risk-management procedures.
- 3 Complying with any reasonable directions given by the College's staff.
- 4 Showing appropriate care and regard for the property of the College and others. Any damage should be promptly reported to the College.
- 5 Dressing appropriately for the occasion.
- 6 Not being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

3.5 Drop off / pick up

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

Parents must comply with all traffic rules and any College 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.

3.6 Responsibility for others

Parents are expected to ensure that other individuals involved in their child's life, such as other relatives and carers, also comply with this Code of Conduct.

Raising concerns appropriately and productively

The College is committed to the education and wellbeing of each student. It is therefore critical that Parents are able to raise genuine concerns and grievances they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive and respectful forum.

The College's grievance-management procedures are set out in the *Complaints and Grievances Policy*. This policy sets out how concerns and grievances may be raised with the College; who they should be raised with; and how the College will deal with these in a respectful and timely manner.

Parents with concerns and grievances should consult the policy. However, in general:

- 1 Parents should not communicate with another student about an issue concerning their own child. Parents must not attempt to discipline a student who is not their child, and should not raise their voice or be aggressive or hostile when communicating (verbally or non-verbally) with another family's child.
- 2 Parents should raise their concerns with their child's teacher in the first instance. More serious concerns or grievances, including where a Parent is dissatisfied with a teacher's response to a concern, may be raised with the appropriate member of the College leadership (as set out in the policy).
- 3 Parents should arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss their concerns and grievances, rather than relying on email or other written communications.
- 4 Parents should clearly set out their concerns and grievances, and what they would practically like to see happen.
- 5 Parents should appreciate that while the College is committed to dealing with their concerns and grievances in a timely manner, it will not always be practicable for staff to provide an immediate acknowledgement or response (particularly where a concern or grievance is sent by email).
- 6 Parents should respect that the College employs experienced educators and other professionals who are well-trained in making academic, disciplinary, extracurricular, pastoral and wellbeing decisions every day. While the College will always take into account the interests of the Parent's child, the College must ultimately make decisions that take into account the interests of all students (and others who may be affected by the College's decisions).
- 7 Parents should recognise that just as the College will seek to respect each student's privacy, the College will also respect the privacy of other members of the College community. This means there are limits to what information the College will share with a Parent when issues arise. This does not mean that the College is not taking an issue or situation seriously, or hiding information from a Parent.
- 8 If a Parent is not satisfied with the College's response to a concern or grievance, a College policy may provide a Parent with a right to request an internal review of the College's decision. Alternatively, an external body, court or tribunal may be able to deal with the issue. The College

respects a Parent's rights to invoke formal grievance-resolution procedures. However, Parents who refuse to engage in constructive processes that may resolve their grievances, or who choose to publicly air their grievances about the College (and in particular about staff or students) on social media, are not welcome.

3.7 Consequences for breaching this Code of Conduct

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

Where the Principal considers that a Parent has breached this Code of Conduct, the Principal may implement one or more of the following consequences (and not necessarily in any particular order):

- 1 A request that the relevant conduct immediately cease.
- 2 A written warning.
- 3 A Parent (or another relevant person) being excluded from College activities or events.
- 4 A requirement that a Parent (or another relevant person) only communicate with a nominated College representative.
- 5 A Parent (or another relevant person) being banned from being on College premises and at College events, or approaching, telephoning, or otherwise contacting specific staff members, or from using a communication platform controlled by the College through the issue of a legally binding Community Safety Order. *
- 6 Termination of the enrolment of a Parent's student(s).

Staff and volunteers are empowered to take steps to protect their own health and wellbeing. If they feel that a Parent is being inappropriate, they are encouraged to indicate this and ask that it stop. If it does not, or if a staff member feels that a Parent's actions are posing a risk to their or someone else's health and wellbeing, they are empowered to remove themselves from the situation. This may include by immediately concluding a meeting or phone call, or by demanding that a Parent immediately leave the College grounds (or a College activity or event).

4. RELATED POLICIES

- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- (Child Safety) Code of Conduct
- The Obligation to Report a Sexual Offence and Failure to Protect
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Respectful and Safe School Policy and Guidelines
- ICT Policy
- Cyber Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy

POLICY NUMBER: POL - 040

VERSION: 1.1

APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE: JULY 2022

ENDORSED BY COUNCIL: 12 SEP 2022



5. REFERENCES

- Parent Code of Conduct Template – Russell Kennedy Lawyer and AHISA, 26 June 2019
- Ministerial Order No. 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, 10 February 2022
- * The Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021 (Vic) ('the Protection Act') was passed into law by the Victorian Parliament on 28 June 2022. The Principal of any school can issue community safety orders to protect the school staff, the students and other members of the school community from parents, carers or other adults who engage in violent, abusive, threatening behaviour on school grounds or other places where school activities occur.