

# Parent Code of Conduct



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## Introduction

Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School aims to provide an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all. We believe that parents are valuable contributors and participants in the life of the School.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School bases its relationship with parents and caregivers on respect for each other. It is important for our community to recognise and appreciate diversity, to value the contributions of others and to cooperate with and care for others.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School strives to develop a sense of community. We aim to promote partnerships between all members of our community and to encourage positive interaction, respecting the rights and responsibilities of all.

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

## Scope

This Code applies to all adults including parents, guardians, care-givers, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, babysitters and any other adults involved in activities or communication related to Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School. For convenience, the term "parents" is used throughout the document.

## Child Safety

Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School has a zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The School complies with all relevant child safe/protection laws and regulations and has implemented a comprehensive Child Safe Program in order to maintain a child safe culture. The School promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, including those with a disability, those who are from a culturally or linguistically diverse background or those who are of Aboriginal heritage.

## General Principles

### Communication

Parents are to use courteous and respectful written and spoken language in all communications with students, staff, other parents and members of the school community. Profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or offensive language is not to be used.

### Ethical Conduct

Parents are to act in the best interests of students, their families and staff members. They are not to engage in malicious or judgmental gossip, and should ensure that anything they say or write about others is fair and truthful.

## **Respect**

At Good Shepherd, we value our diverse community and respect the rights, customs, cultures, beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own. All members of our community are to refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification.

## **When visiting the School**

- All visitors to the School during school hours are required to sign the Visitors Register located in the Administration Centre.
- Parents are to comply with all safety and emergency procedures in place while at school, and in the event of an emergency will follow all instructions given by any member of school staff.
- Parents attending School Chapel Services, School Assemblies or public meetings, are to participate respectfully, in the manner required of students and staff.
- Parents are to treat other parents and visitors to the School with courtesy and respect.
- Parents are to respect the important role teachers have in the delivery of learning programs. Parents are asked not to interrupt or distract teachers while classroom instruction or learning activities are underway. Please negotiate a suitable time to meet with teachers to discuss any issues.
- Parents are not to discipline a child who is not their own, or speak to a child who is not their own about that child's behaviour. This is the role of teaching staff. Parents are to raise any behavioural, relational or social issues with a member of the teaching staff. It is the School's responsibility to deal with these issues. (A Duty of Care is to apply in an emergency where a child is at risk of harm or where a parent is supervising a small group of students on an excursion)
- When visiting a classroom, parents are to recognise and accept the authority of the teacher (or teachers) and that they are in attendance under the supervision of teachers. Teachers value parental involvement and assistance, however, they may request a parent to leave a classroom or class activity for any reason, but not limited to:
  - parental assistance not being required at the time;
  - parental presence in the classroom or at the activity is disturbing or distracting to any student or teacher;
  - parental behaviour is contrary to the expectations of this Code of Conduct.

## **Communicating with School Staff**

- School staff are entitled to a safe and positive work environment. This is in the best interests of our students as well as the staff members themselves. Parents are to ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety.
- The priority for School staff is the welfare and learning of all students in the School. School staff are therefore not required or expected to respond to emails and telephone calls immediately. Staff members endeavour to respond to emails within 24 hours. Responses are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays unless it is an emergency.

- The time available for parents to meet with staff is to be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt student learning or prevent a staff member from undertaking their responsibilities. Before school is not an ideal time for meetings as it is an important preparation and greeting time. Parents are to be mindful of the teacher's availability, communicate the reason for a meeting and allow a teacher time to prepare, unless there is a genuine emergency that needs to be discussed.

### **Communicating with School Council**

- School Council members are volunteers and many are engaged in their own work and activities during business hours. When parents communicate with School Council members they are to establish that it is a convenient time, or ask to speak at a convenient time. Calling a School Council member while they are at work may be assumed to be an inconvenient time.
- Correspondence to School Council may be forwarded to the School's email address. It will be forwarded to the School Council Chair and discussed at the next School Council meeting. School Council will respond to any formal communication from parents.
- Parents are to allow School Council members an opportunity to discuss their correspondence at a properly constituted meeting of School Council.

### **Communicating with other parents**

Parents are to respect the privacy of other parents' contact details and email addresses and will not send unsolicited emails or "spam" to School parents or forward unsolicited emails or spam that they receive to other parents. Parents are not to forward other parents' email addresses and contact details without their permission. Parents may 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 provide the email addresses and contact details of parents to other parents without permission. Parents may provide their email addresses and contact details to class representatives in order to receive communications about class activities for their child's class and to establish rosters for classroom help, fundraising activities, etc. Class representatives are not to pass on parent email addresses or contact details to other parents without permission.

### **Making a complaint**

Parents have the right to raise issues and concerns related to the education of their child or school matters. Parents are encouraged to raise their issues and concerns with the right person and follow the correct communication channels. When making a complaint parents should refer to the School Managing Complaints and Grievances Policy, which is available on the School Website and on Floreo.

Parents are to follow the procedures outlined in the Managing Complaints and Grievances Policy. It is a breach of this Parent Code of Conduct to make a complaint in a way that is not consistent with the School Managing Complaints and Grievances Policy, especially 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 Assistant Principals of a possible breach of the Parent Code of Conduct. The Principal or Assistant Principals will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred;

- Clearly identify the nature of the breach of the Code of Conduct and provide a warning to the parent(s) concerned.
- Determine whether the breach may be rectified by the parent making an apology, depending on the circumstances, to an individual or group of individuals.
- Where the breach concerned is related to unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the School, issue a warning to the parent, which, if the behaviour continues, may result in the parent not being permitted access to the School without the express permission of the Principal or Assistant Principal.

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

## Companion Documents

- Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Privacy Policy
- Managing Complaints and Grievances Policy

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or as required by legislation.

**Date of Endorsement:** February 2020

**Document to be Reviewed:** February 2023