



“Working Together”

A Code of Conduct for

Parents and Volunteers of

Catholic Schools in the

Diocese of Townsville

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

This **Code of Conduct** applies to all parents, volunteers and visitors who interact with our 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.

Code of Conduct for Catholic Schools 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. St Francis of Assisi taught us all to strive for peace and harmony. It is essential in such a community that all members recognise and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. “All rights have to be balanced by responsibilities because we are in relationship” (Putney, 2005).

The onus for promoting and upholding these core values of the school community must fall on all those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions, therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers model acceptable behaviour at all times within the school setting 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 of all members of the school community. 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 and guardians 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 of course 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 *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. All Catholic schools are private property owned by the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation for the Diocese of Townsville.

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 including: ***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 25:31-460); ***Liberation*** (Luke 4:16-21); ***Community*** (John 15); ***Hope*** (Luke 24:13-35).

In living out these Gospel values we strive to develop the following:

- 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 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/ren in all educational endeavours by giving praise and showing interest in school activities
- Help your child/ren to discover that 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/ren 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/ren, 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/ren
- Adhere to the school’s policies, as outlined on the school webpage 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
- Minimise gossip and hearsay by communicating with the school and always model good manners for your child
- 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 and within five metres from entrance/fence line-as per State of Queensland legislation.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver 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 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
- 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/ren
- Respect the rights of staff members and other individuals
- Respect the reputation of teachers and be mindful of communications especially social media; e.g. tone of emails
- Follow the correct procedures to resolve a grievance or conflict
- 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, parents must 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.

Grievance Process for Parents, Guardians and Carers

Our Catholic schools want to work in partnership with our families. If a parent/guardian/caregiver has a current **complaint, criticism or concern**, it is expected the following steps be followed in the first instance:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved (e.g. class teacher) first and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. Where/if possible make an appointment with the relevant person
2. If for some reason this is not possible, then make an appointment to see the Principal (or other nominated leadership personnel)
3. The Principal (or nominee) should endeavour to mediate and find resolution
4. If, having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction from your perspective, you may take your complaint to Townsville Catholic Education Office for further facilitation.

It is important to note that criticism regarding a staff member will only be heard if it is related to their professional conduct.

Deliberate breaches and inability to respect the Townsville Catholic Education Code of Conduct for Parents & Volunteers or vexatious complaints may result in exclusion of a parent/guardian/caregiver from a school and / or possible termination of enrolment of their child/children.

If your complaint relates to Sexual Abuse by a staff member towards a child in both an historical or current matter you should, in the first instance, contact the police.

Parents when signing off on accepting the school's policies in the Enrolment Application Form and by the act of accepting enrolment at a Townsville Diocese Catholic School are accepting this Code of Conduct in its entirety