

# Clayton North Primary School Parent Community Code of Conduct

## POLICY

### Rationale:

All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe, and feel safe, in their school community. The School Community Code of Conduct sets clear standards of behaviour, which are expected of members of the School Community. It specifies the consequences for any member of the School Community who does not comply with those standards of behaviour, whether those persons are on the School's property, in transit or at another location for the purpose of any School-authorized events or activities.

### Aims:

- The purpose of this policy is to define expectations of acceptable behaviour for members of the community when interacting with each other in the school environment or when attending any official, social or sporting functions in any location where the school is represented.
- We define our community as the immediate and extended families of children attending the school and friends of the school including local residents, businesses, and organizations, the staff, past students and other schools.

### Implementation:

It is expected that all community members will:

- Uphold and abide by the policies and demands of the Department of Education and Training (DET)
- Support the Principal and staff in the development and implementation of school policies
- Treat all members of the School Community with respect and abide by the school values
- Show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others
- Respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions- regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability
- Use non-violent means to resolve any conflict. Insults, disrespect, and other hurtful acts disrupt learning and teaching in the school community, and are a direct contradiction to the school values and will not be tolerated
- Speak to the principal or class teacher if they have concerns about other children and not approach other children or families directly when concerned about playground or classroom issues

### 3.2 Breach of this Code of Conduct

The consequences to a member of the School Community for breaching this Code of Conduct will be as determined at the Principal's discretion. These consequences include any one or more of the following:

- As an initial response, the School may issue any member of the School Community with a warning letter
- The School may ban any member of the School Community from attending at any activity.
- The School may ban any member of the School Community from being on the School grounds in general.
- The School may direct that any parent may only communicate with members of teaching staff through a nominated school representative.
- In the case of extreme or prolonged breach of this Code of Conduct by a parent, the school will take direction from the Department's Legal Branch
- The School may take such other steps at their discretion that are determined appropriate according to the nature of the breach.

### Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

# Clayton North Primary School

## Raising concerns and complaints

### **Rationale:**

The school's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on the values of:

- ▶ providing a safe and supportive learning environment
- ▶ building relationships between students, parents and staff
- ▶ providing a safe working environment for staff.

### **Guidelines:**

The procedures within this policy cover concerns and complaints about:

- ▶ General issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the school's code of conduct
- ▶ Incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or the school yard
- ▶ Learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- ▶ Communication with parents
- ▶ School fees and payments
- ▶ General administrative issues
- ▶ Any other school-related matters.

They **do not** cover matters for which there are existing rights of review or appeal, as detailed in the *Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide*, such as:

- ▶ student discipline matters involving expulsions
- ▶ complaints about employee conduct or performance
- ▶ complaints by the Department's employees related to their employment
- ▶ student critical incident matters
- ▶ other criminal matters.

### **Implementation:**

- The school will develop its procedures to address concerns and complaints in collaboration with parents and the school community.
- These procedures take effect from date of school council ratification.
- The school expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:
  - ▶ do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
  - ▶ provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
  - ▶ maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
  - ▶ acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
  - ▶ act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
  - ▶ show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
  - ▶ recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- The school will address any concerns and complaints received from parents courteously, efficiently, fairly, promptly, or within the timeline agreed with the person with the concern or complaint, and in accordance with due process, principles of natural justice and the Department's regulatory framework.
- The complainant should telephone, visit or write to:

- ❖ the student's teacher about learning issues and incidents that happened in their class
  - ❖ the area coordinator if students from several classes are involved
  - ❖ the assistant principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues
  - ❖ the principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.
- For contact details for any staff member, call the office on 9544 1522.
  - If the complainant is not sure who to contact, they should contact the Assistant Principal on 9544 1522.
  - Complainants can seek the services of an advocate when they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone who is available through an appropriate support organisation who does not receive a fee for service.
  - All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement.
  - The school will consider recording the following details of all complaints received, even if the complaint appears to be minor:
    - ▶ name and contact details (with permission) of the person with a concern or complaint
    - ▶ the date the concern was expressed or complaint made
    - ▶ the form in which the concern or complaint was received (such as face-to-face, by telephone, in writing, by email)
    - ▶ a brief description of the concern or complaint
    - ▶ details of the staff member responding to the concern or complaint
    - ▶ action taken on the concern or complaint
    - ▶ the outcome of action taken on the concern or complaint
    - ▶ any recommendations for future improvement in the school's policy or procedures.
  - When a complaint is easily resolved in a telephone call, a brief note recording the issue and the resolution is all that is required.
  - The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of the Department.
  - A copy of the complaints policy is available on the website and the procedures will be provided to the complainant on request.
  - The school will determine whether a concern or complaint should be managed through the school's concerns and complaints process or through other complaints processes of the Department.
  - All complaints will be noted and acted on promptly by the staff member who receives the complaint.
  - Concerns and complaints about general school matters (such as the timing of events, school policies and facilities) will be addressed by the principal or a relevant staff member.
  - The school will make every attempt to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible, however, will at times, require adequate time to investigate.
  - Should the complaint involve complex issues, the school might need to take advice from the Department's regional office which may take more time. The school will tell the complainant the new timeline for addressing the complaint and the reasons for any delays. In all cases, the school will try to resolve a concern or complaint within 20 school days.
  - If a concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, the school will offer an appropriate remedy. For example, at its discretion and depending on the circumstances, the school might offer:
    - ▶ an explanation or further information about the issue
    - ▶ mediation, counselling or other support
    - ▶ an apology, expression of regret or admission of fault
    - ▶ to change its decision, its policies, procedures or practices
    - ▶ to cancel a debt (such as for school payments) or refund a fee.
  - The school will implement the remedy as soon as practicable.
  - If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the school, they should contact the Department's appropriate regional office.

- If the complaint cannot be resolved by the complainant, school and regional office working together, the regional office may refer it to the Department’s Group Coordination Division.
- The school will make information about procedures for addressing concerns and complaints readily available to parents and the school community. The information will include:
  - ▶ how a person can make a complaint
  - ▶ the person’s responsibilities
  - ▶ information to be provided by the person
  - ▶ who the person should contact and their contact details
  - ▶ the process and timeframes for managing complaints.
- The school’s procedures for addressing concerns and complaints will be published on the school’s website and printed in the Information for Families handbook.
- The school will:
  - ▶ brief all members of staff about its procedures to address concerns and complaints annually
  - ▶ provide staff with (or provide access to) training and support appropriate to their responsibilities under the procedures
  - ▶ ensure staff who manage complaints demonstrate the personal attributes outlined in the *Good Practice Guide: Ombudsman Victoria’s guide to complaint handling for Victorian public sector agencies*.

**Evaluation:**

- The school will monitor parent concerns and complaints and consider issues raised through the parent complaints process, and any other relevant information from the Parent Opinion Survey, when undertaking a review of the school’s policies, procedures and operations.
- The school will review its information about complaints made over time to:
  - ▶ identify common or recurring issues that may need addressing
  - ▶ assess the effectiveness of these and other procedures and whether they are being followed
  - ▶ use information provided to the school through the Parent Opinion Survey on the views of parents.
- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....	<b>19<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>
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