



## Code of Conduct for Parents and Guardians

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This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations of the School in relation to the conduct of Parents and Guardians of students of the School. This document aims to ensure that the required standards of behaviour are clear to parents, as well as the implications of non-compliance, which in serious cases can include cessation of student enrolment.

### **1. About this Code of Conduct**

The Little Yarra Steiner School (in this document, 'the School') is committed to creating an environment that is safe, respectful and mutually supportive, for staff, contractors, volunteers, students and their parents and guardians. The School values and encourages diversity and equal opportunity and wishes to ensure that all people in the School community are treated with dignity, fairness, courtesy, mutual trust and respect at all times. *The School wishes to ensure that the School environment is free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, vilification, victimisation, and violence.*

The School wishes to work with Parents and Guardians to ensure the care and development of each student. This Code of Conduct specifies the way in which the School requires parents and others responsible for students to conduct themselves when visiting the School campus, participating in School activities or otherwise engaging with members of our School community.

It sets out mandatory minimum standards of conduct, which are reinforced by the rights and obligations of individuals under the law.

### **2. Who does this Code apply to?**

The Code applies to all parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family members and care-givers of students enrolled at the School, when they are acting in that capacity (in this document, 'Parents and Guardians'). It also applies to the behaviour of any 'guests' who accompany Parents and Guardians to School or School events.

This Code governs the way Parents and Guardians interact with and treat other Parents and Guardians, students (including their own), visitors, staff (including teachers), contractors and volunteers (in this document, 'members of the School community').

All Parents and Guardians must act in accordance with this Code, School policies and any other applicable legislation, including the Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021. The consequences of any breach are set out under Section 5 below.

### **3. What is expected of 'Parents and Guardians'?**

#### **3.1 Upholding the School's Purpose and Values**

Parents and Guardians must support and act in accordance with the School's Mission and Values in all dealings with the School, including when referring to the School, directly or indirectly, verbally, in written correspondence and on Social Media. A copy of this document is available on our website, or on request from the school office. For the purpose of this Code, the key parts are as follows:

- The School is based on Anthroposophical principles as given by Austrian educationalist Dr Rudolf Steiner.
- The School fosters a culture of respectful relationships and positive student behaviours. We promote a whole School environment in which the wider community can participate.
- The School is philosophically committed to the principles and practice of Australian democracy, which includes the values of diversity, openness and tolerance.

#### **3.2 Conduct on School premises or at School events**

##### **Respect for the School**

When attending the School or any School-related event, Parents and Guardians must:

- (a) comply with all laws, policies and procedures in place at the School (e.g. health and safety, notification/compliance required, family court orders);
- (b) sign in at reception if entering the school property for any reason at a time other than the normal pick up or drop off time for their child/ren
- (c) advise the School of any areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and family court orders;

- (d) not smoke on the School grounds, and within four metres of any entrance (Victorian Law);
- (e) dress appropriately according to the occasion; this includes avoiding wearing clothing with offensive words or insignias;
- (f) not bring onto or consume alcohol on the School grounds;
- (g) never possess or consume illicit drugs on School grounds;
- (h) not attend School grounds or events affected by drugs or alcohol;
- (i) respect and not damage School property or the property of others;
- (j) not bring dogs onto the school grounds at any time.

### **Respect for all members of the School community**

The School community is taken to include parents, carers, staff, teachers, contractors, volunteers and any others as defined in Section 2 above.

When attending the School or any School-related event, or if otherwise engaged in School-related activities or in communication with any member of the School community, Parents and Guardians must:

- (a) treat all members of the School community (as defined above) with courtesy and respect;
- (b) be courteous and respectful in all written and spoken communication with everyone in the School community and never engage in vexatious communication with any member of the School community as defined in the Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021;
- (c) not use offensive, insulting or abusive language or expletives, raise their voice, or speak in a derogatory or offensive manner, or engage in violent or threatening behaviour towards anyone in the School community;
- (d) never use violence of any kind towards anyone;
- (e) not assault (sexually or physically), sexually harass, intimidate, undermine, threaten, bully or harass any member of the School community;

- (f) listen and behave respectfully (in the same manner required by students and staff) when attending any kind of School assembly, activity, presentation, festival or other public event;
- (g) ensure that any physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of and relationship with the student, such that questions of impropriety do not arise;
- (h) not discipline or reprimand another person's child, raise their voice or get involved in verbal altercations with another parent or guardian or child;
- (i) respect the privacy of other members of the School community. This includes not engaging in malicious or judgemental gossip (either directly or online) and ensuring that anything they say about others is fair and truthful;
- (j) not disparage the School's Mission or Values or otherwise act in a manner which is disrespectful or contradictory to the School's Anthroposophical principles;
- (k) act in accordance with the requirements set out in Sections 3.4 and 3.5 below, concerning photography, video and audio recordings and Social Media;

### **Respect towards staff, teachers, contractors and volunteers**

In all interactions with staff, teachers, contractors and volunteers, Parents and Guardians must:

- (a) only enter a classroom, staffroom or attend a School-related activity with permission from a staff member;
- (b) when attending School or a School event in a voluntary capacity, accept the authority of the teacher (or staff member) and comply with any reasonable direction;
- (c) not interrupt, raise their voice or disrupt a teacher while instructions are given or when learning activities are taking place.

### **3.3 Communicating with School staff, contractors and volunteers**

In order that all staff, contractors and volunteers can enjoy a safe and enjoyable work environment, in addition to the items listed in the section **Respect for all members of the School community above**, Parents and Guardians must comply with the following:

- (a) If a Parent or Guardian contacts a staff member, contractor, or volunteer in relation to a query or concern, the recipient will respond within a reasonable period of time;

- (b) In order to most effectively discuss a particular query or concern with a staff member, contractor, or volunteer (either in person, in writing or over the phone), Parents and Guardians must make an appointment in advance;
- (c) Written correspondence with the School must be respectful and courteous and never abusive, intimidating, threatening or bullying, or constitute sexual harassment.

### **3.4 Photography, video and confidentiality**

Parents and Guardians must not:

- (a) take a photo or audio or video recording of any member of the School community without their consent (or, in the case of a student, their Parent or Guardian);
- (b) share, distribute or post on social media any photo or audio or video recording of any member of the School community without their prior consent (or, in the case of a student not their own, their Parent or Guardian).

### **3.5 Use of Social Media**

Parents and Guardians should recognise the potential for damage to be caused, directly or indirectly, to the School and others as a result of their use of social media, in circumstances when they can be identified as a Parent or Guardian of a student of the School.

When using social media, Parents and Guardians must therefore:

- (a) be respectful and courteous to all members of the School community, and not act in a way that could sexually harass, bully or intimidate;
- (b) not criticize the School's Mission, Values or Anthroposophical principles;
- (c) not discuss or mention the School, its staff or any members of the School community in a negative or defamatory way, or otherwise break the law;
- (d) not use the platform to voice grievances about the School;
- (e) make contact with students (other than their own) using any form of social media without the express consent of the student's Parent or Guardian;
- (f) make reasonable efforts to ensure that their children comply with the School's IT and Social Media Policy;

- (g) never disclose the personal details of, or confidential information about, any member of the School community to third parties without the individual's prior consent or their Parent of Guardian;
- (h) never post defamatory, offensive, sexually inappropriate or other material that may damage the reputation of the School or a member of the School Community.

#### **4. Process for making a complaint**

Parents and Guardians have the right to raise issues and concerns related to the education of their child or other matters relating to the School.

The School will take seriously any issues that are brought to its attention. If Parents or Guardians express their concerns to the School, they can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect in attempting to resolve the matter.

As a general guide, minor issues should be raised with the child's teacher first. The School's grievance procedures are available on request from the office.

#### **5. Consequences for a breach of this Code**

Any person may notify the Principal of a possible breach of this Code of Conduct.

The Principal or their representative will investigate the complaint to determine whether there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct or other School policy or applicable legislation, including but not limited to the Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021, which provides for orders prohibiting or regulating certain conduct on school premises or school-related places in order to protect members of school communities from harmful, threatening or abusive behaviour.

If satisfied that a breach by a Parent or Guardian has occurred, the Principal or their representative may implement disciplinary action against the person as stipulated by this Code of Conduct, or other School policy or relevant legislation, including The Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021, such as a school community safety order, warning, direction to provide an apology, direction not to enter School grounds for a period of time, or other sanctions up to and including termination of the enrolment of the student under their care.