



Green Point Christian College

Code of Conduct - Parent/Guardian/Visitor Including Communication Policy (Parents to Staff)

*First Edition – April 2015
Approved by Board – May 2015
Updated by Principal – March 2017
Updated by Acting Principal – April 2019*

► RATIONALE – Purpose and Principles

At Green Point Christian College we seek at all times to provide an open, safe and welcoming community with high quality education, pastoral services and co-curricula activities. We require that all College community members demonstrate a commitment to the highest standards of ethics, professional behaviour and compliance with the College's Codes of Conduct.

The College is always willing to assist parents whenever they can, however there also needs to be a code of understanding about the College's position regarding dropping off and picking up children, email and SMS contact with staff, and the use of Social Media. With this Code of Conduct in place it is hoped that parents/guardians/visitors can appropriately direct their concerns and contribute to a harmonious environment that reflects and builds on the College's core beliefs and values. At all times the College has a duty of care towards all staff.

This Policy is intended to:

1. Provide a set of general principles to guide parents/guardians/visitors in their interaction with staff, students and other parents of Green Point Christian College;
2. Communicate the College's expectation as to how parents conduct themselves when on College grounds which includes dropping off or picking up children, through email and other channels of communication; and
3. Explain how parents/guardians/visitors can direct their concerns.

This Code is not intended to comprehensively address every situation, but is a general guide to playground principles, car park principles and communication. We ask that parents exercise discretion and care in their interactions with all others in their dealings with the College.

► SCOPE

The scope of this Policy applies to all parents, guardians, relatives, friends, supporters, carers, visitors and invitees to the College. This Policy is written to ensure there are clear standards of behaviour in the College environment, or when attending any College related function or activity, or when picking up and dropping students at the College or when communicating to staff through email, SMS or commenting on the College through Social Media or any other public forum.

► DEFINITION

Any Code of Conduct has, as its primary goal, an understanding that the community of the College is founded on relationships based on shared beliefs and common goals. This Code of Conduct creates a climate of mutual respect and support for parents and visitors. It ensures a common understanding of

expectations for personal behaviour, acceptable interactions with staff, other parents, other visitors and students.

► **GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT PRINCIPLES**

Personal Behaviour

All parents/guardians/visitors are expected to comply with behaviour that demonstrates respect for other people, the authority of the College, and sets a Christ-like example for students. The following standards of behaviour include but are not limited to:

1. Refraining from inappropriate language or conduct on College grounds. This includes wearing inappropriate clothing that may cause offense;
2. Refraining from smoking – all educational facilities and grounds are non-smoking areas;
3. Not possessing or being affected by alcohol or any illegal substance, whilst on College property;
4. Respecting and complying with all applicable Commonwealth and State laws;
5. Respecting the legal and moral rights of others and treating them with dignity, civility and respect at all times, especially if there is a disagreement;
6. Showing proper care and regard for College property and the property of others.

Interaction with staff, other parents and students

Parents/guardians/visitors are expected to interact respectfully with staff, students and other parents at all times. Any language which is abusive, insulting or aggressive in nature is not appropriate.

Parents/guardians/visitors are not permitted to discipline another parent's child whilst on College grounds. The duty of care whilst on College grounds remains with teachers.

All concerns related to general Code of Conduct principles need to be directed to the Principal.

► **GENERAL CAR PARK PRINCIPLES**

All parents/guardians/visitors are expected to comply with behaviour that demonstrates respect for other people, the authority of the College, Work and Health and Safety expectations and setting a Christ-like example for students.

All parents need to abide by all road rules, traffic control measures and staff directions when using vehicles on the College grounds. It is essential for the safety of all students at the College that the following processes and procedures are also followed:

1. Refrain from parking in car spaces designated as "Parking for Church Business Only";
2. Do not access the driveway entry at the Church office, unless you are collecting a child from Little Coasties;
3. Do not park in the student carpark;
4. Refrain from asking Primary School students to walk across the Student Carpark. If a Primary School student is waiting for an older sibling they are to wait and be met by that sibling before accessing the carpark;
5. Do not park in the disabled parking designated as such, unless you are picking up students with disabilities, or have a disability yourself or are transporting a disabled passenger.

► GENERAL COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

Messages to students

If a parent needs to get a message to their child during the day, they are to telephone the office (call 4363 1266 and when answered press 1 – this will direct the call to the receptionist). The College receptionist will ensure the message is passed on. When teachers are on class they have duty of care to all students in the class and need to maintain that responsibility; parents are not to contact teachers directly for an urgent message.

Emailing staff – appropriate use of email

The College recognises that email is a widely used means of communication. However, though it has an element of immediacy for the sender, it is often not the best way to communicate a concern or frustration which, because of the medium, may be misunderstood by the recipient. Further to this, email is not an appropriate communication tool when a parent requires an immediate response to highly sensitive or complex situation. Email should not be considered an opportunity to send information that has not been considered in light of other Policy and Procedures of the College. Email, whilst a seemingly innocuous communication device, is now being understood and treated as a significant form of communication capable of being the subject of a subpoena by the Court system. Therefore, it always needs to be used wisely.

Some helpful suggestions about using email:

- Think twice before sending an email; it is easy to write and send but difficult to take back;
- Be cautious because you know exactly what you want to say, but the person receiving your email will find it hard to read tone into what you have written;
- Be discreet, professional and lawful in interacting with staff;
- Be aware of College Policies and Procedures which you have agreed to follow;
- Consider the time of day or night an email is sent;
- Consider the length of the email and therefore whether it is the best way to communicate with staff at the College;
- If a teacher has not responded to an email in three days, please telephone the office and leave a message for the teacher.

Parent meetings

Parents are always welcome at the College to meet with staff. Unscheduled meetings before school may be problematic as teachers are preparing for the day ahead. Instead, parents should contact the office (call 4363 1266 and when answered press 1 – this will take you straight to the receptionist) or contact the teacher to make a mutually convenient time.

SMS or contacting staff at home

Parents should not contact a staff member at home, on their personal home phone or mobile or by SMS if the matter relates to the College.

Social Media and other Public Forums

Social media and other Public Forums should not be used to criticise or denigrate others in the College community. The College reserves the right to request material publicly posted about students, staff, parents or the College that is inaccurate, confrontational, critical, offensive or disrespectful to be

taken down. Likewise, the posting of photos of other children without consent is inappropriate. Matters that include libel or slander may be dealt with at a higher level.

► **OTHER PARENTAL SITUATIONS**

The College will endeavour to assist parents to manage conflicts as best as it can, but can only do this if it is informed of such matters. In some circumstances, parents are required by law to advise the College of areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and family court orders.

Whilst there is no obligation to inform the College of other situations where parents may be in dispute (eg separation or other Court Orders in place between parents or people at the College) any information received of this nature will be treated in strict confidence.

In any event, the College expects parents to behave lawfully on College grounds and observe the terms of any order, obligation or undertaking to which they may be the subject. The College takes seriously any issues that are brought to its attention. If concerns are expressed in confidence, parents/guardians/visitors can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect in order to try and resolve the matter.

As a general guide, minor issues may be addressed (in private) with your child's teacher. Cases of inappropriate conduct or misconduct ought to be directed, in the first instance, to the College Principal. The Principal may wish to speak to the parent and then to relevant class teacher. If the issue concerns other parents or students, the Principal may speak with those persons as well, unless there is a reason for the matter to remain between the parent and the College.

It is not possible to categorically state what will constitute a minor issue, inappropriate conduct or misconduct. Each situation must be considered as it arises. However, in cases of serious or repeated misconduct, the College may need to take steps to institute a temporary ban of a parent/guardian/visitor from entry to the College grounds and may, where appropriate, involve other authorities.

► **BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The consequences to a member of the College community for breaching this Code of Conduct will be determined by the Principal in accordance with the Green Point Christian College Grievance Policy and may include one or more of the following:

- The College may place a temporary ban on any member of the College community from attending any co-curricula activity, after any breach in the Code of Conduct, whilst seeking a resolution;
- The College may place a temporary ban on any member of the College community from being on the College grounds in general, after any breach in the Code of Conduct, whilst seeking a resolution;
- The College may direct that any parent/guardian/visitor only communicate with members of staff through a nominated College representative, whilst seeking a resolution to the breach of the Code of Conduct;
- In the case of extreme or prolonged breach of this Code of Conduct, which has been consistently acknowledged by the College to a parent/guardian/visitor in writing, the College may see that the only option is to terminate the enrolment of the child of that parent/guardian.

Right of Appeal

The Green Point Christian College Grievance Policy “right of appeal” will apply to any decision made by the Principal under this Code of Conduct. The Policy is accessible on, and can be downloaded from, the College’s website.

Important Related Policy Documents:

- Grievance Policy
- Work Health and Safety
- Child Well-being and Child Protection Policy

► GENERAL COMMENTS

It is important that parents show respect for staff and not publically criticise them or seek to undermine their authority. If a parent has a particular concern about a member of staff, they can raise it with the staff member concerned or with the Head of School, Deputy Principal or the Principal, however when doing so, they should observe the general rules of conduct set out in this Code. Rude, critical or abusive language should not be used. It is not productive and can make it harder to resolve concerns. Additionally, parents are to allow staff a reasonable amount of time (at least three days) to investigate, gather evidence, and consider the perspectives of other parties before making a decision about an issue that has been raised.

This Policy now supersedes these Guidelines forming a more expansive framework for Staff and Parent communications for K-12. This Policy also supersedes the Code of Conduct – Parent/Guardian/Visitor approved in May 2015.

The College has a responsibility to follow its own Policies and Procedures and has an inherent duty of care to staff to ensure their well-being.



Green Point Christian College

The Statement of Faith of Green Point Christian College is as follows:

God

There is one God and He is sovereign and eternal. He is revealed in the Bible as three equal divine Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God depends on nothing and no one; everything and everyone depends on Him. God is holy, just, wise, loving and good.

God created all things of His own sovereign will, and by His Word they are sustained and controlled.

God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is also Father of all whom He has adopted as His children. Because of God's faithfulness and His fatherly concern, nothing can separate His children from His love and care.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternally existing, only begotten Son of the Father. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, truly God and truly man. He lived a sinless life and died in our place. He was buried, rose from the dead in bodily form and ascended to heaven. Jesus is King of the universe and Head of the Church, His people whom He has redeemed. He will return to gather His people to Himself, to judge all people and bring in the consummation of God's Kingdom.

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He convicts people of their sin, leads them to repentance, creates faith within them and regenerates them. He is the source of their new sanctified life bringing forth His fruit in the life of believers. He gifts believers according to His sovereign will, enabling them to serve the Lord.

The Bible

The Bible, which is comprised of the books of the Old and New Testament, is the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God, and the only absolute guide for all faith and conduct. It is indispensable and determinative for our knowledge of God, of ourselves and of the rest of creation.

God's World

Adam and Eve, the parents of all humankind were created in the image of God to worship their Creator by loving and serving Him, and by exercising dominion under God's rule by inhabiting, possessing, ruling, caring for and enjoying God's creation. Consequently, the purpose of human existence is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Sin entered the world through Adam's disobedience, because of which all people are alienated from God and each other and, as a result, they and all creation are under God's judgement.

All people have sinned and, if outside of Christ, are in a fallen, sinful, lost condition, helpless to save themselves, under God's condemnation and blind to life's true meaning and purpose.

God holds each person responsible and accountable for choices made and actions pursued. Human responsibility and accountability do not limit God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty does not diminish human responsibility and accountability.

Salvation from the penalty of sin is found only through the substitutionary, atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the sinless One, He took upon Himself the just punishment for our sins.

Through His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus has destroyed the power of Satan, who is destined to be confined forever to hell along with all those who reject Jesus as Lord.

Out of gratitude for God's grace and in dependence on the Holy Spirit, God's people are called to live lives worthy of their calling in love and unity and in obedience to God in all spheres of life. They are responsible to ensure that the gospel is faithfully proclaimed. Christian parents are required to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord and to diligently teach them the truth of God's Word.