

## SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

### v1.0 Code of Conduct Parent / Guardian / Visitor Including Communication Policy (Parents to Staff)

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Prepared by Executive Principal

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Date ratified

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Monitored by Principal

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Review by School Director

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Date for review 2022

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Policy pertains to All staff

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NESA Reference ...

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#### Version History

Version	Date	Notes
1.0	February 2021	New policy

## 1. RATIONALE – PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

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

The School is always willing to assist parents whenever they can, however, there also needs to be a code of understanding about the School's position regarding interaction with staff, students and other parents, 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 or complaints and contribute to a harmonious environment that reflects and builds on the School's core beliefs and values. At all times the School has a duty of care towards all staff, students, parents, guardians and visitors.

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 Yattalunga Valley Christian School.
2. Communicate the school's expectation as to how parents conduct themselves when on School 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/complaints.

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 School.

## 2. SCOPE

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

## 3. TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy is to be read in conjunction with related Yattalunga Valley Christian School policies if stated in this policy.

<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Evidence of Compliance</i>
<b>Principal, School Director</b>	
Ensure the development of this policy within the School	
Ensure procedures are maintained that enable compliance with this policy	
Operate within his/her delegated authority	
<b>All staff</b>	
Operate within delegated authority	

#### **4. DEFINITION**

Any Code of Conduct has as its primary goal, an understanding that the community of the School 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.

#### **5. 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 School, 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 School 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 School 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 School 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 School grounds. The duty of care whilst on School grounds remains with teachers.

Concerns related to general Code of Conduct principles need to be directed to the Principal. All concerns related to Staff conduct (including allegations against staff) must also be directed to the Principal.

#### **6. GENERAL CARPARK PRINCIPLES**

All parents/guardians/visitors are expected to comply with behaviour that demonstrates respect for other people, the authority of the School, 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 School grounds.

It is essential for the safety of all students at the School 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 students to walk across the student carpark or Kiss and Drop zone. If a student is waiting for an older sibling, they are to wait and be met by that sibling before accessing the carpark or Kiss and drop zone;
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.

## 7. 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 xxxx xxxx). The School staff 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 School 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, complaint 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 School. 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 School 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 School;
- 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 School 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 xxxx xxxx) or contact the teacher via email 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 School.

### Social Media and other public forums

Social media and other Public Forums should not be used to criticise or denigrate others in the School community. The School reserves the right to request material publicly posted about students, staff, parents or the School 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.

## 8. OTHER PARENTAL SITUATIONS

The School 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 School of areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and family court orders.

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

In any event, the School expects parents to behave lawfully on School grounds and observe the terms of any order, obligation or undertaking to which they may be the subject. The School 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 by staff, other parents or students, ought to be directed, in the first instance, to the School Principal. The Principal may wish to speak to the parent and then to the 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 School.

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 School may need to take steps to institute a temporary ban of a parent/guardian/visitor from entry to the School grounds and may, where appropriate, involve other authorities.

If the misconduct involves staff interactions with a student or group of students, the Principal must follow the guidelines for Reportable Conduct in the Child Protection Policy.

## 9. BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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

- The School may place a temporary ban on any member of the School community from attending any co-curricular activity, after any breach in the Code of Conduct, whilst seeking a resolution;
- The School may place a temporary ban on any member of the School community from being on the School grounds in general, after any breach in the Code of Conduct, whilst seeking a resolution;
- The School may direct that any parent/guardian/visitor only communicate with members of staff through a nominated School 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 School to a parent/guardian/visitor in writing, the School may see that the only option is to terminate the enrolment of the child of that parent/guardian.

### Right of Appeal

The Yattalunga Valley Christian School Grievance Policy for Parents/Guardians/Visitors, the "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 School's website.

## 10. GENERAL COMMENTS

It is important that parents show respect for staff and not publicly 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 School Director, 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. If a parent has a concern about the conduct of a staff member, this should be directed to the Principal.

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

<b>Related Policies and Procedures</b>
Grievance Policy (Staff)
Grievance Policy (Parents)
Work Health and Safety
Child Well-being and Child Protection Policy
Staff Code of Conduct

# Yattalunga Valley Christian School

**The Statement of Faith of Yattalunga Valley Christian School is as follows (we acknowledge the assistance of CSA in formulating this statement):**

## **1. Introduction.**

- (a) Education, at its heart, is about exploring, discovering and embracing truth. Not only must the School impart knowledge, but teachers are called to enlighten knowledge with wisdom to help their students understand the world they live in and their purpose in it. (Psalm 19)
- (b) We believe that the ultimate meaning and purpose of life rests in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. The School is a beacon of hope, built upon the foundation of the redeeming love of God through Jesus Christ. (Genesis 3, 2 Corinthians 5:19)
- (c) The School plays an important role in the formation of students, at the invitation of their parents - in leading and nurturing them, spirit, mind and body, to lay hold of their unique purpose and potential in God's world, and to equip them for a life of fulfilment and significance. It is the aim of the School that graduating students will be transformational in their future callings and vocations. (Psalm 139:1-18)

## **2. Truth.**

- (a) The whole Bible is uniquely inspired by God and is therefore wholly trustworthy and of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21).
- (b) We believe that the Bible, comprising the Scriptures in the Old Testament and New Testament, teaches the truth about essential beliefs of the Christian faith including who God is, who Humanity is, what the Gospel is and what response God requires from his people. (Deuteronomy 10:12-13, Psalm 119:105, Mark 1:15; John 20:31, Romans 12:1-2)
- (c) The character and attributes of God; His everlasting power and divinity are shown in the created universe which is consistent with the specific teachings of the Scriptures. (Psalm 19:1, Romans 1:20)

## **3. God.**

- (a) The sovereign God is one, in three co-equal eternal persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who act together in creation, providence, redemption, and restoration. (Matthew 28:19, Colossians 1:12-16)
- (b) Jesus Christ, the Son, is fully God and fully man. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His sacrificial death in our place, His bodily resurrection, His bodily return to heaven and His continuous role representing believers before the Father, and His return to judge the living and the dead. (John 1: 1-14, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 8:34, Colossians 1:9-10, 1 Timothy 3:16)
- (c) We believe in the Holy Spirit who with the Father and the Son is worthy of our worship, who convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement. The Holy Spirit unites us with Christ, and makes us partake in Christ's risen life, pointing us to Jesus, freeing us from slavery to sin, producing in us his fruit, granting to us his gifts, and empowering us for service in the world. (John 3: 5-7, John 14: 16-18, John 15: 26)
- (d) In His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ took the place of humanity, making full payment for the sin of all people. For those who accept his gift of grace and exercise faith in Him, He secures forgiveness, a right relationship with God, a new life now and everlasting life at the end of history. (Romans 3:23-26, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 2:24)

#### 4. Humanity.

- (a) God has created humanity in His image and ascribed dignity, sanctity and worth to human life from conception until death. God requires human life to be accorded respect and to be protected from harm (Genesis 1:27, Psalm 139:13-16, Exodus 20:13)
- (b) God has created humanity as distinctly male and female and has ordained a normative connection between binary biological sex and a person's true self-conception as male or female. (Genesis 1:27, Matthew 19:4)
- (c) God calls some people to marriage, and some to a single state: one is not inferior or superior to another, and both have dignity, according to the Bible. God has instituted marriage between one man and one woman for life to be the only Scriptural covenantal, sexual and procreative union for humanity which signifies and mirrors the covenant love between Christ and his Church. Married couples must be sexually faithful to each other. Sexual relationships outside of marriage between one man and one woman are contrary to God's will and command for humanity (Genesis 2:23-24, Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:22-32)
- (d) God has instituted the family as the central social structure and parents have the primary responsibility for bringing up their children. God has also instituted the church to make disciples from all the nations and provide spiritual teaching. He has established civil government to make laws, keep civic order and promote human flourishing. Each of these institutions has distinct roles and responsibilities which overlap but one should not usurp the role of the other. (Genesis 1:28, Mark 12:17, Romans 13:1-7)
- (e) Humanity, originally created for a relationship with God, has turned away from God and thus become sinful by nature and practice, unable by any personal merit or effort to restore that relationship. This fall has corrupted human identity and purpose, impacted sexuality, family and social relationships and has separated humanity from fellowship with God. (Genesis 1:26-31, Romans 1:18-32, Romans 3:23, Titus 3:3-7)

#### 5. The Gospel.

- (a) Humanity's only means of restoring relationship with God is through salvation. Salvation is initiated in the believer solely by the grace of God, accomplished through the work of Jesus dying on the cross and applied by the Holy Spirit. Salvation is a free gift accepted by faith and includes the removal of guilt, being set apart for God, a new life of increasing transformation into the likeness of Jesus and eventually the resurrection to everlasting life. (Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 8:28-30, Matthew 25:34-36)
- (b) Believers experience salvation when they are declared righteous by God as they commit their lives to Jesus in repentance and faith. This conscious commitment is made possible only by the work of the Holy Spirit within the individual; it is not a meritorious work. (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:1-10)
- (c) The Church is the company of all believers who have received new life through faith in Christ, formed by His Spirit into one body, of which Christ is the Head. The Church is commanded by Jesus to make disciples in all nations. (Ephesians 3: 4-10, Matthew 28: 19-20)
- (d) Satan is a personal spiritual being, opposed to God and the salvation of humanity, sworn to enslave and destroy the human race but his ultimate purpose has been brought to nothing by the Lord Jesus Christ. (Genesis 3:1-15, Matthew 4:1-11, Revelations 20:10, Colossians 2:15)
- (e) A person who rejects the gift of eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ will be eternally separated from God. (John 3:36, Revelations 20:11-15)
- (f) The Lord Jesus Christ will personally return in glory and judgement to bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal destruction to the lost, establishing a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness, where there will be no more evil, suffering or death. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8, Revelations 22:12, 17-20)



## 6. The Response.

- (a) Until Jesus returns, God calls believers to respond to the Gospel by living as restored disciples of his Kingdom in a broken world with a commission to spread the Gospel, to make disciples and to engage in personal, relational, communal and civic conduct that is transformed by the Gospel and which serves as an example to the world. (Matthew 28:19-20, Matthew 5:13-16)
- (b) Believers are called to personal conduct which:
  - (i) conforms to the example of Jesus;
  - (ii) rejects sinful actions and seeks to do good works;
  - (iii) demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit; and
  - (iv) recognizes that the body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit;
  - (v) affirms and reflects the truth of the Bible about the nature of human beings, created, male and female, in the image of God.(Galatians 5:16-24, 1 Corinthians 6:19)
- (c) Believers are called to relational conduct that conforms to and reflects the teaching of the Bible concerning human sexuality and marriage. Therefore:
  - (i) outside of marriage, a believer must live a life of chastity;
  - (ii) children are a natural blessing of marriage; and
  - (iii) parents must instruct and care for their children and provide for their physical, spiritual, and educational upbringing.(Genesis 1: 26-17, Psalm 127:3-4, Ephesians 5: 22-33)
- (d) Believers are called to communal conduct which includes active participation in a local church and the use of their gifts for works of ministry, including communicating the gospel to others, making disciples, loving each other, loving one's neighbours including through ministries of mercy and compassion, and active witness in the world. (Hebrews 10:25, Romans 12:4-8)
- (e) Believers are called to civic conduct which includes being salt and light to the world, obedience to the civil authorities in all things which do not contradict the Word of God and a commitment to living quietly and peaceably as a blessing to the community in which the believer is placed. (Matthew 5:13-16, Jeremiah 29:7, 1 Peter 2:13-17, 1 Timothy 2: 1-4)
- (f) Believers are still sinful by nature and practice and they will never perfectly respond to God's call in this life so must continue in repentance and faith relying on the grace of God as well as extending grace to others. However, it is only by striving to respond in faith to God's call that believers will find true meaning and purpose to live a fulfilled life. (Romans 7:23, 1 John 2:2, Jeremiah 31:34, 1 John 1:7)