Right Relationships

Parent Code of Conduct

Position Statement

Meaning for Life

Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

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Introduction

Right relationships are at the core of the mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Rockhampton and every effort will be made to maintain a safe and supportive work and learning environment for all within our school communities. Catholic Education is committed to developing a culture based on mutual trust and respect.

Catholic Education seeks to provide guidance for the highest standard of practice in dealing with others and encourages the establishment and maintenance of right relationships. Above all, it aims to protect and support the dignity and integrity of each person.

Table of Contents

General Principles 4

Right Relationships – Everyone's Business 5

Parent Rights 6

Code of Conduct - Whom Does It Apply To? 7

Parent Code of Conduct..... 8

Breaches of the Parent Code 9

Definitions 10

References 11

Guiding Principles:

1. Dignity of the human person

Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore has inherent dignity, independent of ethnicity, creed, gender, sexuality, age or ability. No human being should have their dignity or freedom compromised.

2. Preferential option for the poor

Caring for the poor is everyone's responsibility. Preferential care should be shown to poor and vulnerable people, whose needs and rights are given special attention in God's eyes.

3. Solidarity

Everyone belongs to one human family, regardless of their national, religious, ethnic, economic, political and ideological differences. Everyone has an obligation to promote the rights and development of all peoples across communities, nations, and the world, irrespective of national boundaries.

4. Confidentiality

All members of a school community should respect the rights of an individual and treat personal information confidentially.

5. Reconciliation

Individuals should always seek to repair relationships that are broken and be open to seeing the good in others.

6. The Common Good

The common good is reached when we work together to improve the wellbeing of people in our school community, society and the wider world.

7. Mutual Trust and Respect

All members of the school community should treat each other with mutual trust and respect. By affirming the dignity and worth of all individuals in the school community, we nurture behaviours that are courteous, co-operative and considerate of others within the community.

Right Relationships – Everyone's Business!

In living out these guiding principles, Catholic Education strives to create a caring, life-giving, Christian environment where the existence of right relationships enables each member of the school community the opportunity to grow and develop as individuals.

Catholic Education seeks to provide guidance for the highest standard of practice in dealing with others and encourages the establishment and maintenance of right relationships. Above all, it aims to protect and support the dignity and integrity of each person.

Catholic Education believes that good communication will enable the relationship between home and school to be harmonious and child centred. The establishment of a Parent Code of Conduct will assist in making expectations clear to ensure all parents within a school community are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Parent Rights:

Catholic Education believes that the development of successful partnerships with parents/carers and families assists in the development of the whole child. The following Parent Rights and Responsibilities are important elements to maintaining a positive relationship with the school:

Parent (Guardian & Carers) Rights:

A. To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students and other parents.

B. To be listened to, and clearly communicated with by the school, in regard to your child's education and development.

C. To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by staff, students and other parents.

D. To be treated in a caring and polite manner.

E. To have a timely response to concerns raised.

F. To be treated with professionalism by all staff members.

G. To be treated as a partner in your child's education.

Code of Conduct – Whom Does It Apply To?

This Code of Conduct applies to all parents (guardians & carers) who interact within Catholic Schools, Kindergartens, OSHC and Long Day Care Centres within the Diocese of Rockhampton (referred to here after as Catholic Education in this document). Where applicable, this code also applies to volunteers and visitors to Catholic Education sites.

It applies to all parents (guardians & carers) who are present at any related Catholic Education or Catholic Education sponsored activity / meeting / or function organised within and outside of official hours.

This code is designed to guide parents (guardians & carers) in their dealings with staff, other parents, students and the wider school community. All staff and students at Catholic schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton are guided by similar codes.

This code does not 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 Rockhampton.

As parents (guardians & carers), volunteers and visitors, there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Rockhampton.

Parent Code of Conduct (Responsibilities)

A. Ensuring you have read, understood and accepted the regulations and conditions of enrolment as outlined in the parent handbook and the *Enrolment Application Contract*.

B. Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education.

C. Follow and support the implementation of the School Vision and Mission Statements through implementation of all school and diocesan policies.

D. Work in partnership with the school for the common goal of achieving what is best for all.

E. Support your child/ren in all educational endeavours by giving praise and showing interest in school activities.

F. Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to your school in a constructive and appropriate manner and according to the *'Right Relationships – Parent and Student Grievance Procedures'*

G. Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment while following the school's Behaviour Guidelines.

H. Ensure the integrity of confidential, private and sensitive information is maintained at all times.

I. Support the school's media expectations by ensuring that photography of other students, parents and staff is not permitted.

J. Create and maintain open, honest and positive relationships with staff, parents and students.

K. Ensure your presentation and personal appearance is appropriate for the school community.

L. Ensure you are free from the influences of alcohol, as appropriate to the occasion, or illegal drugs.

M. Encourage community building with other parents in your child/ren's year level and across the school.

N. Value the school community and its reputation especially when engaging with social media.

O. Do not smoke on school premises and within five metres from entrance/fence line-as per State of Queensland legislation.

P. Uphold and comply with applicable laws, policies and procedures at a diocesan, state and federal level (including Student Protection and Workplace Health and Safety).

Q. Disclose fully and accurately any information required by the school in its enrolment process and commit to further update this information as required.

Breaches of the Parent Code

Proven breaches of the parent code, including **vexatious complaints**, may result in action including, but not limited to:

A. Informal meeting(s) and discussion with the school Principal / delegate with the aim of finding a solution to the concern.

B. Formal requests by the Principal for conduct to be addressed in line with the Diocesan Code of Conduct for Parents.

C. Enactment of the 'Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 – *Part 6 - Directions and orders about conduct and orders at, or entry to, premises of non-state schools'.*

D. Exclusion of the parent (guardian & caregiver) from a school and / or possible recommendation to the Director that the student's enrolment be withdrawn.

Definitions:

Vexatious Complaint

A vexatious complaint is a written or verbal report of alleged improper conduct made to an authority intending the report be acted upon without reasonable evidence. Where there is demonstrable absence of reasonable grounds for suspecting the improper conduct and the report is made to cause distress, these proven vexatious complaints will be considered a breach of the Parent Code of Conduct.

Part 6 - Education (General Provisions) Act 2006

The *Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014* was introduced into the Queensland Parliament on 26 August 2014 by the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. The Bill makes a number of amendments to the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*, including giving principals enhanced powers to deal with hostile persons. Principals of state and non-state schools are able to give a verbal direction to a hostile person to immediately leave and not re-enter the school for 24 hours. This may be necessary if someone is threatening the safety of students, damaging property or disrupting the good order and management of the school. For further details, please refer to the following document: *Part 6 Education Act 2006.pdf*

Enrolment Application Contract

On enrolment of a student within a Catholic School, Kindergarten, OSHC and Long Day Care Centre within the Diocese of Rockhampton, parents enter into a legal contract and partnership with the school by completing the Application Form, reading and understanding the conditions of enrolment and indicating their support for these conditions by signing the enrolment application contract.

Right Relationships - Parent Grievance Procedures and Guidelines

Parent and Student Grievance Procedures have been developed to enable concerns to be addressed through a fair and equitable process. For details on the grievance procedures please refer to the following document: Right Relationships Parent and Student Grievance Procedures Version 5 January 2019.

References

- 'Code of Conduct for Parents and Volunteers of Catholic Education, Diocese of Cairns'
- "Working Together" – A Code of Conduct for Parents and Volunteers of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Townsville
- The Federation of Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools in Queensland, 'Partners in Catholic Education'.
- Rockhampton Catholic Education Diocesan Policy – 'Role of Parents and Carers in Catholic Schools, Colleges and Services.' https://os-data-2.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/rok-catholic-edu-au/bundle6/202007_role_of_parents_and_carers_in_catholic_schools_colleges_and_services_policy_version_4.pdf
- Rockhampton Catholic Education Diocesan Policy – 'Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools' https://os-data-2.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/rok-catholic-edu-au/bundle6/202005_pastoral_care_policy_version_4.pdf
- 'Parent Engagement in Action' – A Practical Guide and Toolkit for Schools. Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Melbourne
- Part 6 Education Act 2006 https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/2013-01-29/act-2006-039

Meaning for Life

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