

St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

SCHOOL COMMUNITY CODE OF CONDUCT



1. ETHICAL STATEMENT

St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls (herein referred to as the School) promotes values that are in keeping with the Christian ethos. We are an Anglican school that values respect, inclusion, excellence and justice.

All students, parents (including guardians), teachers, support staff and volunteers have the right to be safe and feel safe in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that put at risk the safety or wellbeing of others.

This Code of Conduct provides members of the School Community with guidelines for the effective development of positive relationships within the School Community and assists in promoting the values that are in keeping with the School's purpose and values.

2. PURPOSE

The School aims to provide an open, welcoming and safe environment for all. The School is a place of learning for students and the rights of the student will be considered. We believe that all community members play a valuable role in the life of the School. This Code of Conduct for our community, outlines the type of practice we require all members of our School to follow. We hope it will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students, families and staff. The Code of Conduct is a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals. This policy will provide guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure that all interaction with students and adults is respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful and considerate. **The Code specifies the consequences for any member of the School Community who does not comply with these standards of behaviour.**

3. APPLICATION

For the purpose of this Policy 'School Community' comprises the Principal, staff, coaches, employees, students, parents, guardians, volunteers, step-parents, relatives, extended family, visitors, friends, supporters, carers and invitees of the School, when in the School environment or when attending any School related function or activity at any other location. Parents/guardians and students agree to be bound by the School Community Code of Conduct when parents/guardians sign the Enrolment Agreement with the School. Although step-parents, relatives, friends, supporters and carers of girls at the School are not a party to that Enrolment Agreement, this School Community Code of Conduct is a guide for them about expected standards of behaviour.

4. PRINCIPLES

The following principles provide the framework for this Code of Conduct:

- Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the School.
- Active and engaged members of the Community are aware of their rights but, more importantly, accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.
- Insults, disrespect and other hurtful acts are disruptive and are a direct contradiction of the School's Purpose and Values.

- Members of the School Community have a responsibility to develop and maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterised by respect, civility and dignity.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The School Council is responsible for endorsing the Code of Conduct and is the body to which any appeal against sanctions applied for breaches of the Code are directed.

The Principal is responsible for

- Ensuring all parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, students and visitors are aware of this policy upon arrival, employment and enrolment.
- Maintaining currency and relevancy of the Code of Conduct Policy.
- Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in this policy.

The staff members are responsible for

- Respecting the individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of families in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal.
- Working with colleagues, the School Council and parents/guardians to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback.
- Providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and when appropriate, clear and respectful directions.

Parents and guardians are responsible for supporting the efforts of the School in maintaining a safe, orderly and respectful learning environment for all students. This necessitates abiding by the School Community Code of Conduct and ensuring that their child does likewise. Parents/guardians fulfil this responsibility routinely and specifically when they:

- Show an active but non-invasive interest in their child's school work and progress;
- Communicate regularly with the School;
- Ensure that their child is appropriately dressed and prepared for school on a daily basis;
- Promptly report to the School their child's absence or late arrival, and
- Support the School's process and actions relating to disciplinary issues and school based disputes involving their child.

Members of affiliated and support groups are responsible for ensuring that the aims of their group and its practices are consistent with the Code of Conduct.

Members of the wider School community are expected to respect/uphold the Code of Conduct in all their contacts with the School whether on campus or at School functions or events off campus.

Any School Community member who invites a relative, friend, supporter, carer or other person (adult or child) to be present at any School related function or activity at any location must be responsible for that person and must ensure that they act at all times in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

6. COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

School Community members are expected to comply with the following principles when attending cocurricular activities:

- Young people are involved in cocurricular activities principally for their enjoyment.
- Young people should always be encouraged to abide by the rules.
- Young people should be taught that team commitment is a consideration and they are encouraged to give their best effort.

- Young people should be taught that honest effort is as important as victory, so results are accepted without undue disappointment.
- Turn defeat into victory by helping young people work towards performance improvement and good sportsmanship. Never ridicule or yell at a person for making a mistake or for losing.
- Young people learn best by example. Applaud good performance by all participants in an activity.
- Do not publicly question the referee's or official's judgement and never his/her honesty.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from cocurricular activities.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches, managers and officials. They give of their time and resources to provide recreational activities for all students, and
- Do not approach a referee or official at any stage during or immediately after an event, except in appreciation.

7. ASSOCIATIONS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

The affiliated bodies are:

- St Hilda's Parents' and Friends' Association operates in its own capacity.
- The Old Scholars Association makes up part of the School community of former students who have attended either the Girls High School or St Hilda's.
- The Whitby Parents Association is made up of the members, who as parents of Old Scholars are interested in maintaining ties with the School and with other parents once their daughters have graduated.
- Events, seminars and other activities sponsored by the Parents' & Friends' Association or the Support Groups must be approved by the Principal as appropriate for the School and booked with the Communications and Engagement Office to be approved for the School calendar. All activities undertaken should be done so with the approval of the Principal in association with the Coordinator of the activity.

8. SANCTIONS FOR ANY BREACHES OF THIS 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 School's Complaints Policy.

- The breach will be investigated by a nominated senior member of staff and a course of action will be recommended to the Principal.

The sanctions which may be employed include:

- A first and final warning meeting and subsequent letter being issued to inform the relevant person/s of the outcome of the investigation and that another breach of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated.
- A banning from being on the School grounds or attending any co-curricular activity.
- A direction, in the case of a parent/guardian, that he/she may only communicate with members of staff through a specified School representative.
- A restraining order being sought against the relevant person through the legal system.
- The School may take such other steps as it may in its reasonable discretion determine appropriate according to the nature of the breach.

9. Termination of Enrolment

St Hilda's may terminate a student's enrolment if the Principal considers, in the Principal's absolute discretion, that:

- a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between the parents and the School has broken down; or
- parents (and or community members) behaviour towards the School, staff, students and/or parents of a St Hilda's student is not aligned, or is in direct conflict, to the School's values; or
- parents (and or community members) engage in activity or the threat of activity that places St Hilda's reputation in disrepute including by making comments on social media and/or other publications.

10. RIGHT OF APPEAL

A 'right of appeal' will apply to any decision made by the Principal under this Code of Conduct. The appeal is to be made in writing to the Chair of Council. This Code of Conduct has been approved by the School Council and is supplemented by policies, procedures and guidelines developed by the School Council and Executive.

11. ACCEPTANCE BY COMMUNITY

The School actively displays the Community Code of Conduct on the School's website and communicates the policy regularly to ensure that all community members are aware of the behavioural expectations of its community members. In the case of parents choosing to enrol their daughters at St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls, the Community Code of Conduct is now included as part of the School's enrolment process and acknowledgement of this Code of Conduct is demonstrated by signing off on accepting the Community Code of Conduct in its entirety.

Appendix 1 – Guidelines

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

School Community members should act according to these guidelines:

Communication

- Use courteous and acceptable written and spoken language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language.
- Accept that the use of swearing, derogatory terms, sexual jokes, innuendo and other inappropriate language in the School environment or around students will not be tolerated.
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Email Protocols for Staff and Parent Communication

- Responses to emails and telephone calls are not expected to be instantaneous or out of normal working hours, unless of an urgent nature. Normal service standard suggests that an acceptable response time for emails is within 48 hours.

Email Protocols for Staff Communication

- The School recognizes that electronic mail (e-mail) is a valuable communication tool that is widely used across our society. Staff members are provided with St Hilda's e-mail accounts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication both within the organization and with the broader community.

Email Protocols for Parent Communication

- E-mail may be a fast and convenient way for parents to send messages, but this may not be the case for many of the teachers. Some teachers read their e-mail messages in the morning before school, some read them at the end of the day, and some read them during the school day. Many teachers prefer to use the phone to speak directly to parents.
- For these reasons, please remember if you choose to send an e-mail message to a member of staff, you may not get an immediate reply. In fact you may not receive an e-mail reply at all, since the staff members will determine how best to contact you: by e-mail, phone, or to schedule a personal meeting.
- When using e-mail, parents:
 1. Please send only non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use e-mail to inform a teacher that your child is to wait for you at the office after school or meet you somewhere when the day ends. A teacher may not have time to read your message in a timely fashion. Instead use the telephone to contact Reception, to be sure your message is received and clearly understood.
 2. Your child's academic/learning progress is best addressed through a telephone conversation or by scheduling a personal conference with the relevant staff member.
 3. Honour the teacher's right to privacy and ensure that there is no expectation to have unlimited access to communication outside of the reasonable bounds of a normal work day.
 4. Please remember that e-mail is not necessarily confidential and can be subject to FOI (Freedom of Information) regulations. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or personal contact.
 5. Please identify yourself in the subject line of your e-mail message and, if appropriate, the name of your child.
 6. For all medical or health concerns, please contact the School Reception by phone, and your call will be directed to the appropriate staff member.
 7. Mass e-mail to the School staff must be approved by the Principal before sending the e-mail.
 8. Emails containing threatening or offensive language will not be responded to.

- The School maintains email accounts for teachers to facilitate parent/teacher communication and internal as well as system-wide staff communication. The School reserves the right to block or filter e-mail messages to staff that are not directly related to school business or to the School's educational mission.
- All written forms of communication (emails and letters) issued by the School community groups, should use the St Hilda's Style Guide.

Expectations

- While on School grounds or attending School activities, the School's staff are responsible for the students that are enrolled in the School.
- Parents/guardians, and other persons attending with children not enrolled in the School are responsible for supervising the behaviour of those children.
- Discipline of students is the responsibility of staff and therefore any matters or concerns related to managing students' behaviour should be referred to staff immediately.
- Under NO circumstances should a student, parent/guardian or member of staff be approached in a confrontational manner. The proper channels for communication are through the appropriate staff member. Volunteers should make enquiries through the Parent Liaison Coordinator in the Communications & Engagement Office.
- Committee Members contact the Communications & Engagement Office who act as a liaison person with the relevant staff member at the School in relation to resource allocation for events.

Relationships

- Ensure that their relationships with students are strictly in accordance with appropriate roles and that favouritism and special treatment are avoided.
- Respect teachers' preparation time before school and make an appointment for long discussions at a mutually convenient time. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please do not expect a meeting before school, unless pre-arranged.
- Ensure that physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of, and relationship with, the student such that questions of impropriety do not arise.
- Respect diversity in people, their ideas and opinions and treat others fairly regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Respect the legal and moral rights of others and treat them with dignity, civility and respect at all times, and especially when there is a disagreement.
- Respect the value and importance of volunteers within the School community.
- Acknowledge and affirm success in individual and School achievement.
- Refrain from public criticism of School activities and events and children and staff at the School.
- Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment or discrimination, including inappropriate use of social media such as emails and Facebook within the School Community.
- Be mindful of the hurt and damage social media may cause to staff members and other parents. If you have a complaint or concern, please follow the Complaints Procedure.

Complaints

- A complaint is a concern about any work or School related act, behaviour, omission, situation or decision that someone thinks is unfair or unjustified. St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls is a learning community where staff, students and parents can work together and where everyone should be treated with respect. There may be occasions when parents or students have concerns with one or more aspects of schooling (eg. disciplinary procedures, discrimination, harassment and bullying, reports, subject/curriculum issues). Parents should follow the Complaints Procedure to lodge their complaint through the appropriate member of staff.

Ethical Conduct

- Support the School in the development of a Christ-centred learning community based on the Anglican ethos, to work in a co-operative and positive manner.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Always act in the best interests of students, their families, and staff members.
- Show proper care and regard for School property and the property of others.
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need.

Safety

- Support the School's Policies and acknowledge that the Principal is responsible for implementing the School's Policies.
- Comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the School. These are displayed on the School website.
- Be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.
- Respect and comply with all applicable Commonwealth and State laws.

Confidentiality

- Comply with the School's *Privacy Policy*.
- Class list and personal information should not be used for the benefit of others, (specifically, must not be used for business pursuits or networking opportunities).

Conflict Management

- Seek staff assistance, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully.
- Work with the School to deal promptly with areas of concern.
- Accept staff decisions and follow their directions. Speak with the staff member if there is a problem complying with any directions.

School Community members must not:

- Verbally abuse, threaten or inflict bodily harm on another person by any physical aggression or encourage others to do so.
- Be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with, alcohol or illegal drugs. The exception is when, in the normal course of events, the School provides hospitality to members or guests of the School Community in keeping with appropriate legal and hospitality regulations.

Responsibility: Council
Review Date: August 2019
Next Review Date: August 2020