

Blue Mountains Steiner School Policies and Procedures



Parent and Carer Code of Conduct Policy

Aim

An engaged community who share and live our school's values and who support our endeavours, is critical in helping us to build and maintain an effective school. Appropriate conduct on school grounds by everyone is central to ensuring we achieve this goal. Our staff and students work to a Code of Conduct and this document is intended to provide similar guidelines for parents/carers.

Specifically, this Code of Conduct is intended to:

1. Provide a set of general principles to guide parents/carers in their interaction with staff, students and other parents/carers of Blue Mountains Steiner School;
2. Communicate the School's expectation as to how parents/carers conduct themselves when on School grounds; and
3. Explain how parents/carers can direct their concerns.

This Code is not intended to comprehensively address every situation but is a general guide only.

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we anticipate that parents and carers will:

- support the School ethos and values
- show an active interest in their child's schooling and progress
- cooperate with the school and demonstrate behaviour that achieves the best outcomes for your child
- support school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students
- initiate and maintain constructive communication and relationships with school staff regarding their child's learning, wellbeing and behaviour
- contribute positively to behaviour support plans that concern your child
- use appropriate channels of communication for reasonable, constructive criticism for situations when parents are dissatisfied with the quality of teaching and learning, the quality and management of pastoral care, the timely follow up of issues and concerns, or the assistance and service they have received from Blue Mountains Steiner School
- never approach a student(s) in the school grounds or during a school related activity to intervene in personal disputes
- never undermine the schools Duty of Care towards any of our school community
- use the processes and procedures in the Blue Mountains Steiner School Grievance Policy for complaints and grievance resolution.

Personal Behaviour

As parents/carers you are our students' biggest role models. Accordingly, the School expects a high standard of personal behaviour from parents when on School grounds, including but not limited to such things as:

1. Refraining from using offensive, insulting or derogatory language or conduct on school grounds. This includes wearing clothing with offensive language or logos.
2. All education facilities are strictly non-smoking. Please refrain from smoking within sight of the boundary of the school property and while on school excursions, camps or activities.
3. Not possessing on School grounds, or attending a School event if affected by alcohol or any other substance.

Interaction with staff, other parents/carers and students

Parents/carers are expected to interact civilly with staff, students and other parents/carers at all times. Abusive language, raising your voice, insulting or violent behaviour to anyone on School grounds is not appropriate and will not be tolerated.

It is not appropriate to discipline another parent's/carer's child whilst on School grounds. Physical contact can be an assault and is a serious matter. Parents/carers with concerns about the interaction between students on school grounds (principally at drop off and collection times) must address their concerns to their child's class teacher.

Parents/carers with concerns regarding their child's learning are encouraged to schedule a meeting with their child's class teacher so concerns can be given the attention they deserve. Appointments can be made through the teachers or the Front Office. Collection and drop off is when staff are at their busiest and at these times, class teachers may not be able to give your concerns their full attention.

In some circumstances parents are required by law to advise the School of areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and family court orders. The School expects parents to behave lawfully on School grounds and observe the terms of any order, obligation or undertaking they may be subject to.

What parents can expect from a staff member if communication becomes inappropriate

In cases where a parent does not interact civilly with all members of our school community, either in person in or outside of the school grounds, during a phone call, or via email, the staff member may take one of the following actions:

- Request that the parent cease their inappropriate communication in order to allow the communication to proceed.
- Inform the parent that unless the inappropriate communication ceases, the staff member may put an end to the phone call, meeting or discussion.
- Request another staff member be present for the remainder of the meeting, if deemed necessary to proceed with such.
- Lodge a complaint against the offending parent.

Continuing concerns should be directed to the school Principal

Use of Social Media

Social media can be defined as how we use technology to communicate and connect with others. Despite the range of positive uses for social media, there are also a number of ethical and legal issues associated with its use. Many people may hold the mistaken belief that anything published online will be without legal consequence. However, parents should be aware that there are a number of potential legal liabilities that may

arise, particularly in relation to issues pertaining to reputational damage, and defamation.

Parents can ensure they abide by the laws and the School's expectations of its parents, by complying with the following:

- The School, its staff and members of its community should not be mentioned or discussed in a negative or defamatory way.
- Photographs of students in school uniform represent the School and its students, and should not be posted if they have the potential to bring negative connotations towards the Schools or its staff and students.
- Photographs containing other students should not be posted without the express consent of the other child/children's parents.
- Email addresses of parents, staff and students should not be given to other people without their express consent.

When communicating with school staff

All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our children as well as staff themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety.

The priority for school staff is the welfare and education of all children in the school. School staffs are therefore not required to respond to emails and telephone calls instantaneously. Normal service standards suggest that an acceptable response time for emails is 2 working days. Responses are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays unless it is an emergency.

The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt the classroom. Parents should be mindful of the teacher's time, communicate the reason for the meeting and allow the teacher time to prepare, unless there is a genuine emergency that needs to be discussed.

When communicating with school council

School Council members welcome feedback from parents. But school council members are volunteers and engaged in their own work and activities during business hours. When parents communicate with school council members they should therefore establish that it is a convenient time, or ask to speak at a convenient time. Calling someone when they are at work may be assumed to be an inconvenient time.

Correspondence to school council may be forwarded to the school's email address. It will then be circulated to all school council members through their meeting papers and the correspondence folder. It will be discussed at the next school council meeting and a response will be sent within 2 working days of the school council meeting.

Parents should allow school council members an opportunity to discuss their correspondence at a properly constituted meeting of school council and therefore refrain from demanding an urgent response to their letter, sending the same letter multiple times, writing multiple times on the same subject or otherwise harassing school council members when they have not yet had an opportunity to discuss correspondence.

Consequences of Unacceptable Conduct

Blue Mountains Steiner School expects its entire staff to deal professionally, competently and courteously with all parents and carers, including during those exceptional interactions where parents and guardians violate the staff's inherent right to be treated with civility and respect. Blue Mountains Steiner School will however reserve the right to:

1. Limit the physical access to the school or school activity.
2. Limit the communication with staff.
3. And if no resolution can be reached, terminate the enrolment contract for those parents and carers who are involved in repeated situations concerning verbal intimidation, escalating anger, abusive language, physically threatening behaviour or undermining our Duty of Care position as a school.

Related Documents:

1. Staff Code of Conduct
2. Grievance Policy and Procedures
3. Blue Mountains Steiner School Handbook

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the school will review this policy every two years.

Policy reviewed and revised - January 2018

Policy review date – January 2020

