

Parent Code of Conduct



**Andale
School**

Est 1981

Version 1, 24 February 2020

Approved by School Council

1. Purpose

- 1.1 At Andale School we have a fantastic body of parents (including carers and extended family) who are involved in all aspects of the school life and they provide critical support to the school, its teachers and student population.
- 1.2 Our school is committed to ensuring that children feel happy, safe and secure, and have the maximum opportunity to learn.
- 1.3 As members of the school community parents are expected to conduct themselves in a lawful, ethical, safe and responsible manner that recognises and respects the rights of others and the expertise, experience and qualifications of staff.
- 1.4 The Parent Code of Conduct provides statements which serve as a reminder to all members of the school community of their obligations as a member of the Andale School community.
- 1.5 This policy applies to all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, advocates and any others involved in activities or communication related to Andale School.

2. Principles

- 2.1 As a minimum, all members of the school community are expected to behave with respect, civility and in the manner of a responsible citizen.
- 2.2 There may be times when it is felt the actions of a member of the school community have infringed the rights of a child. Under no circumstances is a parent or guardian to approach another child, whilst they are in the care of our school, to discuss or chastise them because of their actions. Such an approach to the child may be seen to be an assault on the child and may have legal consequences. In addition to this, direct parent/parent contact should be avoided when there has been an incident at the school involving their child/children.
- 2.3 It is appropriate to approach the class teacher in the first instance to seek their intervention in bringing about an equitable and peaceful solution to the situation. If the situation remains unresolved, an approach should be made to the Principal.
- 2.4 Bullying has no place within our community and as such will not be tolerated. This is as true for adult-to-adult interaction as it is for child-to-child. All interactions between members of our community must be in keeping with the values espoused

by the school and school policies. Instances of bullying must quickly be brought to the attention of the class teacher or Principal in line with our policy.

- 2.5 The Andale School community should ensure that everyone within the school community is treated with respect, fairness and dignity. Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- 2.6 In order to help protect peoples' good name, problems, differences of opinion and personality clashes are not resolved by involving other people in a disagreement or by taking sides in the argument. We will attempt to resolve these issues through calm dialogue between the parties directly involved whilst respecting the dignity of each and every person.

3. Communication

- 3.1 Parents will use courteous and acceptable written and spoken language in all communications with students, staff and other parents and members of the school community. No profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language may be used.
- 3.2 Parents will act in the best interests of students, their families and staff members. They will not engage in malicious or judgemental gossip, and should ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful.
- 3.3 We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own and all members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification.
- 3.4 All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of the students as well as staff themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety. To ensure this, the following practice is in place at Andale School:
 - a. The priority for school staff is the well-being and education of all students in the school. School staff are therefore not required to respond to emails and telephone calls instantaneously. Responses are not expected outside of normal working hours or during school holidays unless it is an emergency.
 - b. The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must 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.
- 3.5 As members of the school community parents can support the students in learning and encourage them to always try their best. This can be modelled by:
 - a. Sharing our knowledge, learning and experiences with the students,
 - b. Praising the students and encouraging them for all their efforts,
 - c. Recognising our own and encouraging the student's individuality
 - d. Ensuring that you support the school in its curriculum



- e. Being confident to show the students that we can have a go and learn from our mistakes
 - f. Taking an interest in our children's work
 - g. Be happy, confident and positive.
- 3.6 Parents will respect the privacy of other members of the school community and will not send unsolicited communications to other parents nor share contact information without their permission. The school will not give out contact information of parents without permission.

4. On School Grounds

- 4.1 Where possible parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in the school community and support school-based events. Whilst on school grounds parents are asked to adhere to the following:
- a. Treat all school property with care
 - b. Respect school policies that support the safe and effective operations of the school and its community
 - c. All visitors to comply with all safety and emergency procedures in place
 - d. When attending any kind of school assembly or public meeting, parents will listen respectfully.
- 4.2 A parent may not discipline a child who is not theirs or speak to a child who is not theirs about their, or anyone else's behaviour. This is the role of teaching staff. Being approached by an adult they do not know can be distressing for children. Parents should therefore raise any behavioural, bullying or peer group issues with a member of the teaching staff and it is the teacher's responsibility to deal with these issues. (Common sense would apply in an emergency where a child is at risk of harm or where a parent is supervising a small group of students on an excursion.)
- 4.3 When visiting a classroom parents accept the authority of the teacher (or teachers) and that they are in attendance on the teacher's terms. Teacher's value parental involvement and assistance, but they and others may ask a parent to leave for any reason.
- 4.4 It is unacceptable for parents or carers to:
- a. Touch, handle, push or otherwise physically or sexually engaging with students, children or others in a manner which is not appropriate and may endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of that person
 - b. Any form of physical or verbal violence
 - c. Any form of threatening language, gestures or conduct
 - d. Language or conduct which is likely to offend, harass, bully or unfairly discriminate against any member of the school community;
 - e. Theft, fraud or misuse of School resources
 - f. Smoke on the school premises



- g. Be in possession of any illegal substance on school premises
- 4.5 Any parent or school community member who invites a relative, friend, support, carer or other person to be present at any official school activity held by or for the benefit of the school and its students must at all times be responsible for that person and ensure they act at all times in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

5. Use of Social Media¹ and the Internet

- 5.1 Despite the range of positive uses of social media and the internet, Parents recognise that there are also a number of ethical and legal issues associated with its use, which can be directly or indirectly damaging to the School and others.
- 5.2 Parents must ensure they abide by the laws and the School's expectations of Parents.
- 5.3 When using social media and the internet, Parents must:
- a. Not post a photo or video recording of another student, parent, teachers or other staff member on social media without consent;
 - b. Not intimidate, undermine, threaten, bully or harass other students, parents, teachers or other staff member;
 - c. Disclose the personal details of a student or parent to another person without consent;
 - d. Not discuss or mention the School, its staff or any members of the School community in a negative or defamatory way;
 - e. Be respectful to staff, contractors, volunteers, other parents, and/or students;
 - f. Not use it as a means to voice grievances about the School, teachers or other members of staff²;
 - g. Make reasonable efforts to ensure that their children comply with the School's Social Media Policy;
 - h. Post photographs of students in school uniform representing the School and its students if they have the potential to bring negative connotations towards the School and its staff and students;
 - i. Never disclose any confidential information of parents, staff, contractors, volunteers, and/or students to third parties without the individual's express consent;
 - j. Make contact with students (other than their own) using any form of social media without the express consent of the student's parents;
 - k. Never post sexually inappropriate or other material that may damage the reputation of the School.

¹ Social Media includes all other emerging electronic/digital communication applications

² Parents should communicate directly with the School to discuss any issues or grievances.



6. Breach

- 6.1 The School takes seriously any issues that are brought to its attention. If parents express their concerns to the School, they can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect in order to try to resolve the matter.
- 6.2 As a general guide, minor issues may be raised with the child's teacher. Cases of more serious inappropriate conduct or misconduct ought to be directed to the Principal.
- 6.3 Each situation will be considered as it arises and based on the issues.
- 6.4 Any parent, member of school staff or student may notify the Principal of a possible breach of the Parent Code of Conduct. The Principal will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred:
 - a. Provide a first and/or final warning that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated;
 - b. Determine whether the breach may be rectified by the parent making a private or public apology, depending on the circumstances, to an individual or group of individuals;
 - c. Where the breach concerned unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the school, issue a trespass warning to the parent, which, if the behaviour continues, may accelerate to a trespass notice requiring the parent to stay away from the school.
- 6.5 Correspondence that is in breach of this Code of Conduct, because of the language an expression used or the manner in which it is sent or delivered, will not be responded to.
- 6.6 Correspondence which is defined as "vexatious" according to the Complaints Policy will not be responded to.
- 6.7 Nothing in this Policy precludes any person from exercising their individual legal rights in respect of obtaining restraining and intervention orders, reporting assault, bringing action for defamation, exercising rights under vilification or discrimination laws or in any other way.
- 6.8 The Principal has full discretion to take action, which may include termination of the enrolment of the child of parents who continually breach the Code of Conduct.
- 6.9 In accordance with applicable legislation, the Police and/or other appropriate authorities will be informed of any unlawful breaches of this Code.
- 6.10 In cases where a Parent does not act in accordance with this Parent Code of Conduct 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:
 - a. Request that the Parent cease their inappropriate communication in order to allow the communication to proceed;
 - b. Inform the Parent that unless the inappropriate communication ceases, the staff member may put an end to the phone call, meeting or discussion;



- c. Request another staff member be present for the remainder of the meeting, if deemed necessary to proceed with such; and/or
 - d. Lodge a complaint against the offending Parent in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.
- 6.1.1 Parents have the right to raise issues and concerns related to the education of their child or school matters. Parents should ensure that they raise their issues and concerns with the right person and follow the correct communication channels. When making a complaint parents should refer to the Complaints Policy

7. Links to other policies

- 7.1 Anti-Bullying Policy
- 7.2 Child Safe Policy
- 7.3 Behaviour Guidance Policy
- 7.4 Privacy Policy
- 7.5 Complaints Policy
- 7.6 Enrolment Agreement
- 7.7 Social Media Policy

8. Communication of the policy

- 8.1 The school will provide a copy of this Code of Conduct to new families and is available from the school office.

9. Review

- 9.1 The school council will review the Parent Code of Conduct every three years.

