

# PARENTS / CARERS CODE OF CONDUCT

## INTRODUCTION

The Kesser Torah College (KTC) community comprises a diverse group who work together to educate students to become confident, well-educated individuals; who are prepared to contribute as citizens; to work and live with others; and to find satisfaction in their chosen life path.

Students thrive when all parents, carers, and friends of students enrolled at the College support and encourage the values, activities and ethos of the College and are encouraged to read and understand the policies and procedures of the College (including this Code of Conduct).

This Code applies to all adults including parents, carers, step-parents, grandparents, extended family members and caregivers. In the policy the word "Parents" applies to all caregivers as listed above.

This Code has been developed so that parents and those with parental responsibilities are aware of and meet KTC's expectations with regard to their interaction with the College, its teachers, other parents and students. Adherence to this Code is important to promote positive and productive relationships within the College community.

We believe that parents are valuable contributors in our community and a strong partnership between parents and the school is crucial to the educational success of our students. To this end, we aim to work in partnership with Parents in the care and growth of each student. We have a zero-tolerance policy regarding violence of any kind.

## PARENTS and CARERS

### Ethical Conduct and Communication with Staff and Students

Parents play a key role in the education of their children and should act in the best interest of students, their families, staff, and the College community.

The entire community benefits when parents model positive behaviour. Students benefit by seeing and understanding positive communication and develop resilience by seeing measured reactions to unexpected situations.

Parents must respect the privacy of other students, parents, staff, contractors and volunteers in the College community.

The College expects parents to behave lawfully on school grounds and observe the terms of any order, obligation or undertaking they may be subject to.

### Parents On-Campus

- Parents are invited onto campus for morning drop-off and pick-up. Parents should leave the school grounds promptly after the morning bell at 8:20am.
- Parents of Primary School children should drop their children in the library courtyard and are not permitted to accompany their children to the classrooms. In the event a parent drops off their child late to school, the child must be brought to reception and is to go up to class on their own. Our Welfare Team is available to assist with any separation difficulties.
- Parents are required to collect their Primary School children promptly at the end of the school day by 3:40pm latest. We provide an additional paid After School Care program at the conclusion of the school day, to afford additional supervision should it be required. This program requires bookings to be made in advance (24 hours prior).

- We welcome parent volunteers onto campus. All volunteer work or classroom visits should be arranged directly with the Leadership Team.
- Students who arrive at school late or need to leave early, must sign in/out with Reception (in the Primary School) or the High School Secretary (High School students). Primary students are required to be collected from the Reception Area and will be called down from class to meet parents.
- When onsite parents are not permitted to take photos or video unless they have prior permission from the Principal or Senior Management.

In relation to the College or any College-related events, Parents must:

- be mindful to ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful
- refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes bullying, harassment, discrimination or vilification
- refrain from offensive, insulting or derogatory language or conduct
- not smoke or vape on school grounds or within four metres of any entrance in line with NSW law.
- not possess alcohol on school grounds unless it is an after-hours event for adults only and has been sanctioned by the College
- not possess or be under the influence of illicit drugs on school grounds
- not attend school events if affected by alcohol or other intoxicants
- show proper care and regard for College property, the property of others and occupational health and safety concerns.

### **Communication and Interaction with Staff, Other Parents and Students**

At all times, written and spoken communication to anyone in the College community should be courteous and respectful.

When communicating (in person or by any other means), Parents must:

- interact civilly with staff, students and other parents at all times
- not use abusive language or expletives, raise their voice, insult, intimidate or engage in violent behaviour to anyone on College grounds or at any College-related events or towards any staff member in a public space, including the Shule, regarding school related matters
- not discipline or raise their voice or get involved in verbal altercations with another parent or child under any circumstances
- advise the College of areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and Family Court Orders in accordance with relevant laws.

### **Role of the College Generally**

The College is responsible for establishing and administering the policies, procedures and rules which govern the day-to-day operations of the College. It is important that parents recognise and respect this responsibility and that they / their children adhere to the College's requirements and support these decisions.

### **Discipline**

The College expects students to comply with its rules and not engage in behaviour that is in any way harmful to others or contrary to the ethos and philosophy of the College. Parents are expected to support the College in relation to its discipline policy and not engage in activities which undermine its authority. It must be understood that in the case of minor disciplinary matters, the College will be the arbiter of any events or occurrences that take place, and will conduct its own investigations and determinations regarding an appropriate response. The College will not engage in debate regarding the details of any conduct, nor the appropriateness of any punitive or disciplinary response.

In relation to more serious disciplinary matters, which may result in suspension or expulsion, the College will inform parents of the matter and will deal with it in accordance with the College's disciplinary policy. While

parents will be consulted, the final decision lies with the College. Parents are encouraged to read the Primary School and High School Wellbeing and Discipline Policies and Procedures.

### **Interaction with Staff**

The College staff and parents may conduct regular or ad hoc meetings to discuss a student's progress. There may be other times when a parent or staff member requests a meeting to discuss particular issues that may arise during the course of a student's schooling.

If a parent wishes to meet with a staff member, they should arrange an appointment at a mutually convenient time. This can often be facilitated through the school's Administration team.

Parents should never attempt to contact a staff member at their home, unless at the request of the staff member. Parents should also not contact staff on their private mobile telephone numbers, either by phone, messaging or WhatsApp.

Parents also can make an appointment to see the Principal about any particular concerns they may have relating to their son or daughter as per the 'Complaints Handling' policy and procedures.

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 Principal as per the 'Complaints Handling' policy and procedures. However, when doing so they should observe the general rules of conduct set out in this Code.

The College has a duty of care to protect all staff and for this reason any aggressive or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

### **Use of Social Media**

Despite the range of positive uses of social media, there are also several ethical and legal issues associated with its use, which can be directly or indirectly damaging to the College and others.

Parents must ensure they abide by the laws and the College's expectations of parents.

When using social media, Parents must:

- be respectful to staff, contractors, volunteers, other parents, and/or students
- make reasonable efforts to ensure that their children comply with the College's Social Media Policy
- not identify in any way - including tagging or posting - names of students in school uniform, other than their own
- not disclose any confidential information of parents, staff, contractors, volunteers, and/or students to third parties without the individual's express consent
- contact students (other than their own) using any form of social media without the express consent of the student's parents
- not post sexually inappropriate or other material that may damage the reputation of the College
- not post a photo or video recording of another student or parent on social media without consent from the child's parent
- not intimidate, undermine, threaten, bully or harass other students or parents
- not disclose the personal details of a student or parent to another person without consent
- ensure that relationships with students are strictly in accordance with appropriate roles and that favouritism, special treatment or deliberate exclusion when volunteering at, or for the College, is avoided
- ensure that physical contact with students is morally and legally appropriate given the age of, and relationship with, the student.

## Complaints

If a parent has a complaint about a particular issue, this should be directed to the Teacher responsible for the particular area or activity, or the Principal.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint, they should not use rude or abusive language. This is counter-productive and can make it more difficult to resolve concerns. Parents are referred to the College's Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures, for a more detailed explanation of the procedure.

## Interactions Generally

Communications - whether verbal or in writing - with other members of the College community whether teachers, administration staff, other parents or students should:

- show respect, courtesy and consideration
- not harass or bully another person
- not use intemperate language
- not be confrontational
- Social media should not be used to criticise or denigrate others in the school community.

## Process for Making a Complaint

The College takes any issues or concerns that are brought to its attention very seriously. If parents express their concerns to the College, they can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect to try to resolve the matter.

As a general guide, minor issues should be raised with your child's teacher in the first instance. Cases of more serious inappropriate conduct or misconduct should be directed to the Head of Primary (in Primary School), the Director of Early Learning (in pre-school), the Director of Teaching & Learning (in the High School), the school's Heads of Jewish Studies, or the Principal.

Each situation will be considered as it arises and addressed by the College according to College procedures.

Parents have the right to raise issues and concerns related to the education of their child or other matters relating to the College.

A staff member may take one of the following actions in relation to inappropriate conduct by a parent in person, in or outside of the College grounds, during a phone call or via email:

- request that the Parent cease their inappropriate communication 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 in accordance with the School's Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures.

## Student Absence from School

Parents are required by law (Education Act 1900) to send their children to school every day, including for sporting and co-curricular activities. It is also a requirement of your KTC enrolment contract that you abide by these expectations.

Parents are required to notify the College of any absence or partial absence including sick leave, travel and other exceptional circumstances. The College's Application for Student Leave from School form is available from the College website.

Please see the College's Attendance Policy & Procedures for more detailed information about your legal requirements.

## **Sport**

Parents are welcome to attend sporting events but should exercise restraint and good sportsmanship when supporting teams and/or individuals. In particular, those attending sporting events should not abuse, threaten or otherwise seek to intimidate an umpire or referee, or be directed against any player, or College representative(s).

The Sports teachers and coaches at the College select representatives for team-based events based on their view of the most appropriate selection at the relevant time. It is not appropriate for parents or carers to complain about the failure of their child to be selected for a particular team or event.

## **Separated Parents**

Where students have parents or carers that are separated or divorced, no party should attempt to involve the College in any parental dispute that may arise. The College is not able to make judgments on the merits of claims made by one parent against another and should not be asked to do so; nor should it be requested to take any action / intervention, which may or potentially disadvantage another party, or the welfare of a child/children. The College will of course observe any orders made by a Court in relation to a student or communications with parents.

## **Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

With these guidelines in place, it is hoped that parents and carers can appropriately direct their concerns and contribute to a harmonious College community that reflects the College's values.

The consequences for breaches of this Code of Conduct will be determined by the Principal and may include the following:

- the College may ban a parent from entry to the school grounds, or from attending College-related co-curricular activities or other events
- the College may direct that a parent / carer may only communicate with members of staff through a nominated School representative
- in cases of extreme or prolonged breach of this Parent Code of Conduct, the College may terminate the enrolment of the children of that Parent, as determined by the Principal
- the College, where appropriate, may involve other authorities
- the College may take such other steps as it deems appropriate according to the nature of the breach.