

TLS-06: Parent and Carer Code of Conduct

Purpose:

Staff and Students at Ipswich Girls' Grammar School including Ipswich Junior Grammar School work to the expectations of Staff and Student Codes of Conduct. This policy establishes similar expectations for parents. A school community contains a wide variety of individuals and groups who strive to work together to educate students to become confident, well-educated young women, girls and boys. Shared community values enable the members of the community to work productively in a collaborative effort.

The Parent and Carer Code of Conduct supports the School to provide staff, students and their families with a safe and secure work and School environment, free from harassment, by:

- Providing a set of guidelines to support parents and carers in their interactions with the School, staff, students and other parents and carers.
- Communicating the School's expectation as to how parents and carers conduct themselves when on the School grounds, at School events, and on School social media platforms; and
- Explaining how parents and carers can appropriately direct their concerns.

The code of conduct is founded in the School's values of:

Diligence: digging deep and using grit to get the job done

Excellence: committing to be brilliant together

Respect: valuing diversity and embracing the uniqueness of everyone

Integrity: finding the courage to do what is right

Care: showing kindness, compassion and grace for people and place

Scope:

This policy applies to all adults including parents, carers, grandparents, and extended family while they are involved in activities or communication related to Ipswich Girls' Grammar School including Ipswich Junior Grammar School.

Policy:

Ethical standards of conduct

It is an expectation that all parents and carers adhere to high ethical standards in their interactions with staff, students, and the School. Parents and carers play a key role in the education of their children and should act in the best interests of students, their families, staff, the community and the School.

The School values its diverse community and respects the rights, beliefs and practices of individuals and their families, to the extent that these beliefs and practices do not infringe on others' rights, School values, and the law.

Parents and carers are students' most significant role models.

Accordingly, the School expects a high standard of personal behaviour from parents and carers when they are on School grounds, attending events or communicating with staff, other parents or carers, and students, and when they are communicating with or about the School in online forums or in person. For example, it is expected that parents and carers will:

- Not engage in malicious or judgmental gossip (either in person or online) and will ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful.
- Raise concerns or complaints directly and respectfully with the relevant School staff.
- Not engage in any actions or behaviours that constitute bullying, harassment, discrimination, or vilification.
- Not use offensive, insulting or derogatory language. This includes wearing clothing onsite with offensive language or insignia.
- Dress appropriately according to the School occasion.
- Not smoke (including e-cigarettes or vaping) on School grounds or within 5 metres of the School boundary. (As required by Queensland law.)
- Not possess or consume alcohol on School grounds, unless the event has been sanctioned by the School and appropriately licensed.
- Not attend School events if affected by alcohol or any other intoxicant.
- Demonstrate proper care and regard for School property, the property of others and adherence to Workplace Health and Safety expectations.

This is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that demonstrate how the School's values can be upheld.

Communication and interaction with staff, other parents and carers, and students

Parents and carers are expected to interact respectfully with staff, students and other parents and carers at all times. Questions and concerns from parents should be directed, in the first instance, to the appropriate classroom teacher, house group teacher, or other relevant member of staff.

Written and spoken communication should be courteous and respectful. Abusive language, raising of voices, offensive or violent behaviour directed to anyone on School grounds or at any School-related event, is unacceptable.

Parents and carers are expected to ensure that relationships with students are strictly in accordance with their relationship to the child. Parents and carers are expected to ensure that physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of, and relationship, with the student.

It is not acceptable to discipline another person's child whilst on school grounds, unless there is a reasonable health and safety concern.

Staff responding to intemperate or inappropriate communications.

Staff at Ipswich Girls' Grammar, including Ipswich Junior Grammar, have the right to:

- Request that the parent or carer cease their inappropriate communication in order to allow the communication to proceed.
- Inform the parent or carer that unless 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.
- Lodge a formal complaint against the offending parent or carer.

Family court orders

Parents and carers 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 to which they may be subject.

Use of Social Media

Parents and carers interacting with School social media should ensure that all replies are in the spirit of the original media and do not damage or cause distress to the students depicted or to the School.

When communicating information about the School, it is expected that parents and carers will first ensure that the information is accurate and able to be made public, by referring to official School communications, or by consulting with the relevant School personnel.

Parents and carers can ensure they abide by the law and the School's expectations by complying with the following:

- Respect a staff member's professional and personal boundaries, by not using their personal online presence to raise School matters (or otherwise engage in disrespectful behaviour).
- Not take photos, videos or other recordings of a staff member or parent without their consent, or of a student without their parent's consent, and not publish information (including personal details, contact information, images, and recordings) concerning a staff member, parent, student, or other member of the school community online without express consent.
- Avoid publishing information which may bring the School (or any of its staff, students, parents, and other members of the school community) into disrepute. This may include an image or recording which shows a student in School uniform, or a member of the School community at the school or at a school activity or event, behaving inappropriately.
- Not communicate with students from another family outside of the School, including by email or on social media, without prior consent from that student's parent(s).
- Not discuss confidential or sensitive School matters, including in relation to grievances about a particular staff member or student, online.
- Obtain express permission to use the School's name or insignia in the title of any online website, forum or group, or printed or online publication. In addition, no suggestion should be made that any such platform or material is operated or sanctioned by the School.

Parents and carers should be aware that there are legal liabilities that may arise, particularly in relation to issues pertaining to reputational damage, and defamation, relating to the use of social media.

Breaches and Reporting:

The Principal will have absolute discretion for deciding how to best respond to concerns about a parent's compliance with the Code.

Where the Principal considers that a parent has breached this Code, the Principal may implement one or more of the following consequences (and not necessarily in any particular order):

- The School may prohibit a parent or carer from entry to School grounds or from attending co-curricular activities or other events for a nominated period of time.
- The School may direct that a parent or carer may only communicate with members of staff through a nominated School representative.
- In cases of a significant breach, or prolonged or multiple breaches of this Code of Conduct by a parent or carer, the School may terminate the enrolment of the child of that parent.
- The School may, where appropriate, involve external authorities or agencies in managing extreme or prolonged breaches of this Code of Conduct.

Related Policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Discrimination & EEO Policy
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Performance Management Policy