Catholic Schools
Parramatta Diocese

FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) acknowledges that parents and carers are the first educators of their children. CSPD and its schools value parents and carers as partners and this partnership is critical in supporting each child to achieve their best throughout their learning and faith journey.

Working together

This document outlines the responsibilities of parents, carers, educators and staff in CSPD schools to ensure that everyone feels welcomed and valued. The faith development, learning and wellbeing of every child is a shared responsibility between the school and parents/carers.

Our Catholic faith calls us to care for one another and create communities where everyone can flourish. In line with Standard 3 of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, parents and carers are invited to participate in decisions affecting their children and be engaged with their school communities. It is widely acknowledged that students thrive when parents/carers work together with educators and support staff who are skilled in supporting students' learning and wellbeing.

Building Strong Partnerships

A mutual commitment to building strong partnerships between schools and families is critical to creating relationships that are based on transparency, honesty and respect. Our Catholic schools are committed to ensuring that schools are places of welcome and belonging, and provide a safe space for all members of their community.

Shared Commitments

Your school's commitments:

- treat every member of the school community with dignity and respect
- ensure the school is a safe and caring places where every child and young person can flourish and achieve to the best of their abilities
- make your child's faith formation, learning and wellbeing our priorities
- be partners and collaborators with you in your child's faith, learning and wellbeing
- provide you with information about your child's progress and wellbeing that is timely, accurate and easy to understand
- work with you to understand and resolve any issues or concerns you may have about your child
- be available to speak with you at a mutually convenient time

- ensure your concerns or complaints are heard in a fair and timely way
- ensure our written communications use clear and understandable language
- treat communications with confidentiality whenever this is appropriate.

Your commitments:

- treat every member of the school community with respect
- ensure your child attends school every day of the school year, unless they have an approved reason for absence (usually only illness or an unavoidable commitment)
- work with teachers and school staff to understand and resolve any issues or concerns you may have about your child
- respect the privacy of every member of the school community, including when online
- support the school's rules and processes that are in place for the wellbeing, good behaviour and effective learning of all students
- contribute to a school community where safety is the priority and intimidation, bullying or harassment are not tolerated
- support the school's high expectations for your child's learning and wellbeing.

Complaints Resolutions Process

CSPD promotes and maintains positive relationships and harmonious working environments. The Complaint Management Procedure for Parents/Carers & Community members outlines the principles CSPD will follow when dealing with complaints other than those related to child protection or corrupt conduct. If you have a concern or complaint, please raise this with your child's school in the first instance, starting with the classroom teacher and then your school's principal leader.

If you remain unsatisfied with the response from your child's school, please contact parentscarersupport@parra.catholic.edu.au The flow chart at the end of this document describes the way concerns should be raised.

Communication

Communication should always respect the dignity of every person. This is particularly important when dealing with complex matters. Listening to each other and having respectful conversations are important for partnerships to be effective. Please share important information about your child's progress or wellbeing with the school. Our staff will not always be available to talk right away, but will work with you to find a time that works for everyone. We may ask you to direct your emails through the school office so that we can respond quickly and find the staff member who is best able to help.

Social media is an important way to stay connected with your school community. We all have a responsibility to ensure we communicate in a respectful way when we are online. Naming and bullying, harassment or defaming individual staff, other parents or students on social media will not be tolerated.

What is not appropriate

- acting aggressively or in an intimidating way including any use of violence or threatening behaviour
- using intimidating language, including obscenities, yelling or making sexist, racist or other derogatory comments
- disrespecting school community members due to their religion, ethnicity, gender or disability
- bullying, harassing or defaming individual staff, other parents, carers or students, including on social media posts.

Family School Partnership Breakdown

CSPD has an obligation under Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws to provide a safe working environment for staff and learning environments for students. All CSPD and school staff, students and community members should feel safe in our schools.

To ensure the wellbeing of students, staff and the community, steps will be taken to respond to unacceptable behaviour by parents. Catholic schools have no tolerance for abusive or aggressive language or behaviour. When disrespectful or aggressive behaviour of parents or carers impacts the wellbeing of students and staff, action will be taken.

Parents may be restricted from visiting the school and, in more serious cases, referred to the NSW Police. If a parent or carer is found to have acted in a way that has been outlined above and is in breach of these principles, the school, with the support of CSPD, will work to address the behaviour and repair the relationship.

If this is unsuccessful, and in extreme cases, it may be appropriate for the family to be excluded from the school or from all CSPD schools. Parents and carers are referred to the Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion Procedure Clause 16.2.3 which stipulates that if there is a significant breach in the enrolment contract between the school and parents/carers, the student's enrolment may be in jeopardy, and this may result in exclusion. This will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

FLOWCHART FOR RAISING INQUIRIES, CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

I have a concern in regards to ...

My child's:
- learning
- homework
- behaviour
- bullying
- wellbeing
- uniform

Make an appointment to speak with your child's class/ subject teacher, year coordinator or subject leader

Was the concern resolved?

YES NO

Raise the concern with your child's Leader of Learning, Wellbeing or Assistant Principal

Was the concern resolved?

YES NO

Make an apppointment to speak to your school Principal

Was the concern resolved?

YES NO

Contact CSPD via **parentscarerssupport @parra.catholic.edu.au**

- Religious Education/ Mission
- Staff professional conduct
- Dangerous student behaviour
- Suspension of students
- Behaviour of students outside of school
- Other serious matters

Raise the concern with your child's Leader of Learning, Wellbeing or Assistant Principal

Was the concern resolved?

YES NO

Make an apppointment to speak to your school Principal

Was the concern resolved?

YES NO

Contact CSPD via **parentscarerssupport @parra.catholic.edu.au**

- New Enrolment queries or concerns

Phone or email the Enrolment Officer at the chosen school

If you are interested in applying, please visit the school website and request an application pack from the enrolment page

Continue to liaise directly with the Enrolment Officer at the chosen school

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- Information Technology issues such as
  - digital services issues (school issued devices, email accounts)
  - Updating of Contact details

Parents are requested to contact their child's school directly in the first instance for concerns with Information Technology Issues

Should the school not be able to assist you, they will escalate your concerns to CSPD Information Technology support team

Parents are advised to contact CSPD Information Technology support team should they need to after the school escelates your concerns by emailing **familyICT @parra.catholic.edu.au**

Responses will be provided to parents either by the school or the IT support team member as soon as practical.

- School fees

Parents are requested to initially contact the school administration office with any queries relating to school fees

Was the concern resolved?

YES NO

Your school will escalate your concerns to the CSPD School Fees Liaison Unit (SFLU) where necessary. (*SFLU may respond directly to parents with any concerns escalated by the school where the matter cannot be resolved directly by the school.*)

If fees are not paid within the required timeframe - from the due date on the statement - parents will initially be contacted by the school and then may subsequently be contacted directly by SFLU

Billing Statements are fully centralised in the CSPD office. Families with queries relating to their statements are asked to contact the Billings Team on **fees@parra.catholic.edu.au**

The bottom of your billing statement also outlines contact details for various matters

Parents are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the CSPD fees policy

For more detailed complaint management procedures, please refer to the Policy Central page on our website:
Complaint Management Procedures (for parents, carers and community members).

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