



*A hope and a future.*

## PARENTS AND CARERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Partnering with Families is one of our College's core values. It is there to remind us that both the College and families are united in wanting the best outcomes for our students, collectively and as individuals. At our core is the unshakable belief that God loves each individual in our community and as his followers we are called to be like Him and ensure love for others is evident in our words and deeds.

Presuming positive intent is an important 'norm' in our College. We understand that in almost all instances every person, whether it be a parent, carer, student or staff member are desiring positive outcomes in all situations. Unfortunately at times our human nature and emotions can cloud our interactions and this code of conduct has been created to help establish a clear framework that will allow Summerland Christian College to fulfill its duty of care of providing a safe and supportive environment for all staff, students, and other community members

By choosing Summerland Christian College there is an agreement and shared belief that staff, teachers, students and other community members feel safe to participate in our educational community, free from any signs of harmful behaviour that might negatively impact them or constitute harassment, violence, intimidation or vilification.

### Values

Parents and carers play a vital role in the embedding of our values which we believe help to make our college such an amazing environment for young people to grow and learn.

Our values are:

#### **1. Christ Centered**

We believe students thrive best in a supportive Christian environment. That's why we strive to create a caring and faith inspiring setting built on God's love. We provide a supportive Christian environment.

#### **2. Academic Achievement**

We are committed to helping our students achieve outstanding academic results. Our dedicated teachers pursue excellence through innovative approaches to learning and by helping our students achieve their best. We have proven academic success.



### **3. Personalised Education**

We believe God has created every student with a unique set of gifts and distinctive potential. That's why we are committed to providing unique pathways for each individual, enriching their development whilst adding academic value to their lives. We seek God's wisdom beyond the earthly in our teaching approach. We value the individual.

### **4. Partnering with Families.**

We believe that students excel when parents, carers and teachers combine for a tailored and supportive approach to their education. That's why we facilitate and encourage parental insights and participation in each child's learning and academic progress. We encourage partnership with each family.

### **5. The Living Word.**

Here at Summerland, we stand on the Word of God and its scriptures as foundational and life transforming. We believe that the Bible is God breathed and our handbook for wise choices and joyful living. We acknowledge our dependence on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to live as God intended. We are Bible based.

## **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, adhere and have their children adhere to the College's requirements, and support these decisions. Parents and carers can positively impact their children and the children of others through modelling appropriate interactions, dialogue and approaches to grievances in the College community; they have a shared responsibility with their children to ensure that their children abide by the Student Code of Conduct and similarly undertake respectful interactions with teachers, students and other members of the College community.

### **Developing Children's Sense of Responsibility.**

Rules are a part of life and are in place to benefit all. Raising children in an environment where there are clearly articulated rules allows for each individual to develop a sense of responsibility and ownership for their actions. Therefore, the College expects students to comply with its rules and not engage in behaviour which is harmful to others or is contrary to the ethos and philosophy of the College.

The College acknowledges that differing perspectives are quite common when dealing with disciplinary matters. In most cases the College's more global perspective, its systems and reporting protocols along with its contextual knowledge allows for fair decisions to be made in regards to discipline. In working as partners, parents and carers are expected to support the College in relation to its welfare and discipline policy and the consequences/sanctions that are outlined in this policy.



Parents and students are encouraged to raise concerns if they feel as though further discussions are needed in relation to a disciplinary matter.

### **Interaction with Staff**

Our College has enjoyed amazing interactions between staff, parents and carers. We know that these relationships are essential for a healthy environment for students to flourish personally and in their learning.

It is important though, for parents and carers to realise that the College has a duty of care to protect all staff and for this reason, any aggressive or abusive behavior towards its staff will result in a review of enrolment.

The College conducts regular meetings between staff and parents at which the student's progress can be discussed. 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 make an appointment so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged. This can be done through the school office.

Parents should never attempt to contact a staff member at their home or outside the College grounds.

It is important that all 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 relevant Head of College (Head of Primary or Secondary). However, when doing so they should observe the general rules of conduct set out in this Code.

### **Complaints**

If a parent has a complaint about an issue, this should be directed to the teacher or relevant Head of College (Head of Primary or Secondary) responsible for the particular area of activity, in accordance with the College's complaints and grievances process.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint it is helpful to remember that at Summerland Christian College we can be tough on ideas but not on people. That means personal attacks or disparaging remarks need to be avoided so that the focus can remain on the issue at hand; we believe in focusing on 'what' is right or wrong' not on 'who' is right or wrong.



## **Emails and Social Media**

Communication is vital for the College to operate effectively. Whether it be verbal, in writing or via social media, teachers, administration staff, other parents and carers or students should ensure that our communication:

- shows respect, courtesy and consideration;
- does not harass or bully another person;
- does not use intemperate language; and
- presumes positive intent

Staff at Summerland Christian College will aim to respond to communication in a timely manner which in most cases is during work hours.

At times there is a purposeful delay in responding to communications that are quite emotive. Our delay in responding is simply to allow a bit of time for emotions to subside so that we can focus on the heart of an issue. Please do not take any delay as an indication that we might not care about the situation. It is because we value positive interactions that we take this step.

## **Photos and Video**

This one is a hard one, especially at events, but it is really important! Parents and carers must not take photographs or recordings (phone or camera) of any students or staff other than their own family members.

We also ask that parents and carers not post any photographs or personally identifying material from College events on social media or any other communicative platform.

## **Sport**

We absolutely love having parents at sporting events! We ask that parents and carers be encouraging of all participants, including those from other schools. Parents and carers are to see College staff if there are any concerns at sporting events. They are not to approach referees, officials or other competitors.

The Sports Coaches at the College select teams based on their view of the most appropriate selection at the relevant time. It is not appropriate for parents and carers to complain about the failure of their son or daughter to be selected for a particular team or opportunity. Parents/Carers and students are encouraged though, to seek any constructive feedback from Sports Coaches in regard to areas of improvement that are needed for future selection. This may include skill and/or character development.



## **Separated Parents/Blended Families**

The College understands that there can be many complex family dynamics and our aim is to support our students if help is needed.

For the College to remain a place of sanctuary for students who are part of families working through complex dynamics, parents/carers should not attempt to involve the College in any dispute that may arise. While we appreciate being made aware of any changes that may impact our students, 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.

Please note the College will not take any action which would or is designed to disadvantage one party. The College will of course, observe any orders made by a Court in relation to a student or communications with parents if it is made known.

## **Failure to Observe (breach) this Code**

If a parent/carer fails to observe this Code, the College may:

- Provide a verbal request to discontinue the behaviour
- Issue a formal written warning from the College
- Limit access to a teacher or teachers/administrators;
- Limit access to the College premises or sporting or other school events;
- Terminate the enrolment of the student (regardless of whether verbal or written warning has been issued).

This Parent and Carers Code of Conduct is important to us all. It ensures that our College community continues to enjoy a positive environment where families flourish.

It would be foolish of us to think that Summerland Christian College is the right fit for every family. This Code, along with our other policies, helps to articulate the outworking of 'who we are' and these documents should be considered when deciding if Summerland Christian College is the school you wish to partner with during the most influential years of a child's life.

