

# DARA SCHOOL

## PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS POLICY

(Includes Parent Code of  
Conduct)

## **PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS POLICY 30**

### **PURPOSE**

Dara School implements a range of policies that are designed to ensure the effective operation of the school, including the safety and wellbeing of its staff and students.

The purpose of this policy is to recognise and support:

- The critical role parents play in providing learning opportunities complementary to the school and in connecting the formal education occurring in school with the family and community.
- Education as a shared activity and responsibility between the school, families, and the community.
- Learning that started well before entering our school and will extend well beyond the current school environment and the formal educational process.

This policy outlines the responsibilities of the parents of Dara School students, and the actions that may be taken by the School in the event of a breach of the Parent Code of Conduct (Guideline 30.2) or other School policies. The Parent Code of Conduct is a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to

- Parents/guardians/carers of students enrolled in Dara School, including extended family members and carers,
- Employees (permanent and casual) and volunteers
- Students
- Members of the wider school community

### **POLICY PRINCIPLES**

#### **3.1 KEY OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this policy are:

- To maintain the values held by Dara School, by building trust and respect within our community.
- To provide guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure interactions between all members of the community, students and staff are respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful, kind and considerate.

- To act as an ethical compass to assist in making decisions which are in the best interest of the students and Dara School as a whole.
- To ensure all parents/carers understand what is expected of them, including reporting of potential violations and cooperation with any inquiries.
- To specify consequences for a breach of the Parent Code of Conduct standards of behaviour.
- To underpin the expectation that parents/carers will follow the requirements outlined in the Parent Handbook.

### **RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

Dara School recognises the rights of all parties to be treated with respect. Dara School expects that parents/carers will always behave respectfully towards Dara School's staff (including employees, contractors and volunteers), students and other parents. This applies not only to words used, but also to tone of voice and body language. "Respect" is intentionally a broad concept. The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that are not respectful and therefore breaches of the parent code of conduct:

- Bullying, intimidation, discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and child abuse
- Actual or threatened aggression or violence
- Behaviour that causes a risk to a person's health and wellbeing
- Defamatory or disrespectful comments
- Gossip, rumour, and innuendo
- Raising one's voice, or using offensive language, while communicating
- Age-inappropriate language when communicating with children
- Not complying with the reasonable instructions of Dara staff
- Vexatious complaints

Dara School has a duty of care to protect all staff and students, and for this reason, any aggressive or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated. All members of the Dara community are empowered to take steps to protect their own health and wellbeing. If they feel a Parent is not being respectful, they are encouraged to indicate this and ask that it stop. If it does not, or if a staff member / parent feels a Parent's actions are posing a risk to their or someone else's health and wellbeing, they are empowered to

remove themselves from the situation or remove the children from the vicinity, at the point of risk, as per the Grievance Procedures.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1 PARENTS/CARERS**

Dara School Parents/carers are responsible for building a partnership with the School by:

- Supporting their child/ren's learning.
- Communicating with the School as relevant for their child/ren or family, for example providing up to date medical and contact information, and other relevant family matters.
- Acting in accordance with the Parent Code of Conduct, Parent Handbook, and other School policies, procedures and guidelines, including supporting their child/ren to act in accordance with School policies.
- Supporting the efforts of Dara School in maintaining a safe, orderly and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents/carers should understand that while the School will appropriately consult with parents/carers on behavioural management issues, the final decisions on how such matters are managed, the consequences of the behaviour, and the seriousness of the concern, will be with the School. Parents/carers must be cooperative with the School and attend meetings when required.
- Parents/carers show respect for the time of Dara staff by making appointments for discussion rather than expect ad-hoc meetings and by using School communication channels to communicate with staff during school hours.
- If inviting relatives, friends, supporters, carers or other persons (adult or child) to be present at any school related function or activity at any location, taking responsibility for that person and ensuring they always act in a manner consistent with the Parent Code of Conduct (p 10-p13).
- Follow and comply with all School policies and instructions when on School grounds or when associating or communicating with members of the Dara community.
- Recognise the damage that gossip can do within a school community and avoid unconstructive commentary with other parents/carers or students including on social media.
- Raising grievances appropriately and productively, in accordance with the Grievance Policy, and in an appropriate forum.

- Responding to School communications and instructions in a timely manner.
- Paying all Fees raised by the School in full by the due date. If Fees are unable to be paid by the due date due to extraordinary circumstance, parents/carers must communicate this to the Business Manager as soon as that becomes apparent.
- Respect the privacy of members of the Dara community, and of the School, by not sharing matters that would be considered to be confidential by the average person.

#### 4.2 DARA SCHOOL

Dara School will build a partnership with parents/carers in the learning of students by:

- Creating an open, welcoming, and supportive school environment, including by facilitating occasions for parents/carers to engage with and celebrate the school community and student learning, such as meetings between families and school staff or community events.
- Providing consistent and effective two-way communication between the school and parents using face-to-face meetings such as Personalised Education Plan (PEP) meetings, interviews, and teacher-parent-student discussions, as well as online and/or documentation through the school's learner management system, email and phone communication, access to student learning folders and academic reports. (See GU 30.1 Partnerships with Parents Overview of Communications)
- Responding to communications from parents/carers in a reasonable and timely manner, including updating information where requested.
- Supporting the provision of parental involvement in the school community through involvement with roles on the parent committee.
- Ensuring that prompt action is taken to resolve any issues as soon as possible, to the best ability of Dara School and involved parties, with respect towards the wellbeing of those involved.
  - Ensuring the Parent Handbook is kept up to date.
  - Upholding School policies.
  - Ensuring prompt action is taken to uphold and maintain the overall wellbeing of Dara School and its students, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this and other Policies. Prompt action is not necessarily immediate action, time for investigation and consideration is often required.

### **4.3 CO-PRINCIPALS**

As well as overseeing the responsibilities of Dara School listed in 4.2, the Principal(s) are responsible for:

- Ensuring all parents, staff, volunteers, students and visitors are aware of this policy upon arrival, employment and enrolment
- Maintaining currency and relevancy of the Parent Code of Conduct Policy
- Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in this policy

### **4.4 SCHOOL STAFF**

As well as supporting the actioning of responsibilities of Dara School, listed in 4.2, School Staff are responsible for:

- Respecting individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of families in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal
- Working with colleagues and parents/carers to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback
- Providing guidance to parents/carers and volunteers through positive role modelling and when appropriate, clear and respectful directions

### **4.5 MEMBERS OF THE WIDER SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Members of the wider school community are expected to respect and uphold the Parent Code of Conduct in all contacts with Dara School, whether onsite or at school functions or events off site.

### **4.6 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

Dara School staff will provide ongoing support with monitoring of the school's compliance with this policy, in consultation with the Parent Committee.

The Dara School Board of Governance will maintain oversight of the policy's relevance.

Dara School leadership will review the policy every 5 years, or as needed, and amend as appropriate.

## 4.7 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

### Parent/carer

Parent refers to parents or caregivers or guardians of students enrolled in Dara School.

**Parent Handbook** The Parent Handbook is updated across the year and is available from the Front Office. A digital copy can be accessed on SEQTA.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 1 Child Protection
- 4 Grievance Policy
- 12 Enrolment
- 15 First Aid
- 16 Volunteers Policy
- 18 WHS Policy
- 24 Attendance Policy
- 29 Asthma and Anaphylaxis Management Policy
- 38 Fee Policy
- 35 ICT Policy
- 17 Social Media Policy
- 10 Student Behaviour Management Policy
- 56 Suspension and Termination Policy
- Parent Handbook

## EDUCATION STANDARDS BOARD

**Criterion 3.7** The school monitors the attendance of each student at school and at classes and has in place processes to minimize non-attendance and to keep parents or guardians and the education authority informed as required by legislation.

**Criterion 3.8** The school communicates with parents and guardians about issues concerning the safety, health, and welfare of students.

## REFERENCES

Emerson, L., Fear, J., Fox, S., and Sanders, E. (2012). Parental engagement in learning and schooling: Lessons from research. A report by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) for the Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau: Canberra.

DEEWR (2008). Family – School Partnerships Framework

## APPENDIX

Guideline 30.1 - Partnership with Parents Overview of Communication (GU 30.1)

Guideline 30.2 - Parents Code of Conduct (GU 30.2)

Guideline 30.3 – In the Event of a Breach of the Parent Code of Conduct (GU 30.3)

<b>Title</b>	Partnership with Parents Policy
<b>Policy Reference Number</b>	30
<b>Responsible for review</b>	School Leadership
<b>Implemented</b>	4 March 2019
<b>Reviewed and implemented</b>	June 2024,
<b>Policy due for Review</b>	May 2027
<b>Reviewed and implemented</b>	Dec 2025

## GUIDELINE 30.1

### PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION

The best experiences for children happen when there is a strong relationship between educators and the child's family. The relationship with each family will be unique in many ways, but all partnerships will share some features:

- Mutual trust,
- Open, respectful communication,
- Empathy,
- Openness to others' views, values, professional knowledge, and perspectives,
- Shared decision making,
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities,
- Appreciation of each other's knowledge and experience,
- Willingness to negotiate and compromise,
- Commitment to resolve tensions and conflicts,
- Shared aims or goals—what is best for the child (in the best interest of the child).
- Consideration of cultural values.

This can be achieved through effective communication. At Dara School we have a variety of methods to communicate with parents.



Graphic 1: Canva - <https://www.canva.com/design/DAGNIOUyJM/MhCIASCzqCDbGgDhQfDWww/>

## **GUIDELINE 30.2**

### **PARENT<sup>1</sup> CODE OF CONDUCT**

Dara School cannot provide the best education for a child or help equip that child with the skills required for a fulfilling adult life, without collaboration and support from that child's family. The Partnership with parents/carers is vital in helping your child find success in their education with Dara. To support this the Parent Code of Conduct outlines Dara School's expectations for a student's parents/carers and other (extended) family members.

In developing this Code, the School recognises that Parents ultimately want the best for their children. However, the School also expects Parents to recognise that it must balance the interests of all of Dara School's community members (including not only students and Parents, but also Dara School's staff and their right to a safe working environment).

This Code does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of a parent's interactions with Dara School and the school community. Instead, it sets out general expectations. Parents/carers must endorse the vision and model of Dara School and use the school's values of Courage, Connection, Compassion, Curiosity and Creativity.

This expectation is demonstrated through the following actions and behaviours from parents.

#### **SUPPORTING OUR ETHOS AND VALUES**

- Supporting and respecting Dara School's unique curriculum and teaching pedagogy in building and maintaining a learning environment for gifted students, as expressed through the Dara Model.
- Acknowledging the importance of a trusting parent/carer/teacher/child relationship in the development of their child(ren)
- Actively seeking to understand the School's teaching and learning by arranging meetings with their child(ren)'s teacher(s) as needed.
- Sharing knowledge about their child(ren) with Dara School that may contribute to their child's learning experience.
- Modelling Dara School values in interactions with their child/ren, especially in relation to school activities and tasks, as well as learning.

#### **COMMUNICATING RESPECTFULLY**

- Interacting with staff, students, and other parents/carers and adults of the school environment and community in ways that model positive and respectful social interactions to children of the school.

- Showing value and respect for the school community and its reputation when communicating in traditional and digital forms, recognising the damage that gossip can do within a School community, and avoiding commentary that reflects poorly on the School (including criticism, uninformed rumour or speculation) with other Parents or community members, including on social media.
- Following appropriate School policy including correct procedures to resolve grievance or conflict, e.g. raising any genuine concerns and grievances relating to Dara School in an appropriate, constructive and respectful forum, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Grievance Policy.
- Raising concerns about their child(ren)'s education with their child's teacher(s), and, if not resolved, with one or both Co-Principals, in a constructive and appropriate manner.
- Maintaining and respecting confidentiality when required.

#### **USING TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA RESPECTFULLY**

- Upholding the expectations set out in the Partnerships with Parents Policy and this Parent Code of Conduct in both a technological and online capacity, for example:
- Respecting a staff member's professional and personal boundaries, by not using their personal online presence to raise school matters or otherwise engaging in disrespectful behaviour.
- Not taking photos, videos or other recordings of another student without their parent's consent, and not publishing information (including personal details, contact information, images and recordings) concerning a staff member, parent/carer, student or other member of the Dara School community online without express consent.
- Not publishing or sharing information online, or in person, which may bring Dara School (or any of its staff, students, parents and other members of the Dara School community) into disrepute. This includes where an image or recording shows a student in school uniform behaving inappropriately.
  - Not discussing confidential or sensitive school matters, including in relation to grievances about a particular staff member or student, online, or by other means e.g. SMS or messaging.
- Not setting up or participating in any unofficial online website, forum or group which features Dara School's name in its title or description, or which may suggest it is operated or sanctioned by Dara School.

- Not communicating with other students outside of Dara School, including by email or on social media, without prior consent from that student's parent/carer(s).

### **SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- Encouraging their child(ren) in their learning and development through
  - Supporting their child(ren) to build a growth mindset.
  - Supporting their child(ren)'s physical wellbeing through providing good nutrition and fitness and sporting opportunities.
  - Showing support and interest in school activities.
  - Taking reasonable action to support the school attendance of their child(ren).
  - Supporting their child through attending "round table" discussions led by their child.
- Supporting their child in pursuing their intellectual and creative interests outside of school.

### **ACTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PARENT HANDBOOK**

- Remaining up to date with all communications from the School, including the Parent Handbook
- Acting in accordance with the day-to-day requirements of the School in matters such as the following (non-exhaustive list):
  - Drop-off and pick up procedures
  - Sun safe policies
  - Uniform

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR BREACH OF THIS CODE**

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

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

- A request that the relevant conduct immediately cease.
- A written warning.
- A parent (or another relevant person) being banned from the School grounds, either for a particular period or permanently.

- A parent (or another relevant person) being excluded from School activities or events.
- Involvement of relevant authorities, such as the police.
- A requirement that a parent (or another relevant person) only communicate with a nominated School representative.
- A requirement that a parent (or another relevant person) not communicate with School staff, except in emergency situations, and that all communication be via another member of the family or their representative.
- Termination of the enrolment of a parent's child(s).

Staff and volunteers are empowered to take steps to protect their own health and wellbeing. If they feel that a parent/carer is being inappropriate, they are encouraged to indicate this and ask that it stop. If it does not, or if a staff member feels that a parent's actions are posing a risk to their or someone else's health and wellbeing, they are empowered to remove themselves from the situation. This may include immediately concluding a meeting or phone call or demanding that a parent immediately leave Dara School grounds (or a Dara School activity or event).

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<sup>i</sup> Parent refers to parents or caregivers or guardians of students enrolled in Dara School.

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### **GUIDELINE 30.3**

#### **IN THE EVENT OF A BREACH OF THE PARENT<sup>i</sup> CODE OF CONDUCT**

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

Where the Principal considers a parent has breached the PCC, the Principal or delegate will inform the parent of the nature of the breach, and the Principal may then implement one or more of the following consequences (not necessarily in any order i.e. steps may be skipped – not an exhaustive list):

1. A request seeking the relevant conduct immediately cease.
2. A written warning
3. A parent (as defined in this policy) being banned from Dara School grounds, either for a particular period or permanently
4. A parent (as defined in this policy) being excluded from school activities or events
5. A requirement a parent, or another relevant person, only communicate with a nominated school representative
6. Termination of the enrolment of a Parent's student(s)

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Both parent(s) and School are expected to maintain confidentiality through all stages of this process.