



# Parent Code of Conduct

2025

## Parental Partnership 2025

### Introduction

Port Macquarie Adventist School provides quality Christian education through our values of Respect, Responsibility and Integrity. We believe that education works best when the school, parents and students are on the same page and have clear, open and respectful communication.

The School endeavors to make considered decisions that are in the best interests of all students and the entire community, however we acknowledge that there are sometimes concerns or grievances regarding School practices and this Partnership of conduct aims to set some guidelines about the manner in which these should be approached.

The intention of this document is to ensure clarity for parents and guardians of the School's expectations with regard to their interaction with the School, its staff, other parents and students. As a Christian learning environment, we wish to look to biblical principles to resolve conflicts and to manage situations to ensure that every situation is focused on one question.

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### *How can we best work together for the benefit of the students?*

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This Partnership applies to all Port Macquarie Adventist School parents, guardians and caregivers, (collectively referred to as "Parents") with students enrolled at Port Macquarie Adventist School. It applies across all School environments, both during and outside school hours and within and outside the physical school environments, including online.

# Expectations

## 1.1 Be a positive role model and support the School

Parents are expected to support the educational ethos and values of the School, model appropriate behaviours for their children to learn from, and work with the School as it educates and provides wellbeing support to all students.

Parents can support the School and be positive role models by:

1. Abiding by the School's policies, procedures and directions, and ensuring their children do the same.
2. Being aware of the School's child protection protocols and, in particular, the Child Safety Policy which aims to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students. This can be found on the School website.
3. Respecting that the School is inclusive and welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds, and with different needs.
4. Encouraging their children to actively participate in the life of the School, including in the many sporting and co-curricular activities available (noting that some will be compulsory).
5. Being responsive to concerns raised by the School about their own child, including by being cooperative, providing information and attending meetings when required.
6. Keeping the School informed about their child's behavioral or educational needs, including by providing updated medical and relevant information as it becomes available or working with the School to ensure we get support for students from experts when required. The School will continue to work with parents on how they might best attempt to accommodate the needs within the restrictions of a school environment.
7. Keeping the School informed about their child's parenting arrangements, including any court orders that may be in place. However, parents should not involve the School in parenting disputes, or expect the School to act as the go-between for estranged parents.
8. Recognising the damage that gossip can do within a School community, and avoiding unconstructive commentary (including criticism, uninformed rumour or speculation) with other parents, including on social media.

## 1.2 Behave respectfully towards members of our community

Port Macquarie Adventist School expects that parents will always behave respectfully towards School staff (including employees, contractors and volunteers), students and other parents.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that are not considered respectful:

- Bullying, intimidation, discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and child abuse.
- Actual or threatened aggression or violence. Demanding or Assertive requests to staff.
- Behaviour that causes a risk to a person's health and wellbeing.
- Defamatory comments.
- Gossip, rumour, and innuendo.
- Raising one's voice, or using offensive language, while communicating.
- Age-inappropriate language when communicating with children.

### **1.3 Appropriate use of technology and social media**

The expectations set out in this Partnership of Conduct also apply to the way a parent uses technology and behaves online. For example, Parents should:

- 1 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).
- 2 Not take photos, videos or other recordings of another 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.
- 3 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 includes where an image or recording shows a student in School uniform behaving inappropriately.
- 4 Not communicate with other students outside of the School, including by email or on social media, without prior consent from that student's parent(s).
- 5 Not discuss confidential or sensitive School matters, including any matter relating to grievances about a particular staff member, students or other Parents online.
- 6 Not set up any online website, forum or group which features the School's name in its title, or which may suggest that it is operated or sanctioned by the School.

#### **1.4 When visiting School grounds, or attending School activities and events**

Parents must respect the School's risk management procedures when visiting the School. Parents should immediately proceed to Reception upon arrival to sign in and should only enter a classroom or other student environment when invited to do so by a staff member. This requirement does not apply when visiting the School only to:

- attend an activity or event to which all members of the School community have been invited;
- visit the School Uniform Shop; or
- drop off or collect a child from School.

#### **1.5 When visiting the School, or attending School activities and events, Parents should model appropriate and respectful behaviour. This includes:**

- 1 Demonstrating good sporting conduct and fair play when attending the School's art, drama, music and sporting events.
- 2 Adhering to applicable occupational health and safety and risk management procedures.
- 3 Following any reasonable directions given by School staff.
- 4 Showing appropriate care and regard for the property of the School and others. Any damage should be promptly reported to the School.
- 5 Not being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

#### **1.6 Drop off / pick up**

When dropping off and picking up students from the School, Parents are expected to ensure the health and safety of all members of our School community, as well as the wider community, at all times.

Parents must adhere to all traffic rules and any School traffic management system in place. This includes adhering to applicable speed limits, observing all traffic signs, limiting the use of car horns (unless indicating imminent danger), following directions given by staff on duty and parking appropriately and safely

#### **1.7 Responsibility for others**

Parents are expected to ensure that other individuals involved in their child's life, such as other relatives and carers, are also aware of and adhere to this Parent Partnership of Conduct.

## Raising Concerns Appropriately And Productively

The School is committed to the education and wellbeing of each student. It is therefore critical that Parents are able to raise genuine concerns and grievances they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive and respectful forum.

The School's grievance management procedures are set out in the Complaints and Grievances Policy. This policy sets out how concerns and grievances may be raised with the School and how the School will deal with these in a respectful and timely manner.

Parents with concerns and grievances should consult the Complaints and Grievances Policy. However, in general:

- 1 Parents should not communicate with another student about an issue concerning their own child. Parents must not attempt to discipline a student who is not their child and should not raise their voice or be aggressive or hostile when communicating (verbally or non-verbally) with another family's child.
- 2 Parents should raise their concerns with their child's teacher in the first instance. More serious concerns or grievances, including where a parent is dissatisfied with a teacher's response to a concern, may be raised with the appropriate member of the School leadership (as set out in the Complaints and Grievances Policy).
- 3 Parents should clearly set out their concerns and grievances, and what they would practically like to see happen.
- 4 Parents should respect that the School employs experienced educators and other professionals who are well-trained in making academic, disciplinary, co-curricular and wellbeing decisions every day. While the School will always take into account the interests of the individual child, the School must ultimately make decisions that take into account the interests of all students (and others who may be affected by the School's decisions).
- 5 Parents should recognise that just as the School will seek to respect each student's privacy, the School will also respect the privacy of other members of the School community. This means there are limits to what information the School may share with a parent when issues arise. This does not mean that the School is not taking an issue or situation seriously or hiding information from a parent.

## Consequences For Breaching Partnership Of Conduct

Staff and volunteers are empowered to take steps to protect their own health and wellbeing. If they feel that a parent 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 by immediately concluding a meeting or phone call, or by requiring that a parent immediately leave the School grounds (or activity or event).

The Principal will have absolute discretion in deciding how to best respond to concerns about a parent's compliance with this Partnership of Conduct. The principal will consult with the executive committee when deemed necessary to ensure appropriate actions are taken.

Where the Principal considers that a parent has breached this Partnership of Conduct, the Principal may take one or more of the following actions (and not necessarily in any particular order):

- 1 Request that the relevant conduct immediately cease.
- 2 Provide a written warning.
- 3 Exclude a parent (or another relevant person) from the School grounds, either for a particular period or permanently.
- 4 Exclude a parent (or another relevant person) from School activities or events.
- 5 Require that a parent (or another relevant person) only communicate with a nominated School representative.
- 6 Review of the enrolment with possible termination

Parents have the right to respond to and/or appeal a disciplinary decision, this appeal will be to the Port Macquarie Adventist School Advisory Council who will make a recommendation to the Education Director or their delegate for a final decision.

Port Macquarie Adventist School wants to work together with parents for the benefit of the education of the students in our care and this process is to ensure we collaborate together in the best way possible to reach positive outcomes.