



# ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE - SYDNEY

A Catholic school for boys in Years 5 to 12, teaching the Augustinian values of  
*'Truth, Love & Community'*

## CODE OF CONDUCT for PARENTS and GUARDIANS

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| Status         | <b>CURRENT</b>   |
| Classification | Operational      |
| Established    | 2019             |
| Last Review    | 2026             |
| Next Review    | 2028             |
| Responsibility | Deputy Principal |

### Context

St Augustine's College – Sydney is a Year 5 to Year 12 Catholic Congregational comprehensive school for boys teaching the Augustinian values of Truth, Love and Community.

The College seeks to promote the formation of the whole person; an individual who is well rounded and lives by the Gospel mission of justice, forgiveness, compassion and generosity.

Key to an Augustinian education is friendship, a commitment to learning and the opportunity to achieve academic and personal excellence within a faith community.

### Child Safety Commitment

Parents and guardians must comply with the College's Child Safeguarding Policy and the Child Safe Standards. Any behaviour that compromises the safety or wellbeing of a child, including grooming or inappropriate contact, is strictly prohibited and may be reported to relevant authorities.

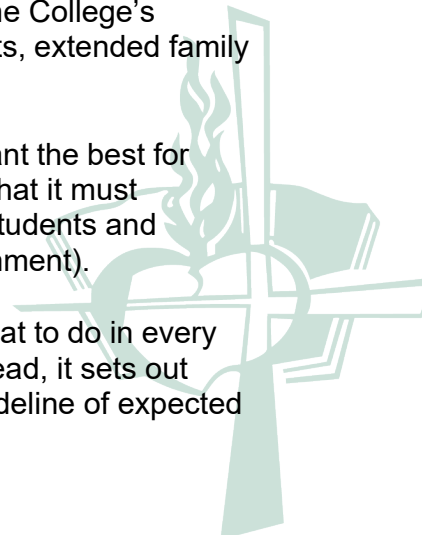
### About this Code of Conduct

St Augustine's College - Sydney requires the cooperation and support from a student's family to provide the best education to a student or help equip that student with the skills required for a fulfilling adult life.

To ensure such cooperation and support, this Code of Conduct outlines the College's expectations for a student's parents, step-parents, guardians, grandparents, extended family members and carers (collectively, **parents**).

In developing this Code, the College recognises that parents ultimately want the best for their children. However, the College also expects parents to recognise that it must ultimately balance the interests of all its stakeholders (including not only students and parents, but also the College 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 the College and its community. Instead, it sets out general expectations. As such, this Code is intended to be a practical guideline of expected and appropriate conduct.



## **Summary**

In summary, the five key expectations of parents expanded on in the following pages are as follows:

1. Parents are expected to visibly support the educational ethos and values of the College, and role model responsible and safe behaviours for their children and others to learn from in the community.
2. Behave respectfully towards members of our community. Respect includes valuing cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity within our community. Parents should demonstrate sensitivity and inclusivity in all interactions.
3. Parents should always behave respectfully towards College staff (including employees, contractors and volunteers), students and other parents.
4. Use technology and social media appropriately.
5. Parents are expected to be respectful in their communication with others, be mindful of privacy and safety in publishing information online, and ensure confidential information is not shared without permission.
6. Be a responsible visitor and participant.
7. Parents must respect the College's risk management procedures when visiting the College and attending school activities and events off-campus.
8. Raise grievances appropriately and respectfully.
9. Parents should raise genuine grievances they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive and respectful forum.
10. Parents are encouraged to engage positively with the College by attending parent education sessions, supporting College initiatives, and fostering respectful dialogue. Constructive collaboration between parents and staff enhances student learning and wellbeing.

## **Support the educational ethos and values of the College**

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

Parents can support the College and be positive role models by doing, for example, the following:

1. Comply with the College's codes of conduct, directions, policies, procedures, rules and regulations.
2. Encourage and ensure their children also comply with the College's codes of conduct, directions, policies, procedures, rules and regulations.
3. Respect (and show their children that they respect) that the College is inclusive and welcomes students and staff from a variety of backgrounds, and with different needs.

4. Respond to College communications (e.g. by responding and providing permissions in a timely manner) when requested to do so.
5. Encourage their children to actively participate in the life of the College, including in the classroom and the many sporting and co-curricular activities available (noting that some co-curricular activities will be compulsory)
6. Support the College's commitment to developing a student's initiative, independence and sense of responsibility for their own lives and actions.
7. Support the College's approach to student behavioural concerns, which can include a range of outcomes (including those which are educational, pastoral or disciplinary in nature).
8. Be responsive to concerns raised by the College about their own child, including by being cooperative, providing information, and attending meetings when required.
9. Raise grievances directly with the College, and in a timely manner.
10. Keep the College informed about a child's needs (including but not limited to their behavioural, educational, personal, and physical or mental health needs). This includes providing updated medical information, family developments and other like information as it becomes available. However, parents need to also appreciate that while the College will take into account any new information, and comply with its legal obligations, it cannot necessarily accommodate every need.
11. Keep the College informed about a child's parenting arrangements, including any court orders that may be in place. However, parents should not involve the College in parenting disputes, or expect it to act as the go-between for estranged parents.
12. Recognise the damage that gossip can do within a school community, and avoid unconstructive commentary (including criticism, uninformed rumour, or speculation) with other parents, students and the broader community, including on social media.

Parents are expected to be a role model for responsible and safe behaviours. This includes ensuring the health and safety of all members of our community (including staff, students, parents and alumni) and the wider community. Parents are expected to ensure that other individuals involved in their child's life, such as other relatives and carers, also comply with this Code.

### **Behave respectfully towards members of our community**

The College expects that parents will behave respectfully at all times towards other members of the community. This applies not only to words used, but also to tone and body language, and similar expectations are embedded in the College's codes of conduct for staff and students.

St Augustine's College is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and respectful community and maintains a zero-tolerance approach to hate speech and hate-related conduct. It is important for families to understand that the law makes it a criminal offence to publicly and intentionally encourage hatred against a person or group because of their race, where this could cause a reasonable person in that group to feel fear for their safety, including fear of harassment, intimidation or violence. Hate speech includes any communication or behaviour that targets individuals or groups based on characteristics

such as race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or cultural background, including offensive, abusive or threatening language, inciting hatred or discrimination, harassment, or the sharing of harmful content.

Parents and caregivers are expected to model respectful and inclusive behaviour in all interactions, refrain from engaging in or promoting discriminatory conduct, and use appropriate and constructive channels when raising concerns. This expectation extends to all online activity, including social media and messaging platforms, where content must not harm the wellbeing, safety or reputation of any member of the College community. The College values its partnership with families in promoting dignity, inclusion and respect for all.

‘Respect’ is intentionally a broad concept. The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that are not respectful:

1. Rude or insulting behaviour, including passive-aggressive, intimidating or derogatory language.
2. Bullying, intimidation, discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and child abuse. Please note that in addition to being a breach of this Code, such behaviour may also be unlawful.
3. Initiating or engaging in hate speech. In addition to being a breach of this Code, hate speech is conduct that is unlawful.
4. Actual or threatened aggression (verbal or non-verbal) or violence.
5. Behaviour that causes a risk to a person’s health and wellbeing.
6. Defamatory or disrespectful comments.
7. Gossip, rumour, and innuendo.
8. Raising one’s voice, or using offensive language or actions, while communicating.
9. Age-inappropriate language when communicating with or about children.
10. Vexatious complaints.

### **Use technology and social media appropriately**

The expectations set out in this Code can 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 College matters (or otherwise engage in disrespectful behaviour).
2. 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 community online without

express consent.

3. Avoid publishing information or opinions which may bring the College (or any of its staff, students, parents and other members of the community) into disrepute. This may include an image or recording which shows a student in College uniform, or a member of the community at the College or at a College activity or event, behaving inappropriately. This may also include making critical or defamatory comments about the College, its staff, students or other members of its community via any online or published platform.
4. Not discuss confidential or sensitive College matters, including in relation to grievances about a particular staff member or student, online, including social media platforms or with the media.
5. Obtain express permission to use the College's name or crest 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 College.
6. Parents should exercise caution when participating in informal parent groups (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook). These platforms must not be used to share confidential information, spread rumours, or organise actions contrary to College policies. The College reserves the right to address breaches occurring in these forums.

### **Be a responsible visitor and participant**

Parents must respect the College's risk-management procedures when visiting the site. 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 College only to:

1. Attend an activity or event to which all members of the community have been invited.
2. Visit the College uniform shop.
3. Drop-off or collect a child from College Reception.

When visiting the College or attending College activities and events, parents should model appropriate and respectful behaviours, and uphold the College values. This includes:

1. Demonstrating good sporting conduct and fair play when attending sporting and co-curricular events. Complying with applicable occupation, student and workplace health and safety and risk-management procedures.
2. Complying with any reasonable directions given by College staff.
3. Showing appropriate care and regard for the property of the College and others. Any damage should be promptly reported.
4. Dressing appropriately for the occasion.
5. Not being under the influence of drugs or alcohol (and otherwise not engaging in the possession, sale or supply of the same).

6. Not smoking or vaping on site and respecting the non-smoking status of the entire College campus.
7. Behaving lawfully on College grounds whether at events hosted by or connected to the College, whether conducted on site or otherwise.
8. Ensuring that any necessary physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of, and relationship with, the student.
9. Respecting College property and the property of other members of the community (including staff, students and parents).

When dropping off and picking up students from the College, 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 comply with all traffic rules and any College Traffic Management Plan in place. This includes adhering to applicable speed limits, observing all traffic signs, limiting the use of car horns (unless indicating imminent danger), and parking appropriately and safely.

Parents must comply with any applicable government issued health orders or directions, or College directions, in response to any potentially transmissible conditions.

### **Raise grievances appropriately and respectfully.**

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

The College's complaints handling procedures are set out in the *Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedures* available on the College website. This policy sets out how concerns and grievances may be raised with the College, who they should be raised with, and how the College will deal with these in a respectful and timely manner.

Parents with grievances should consult the *Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedures*, however, in general:

1. Parents should take care with volume, tone and vocabulary when communicating with another family's child.
2. Parents should not communicate with another student about an issue concerning their own child. In particular, parents should refrain from any attempt to discipline a student who is not their child, unless they are attempting to restrain a student from causing a risk to themselves or others, and in doing so they act appropriately, respectfully and reasonably.
3. Parents should raise their grievances with their child's teacher in the first instance, in a considered and respectful manner. More serious concerns or grievances, including where a parent is dissatisfied with a teacher's response to a grievance, may be raised with the appropriate member of the College.
4. Any form of disrespectful or aggressive conduct towards a staff member will not be

tolerated.

5. Parents should arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss their grievances, rather than relying on email or other written communications.
6. Parents should clearly identify their grievances, and what they would practically like to see happen. If there is more than one issue or problem, parents should write a list so that they are adequately prepared and then decide which issue or problem matters most.
7. Parents should appreciate that while the College is committed to dealing with their grievances in a timely manner, it will not always be practicable for staff to provide an immediate acknowledgement or response (particularly where a concern or grievance is sent by email).
8. Parents should respect that the College employs experienced educators and other professionals who are well-trained in making academic, disciplinary, co-curricular, pastoral and wellbeing decisions every day. Please understand that while the College will always take into account the interests of the parent's child, it must ultimately make decisions that take into account the interests of all students (and others who may be affected by the College's decisions).
9. Parents should recognise that just as the College will seek to respect each student's privacy, it will also respect the privacy of other members of the College community. This means there are limits to what information the College will share with a parent when issues arise. This does not mean that the College is not taking an issue or situation seriously or that it is withholding information unnecessarily from a parent.
10. If a parent is not satisfied with the College's response to a grievance, it may provide a parent with a right to request an internal review of its decision. Please refer to the *College Complaints and Grievance Policy* for details. Alternatively, an external body, court or tribunal may be able to deal with the issue. The College respects a parent's right to invoke any formal grievance-resolution procedures which may exist. However, in instances where parents do not engage in the constructive processes that may resolve their grievances, or unreasonably escalate issues including the disclosure of personal, protected or other private or confidential information, especially if disclosed by publicly airing their grievances about the College (and in particular about staff or students), including on social media platforms, then the College is entitled to and may seek to mitigate the impacts of such disclosures by any reasonable means available to it.

### **Consequences for breach of this code**

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

The College will apply principles of procedural fairness when considering any consequence under this Code. Parents will be given an opportunity to respond before significant actions, such as exclusion from activities or termination of enrolment, are implemented.

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):

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

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 communicate this and ask that it stops. 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 the College grounds (or a College activity or event).

The Principal may, without notice, terminate a student's enrolment if the Principal considers that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust, respect and cooperation between a student's parents and the College has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts that relationship.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Principal every 3 years or as required.

**Related policies:** *Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedures*