

# Birchgrove Public School



## Parent and Community Code of Conduct

Our school community is more than just students; it consists of relationships between four groups, our students, our staff (including both teachers and support staff), our parents, and the wider community.

Our students, teachers and parents all have their own published code of conduct, indicating how they must treat fellow students, teachers and parents with dignity and respect, and how in return they can expect and will receive the same respect.

The code of conduct is designed to indicate clearly the acceptable manner to approach the staff, relate to the school property and your rights and responsibilities as parents.

## Parents Obligations

### ***Parents should ensure that their child;***

- Regularly attends school.
- Arrives at school before the commencement of the school day.
- Has appropriate nourishment for a school day.

### ***Parents and the wider community should ensure that they;***

- Treat all staff with dignity and respect.
- Follow any lawful instructions whilst on school property.
- Maintain appropriate behaviour when dealing with other parents in the school environment.
- Never directly approach a child on a dispute or matter of conduct.

## Parents Rights

### ***Parents have the right to;***

- Have their concerns addressed in a timely and professional manner.
- Have concerns or issues dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.
- Be treated with mutual respect.

### ***How should I approach staff?***

- remain calm, and remember it's a solution that you are looking for not an argument.
- Identifying calmly and clearly the issues
- working together to developing a co-ordinated action plan is much more likely to lead to a successful resolution for everyone involved.

To help you identify who is the most appropriate person to approach, we have developed a small table to give you a quick guide on the appropriate way to approach various issues.

**Your Concern**

**The Appropriate Action**

**The Academic Progress of my own child**

Directly contact the child's teacher either, by note, by phone, or in person to arrange a mutually suitable time to discuss.

**The Welfare of my own child**

For minor issues directly contact your child's teacher outside of classroom times to clarify information. If a simple resolution cannot be found, arrange a mutually suitable time to further discuss the issues.

For more serious concerns, contact the school office (9810 2469). State the nature of your concern and arrange a suitable time to discuss with the class teacher and/or the principal.

To convey information about a change of address, telephone number, emergency contact, custody details or any health issues, please contact the office.

To convey information regarding your child's non-attendance due to sickness or other reasons please contact the office.

**Actions of another student**

For positive recognition contact the class teacher or principal.

For classroom issues contact the class teacher, for playground issues contact the principal. If the situation requires it, arrange a mutually suitable time to further discuss the issues.

Do not under any circumstances approach another student directly.

**Identifying school policy or practice**

Contact the school office (9810 2469). State the nature of your concern. If the office is unable to resolve your query from written policy documents then arrange for a suitable time to discuss with the principal and/or an appropriate staff member.

**Actions of a staff member**

For positive recognition contact the staff member directly, and if you deem it appropriate, you may also contact the principal. Written encouragement has the added benefit of being available for staff to keep for future reference. For negative issues contact the school office (9810 2469) and talk to the principal, if available, or arrange for a return phone call. Do not state the nature of your concerns to office staff, simply express your desire to talk to the principal and express the level of urgency you deem appropriate. After a preliminary discussion on the phone, arrangements can be made for further meetings, with the principal and/or the staff member in question if necessary.

***The following is a list of inappropriate behaviour.***

- Use of offensive language, including foul language or swearing, name calling, demeaning, sexist, or racist language.
- Interrupting the learning environment to contact a teacher. Class time is for the students.
- Expecting to conduct a meeting without previously having organising an appropriate meeting time.
- Approaching staff regarding a school matter on their personal time
- Any form of a threat, be it physical or verbal.
- Physical assault or intimidation.
- Entering school grounds whilst under the effects of alcohol or drugs.

**School Property**

- School facilities are provided for the enjoyment and education of our children, we would ask that you;
- Treat all property with respect
- Follow all lawful staff instructions whilst on school property
- Do not enter the school grounds without a legitimate reason
- When entering the grounds with a legitimate reason always contact the office first, rather than approaching staff directly.

All schools come under The Inclosed Lands Protection Act. This provides a basis for taking action in relation to what is commonly referred to as trespass. (see below)

**The Inclosed Lands Act.**

Schools are places where parents and community members should be welcomed as partners in education, even in circumstances related to student discipline. However, there are circumstances where a parent or community member's presence on the school site is problematic. Situations where principals might consider issuing a notice prohibiting entry include:

- when two or more parents are engaging in aggressive behaviour towards each other on school grounds, possibly as a result of a community dispute
- when a parent is constantly harassing a teacher in a non-threatening manner
- where a member of the community constantly traverses the school grounds as a "shortcut" and where a right of way does not exist.
- Schools are specifically defined as "inclosed lands" under the Act. The Act addresses a number of offences relevant to schools such as:
  - entry without lawful excuse
  - remaining on inclosed lands after a request to leave
  - behaving in an offensive manner after a request to leave
  - giving a false name and address.

Local Police can be requested to deliver a letter which prohibits entry to the school if the particular circumstances warrant such action.

(Excerpt from **HOW TO BE A SAFER SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY DIRECTORATE**  
<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/adminsupport/safetysecurity/htbass.pdf> )