

## Agreed expectations

TCS has expectations of how people will conduct themselves and interact with each other in and around our schools. All members of our school communities can expect to be part of a positive, supportive school environment where inappropriate behaviour of any kind is not tolerated.

At TCS we expect all staff members to work in a highly professional manner by

- extending welcome and courtesy to parents at all times
- taking the lead role in building a relationship of trust and respect with parents
- communicating with parents in a timely manner
- working through contentious issues respectfully and professionally
- providing feedback in a timely manner to students about their work and learning progress
- seeking professional assistance and support when necessary
- engaging wholeheartedly in professional development opportunities to maintain currency and expertise.

All parents are expected to

- ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually for the full school day, in correct uniform and with necessary equipment
- follow all applicable policies and procedures
- conduct themselves appropriately at all times on school premises and in doing so model the behaviour expected of students
- display courtesy and respect in all interactions with other parents, visitors, members of staff and students, whether face to face or online
- maintain the confidentiality of anything of a personal nature observed or overheard whilst at school and not meant for wider disclosure
- refer matters relating to conduct of another parent, visitor or member of staff or student to the principal
- follow the agreed school complaints procedure to quickly and appropriately resolve any concern or dispute
- respect the integrity of the community by refraining from making derogatory or offensive comments or statements about the school or any individual connected with the school in any public forum including social media.



Diocese of Toowoomba  
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# Parent engagement charter

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# Parent engagement charter

*Catholic Schools commit to nurturing active partnerships with families and providing parents with opportunities to engage meaningfully in the life of the school community. The student's learning journey is enriched through positive and reciprocal relationships.*

Dr Pat Coughlan, Executive Director: Catholic Schools

## Purpose

Parents naturally have a keen interest in their child's learning. However, for the vast majority, contact with school as a 'parent' is a new experience and this can be quite daunting. Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS) has developed this Charter to aid parents as they navigate the school environment and become fluent in the 'language of school'.

## The benefits

At TCS we believe in a parent's right and responsibility to be involved in and contribute to the educational experiences of their children.

We know that a relationship between school and parents works best when it is based on mutual respect and acknowledgement of the value that each brings.

All of our schools aim to complement and build on the work of the family in developing confident, accomplished and intelligent students who demonstrate

- a positive self-esteem and world-view
- motivation to learn
- a positive disposition towards school
- high levels of achievement.

## Learning the 'language of schools'

### 'At home' parenting

While many parents strive to be involved in school-based activities the opportunities to do so do not always balance with many other demands of work and family. Parents should not underestimate the powerful influence of 'at home' parenting behaviours on their child's educational outcomes.

Parents are highly influential when they

- have high expectations for their children's conduct and courtesy, punctuality, sense of responsibility and involvement in family activities
- show interest in their children's learning by
  - helping them relate what they are learning in school to the world beyond school
  - being supportive of the work of teachers
  - modelling the behaviours of successful learners
- talk to children about things that interest them and provide opportunities for children to extend their engagement in these areas
- discuss their children's educational and career aspirations and encourage children to set goals for their progress.

*Our experiences tell us that when responsibility for children's learning is shared by the school, home and community, children have more opportunities for meaningful, engaged learning.*

## Communicating

Teachers keep parents well informed about their child's learning achievement and progress through both formal and informal contact.

Formal contact includes

- parent information sessions (usually at the beginning of first term)
- parent-teacher interviews (usually scheduled at the end of first term or second term)
- occasional formal meetings requested by teachers and/or parents for specific purposes.

When a formal meeting is needed an appointment should be made to meet at a mutually convenient time. Parents should contact the school office to arrange such an appointment. Occasionally, circumstances dictate an immediate meeting, however, as a general rule parents can expect that meetings will not be scheduled during class time.

## Parent involvement at school

Volunteers assist in providing services and opportunities for students' learning which might otherwise not be possible. These might include assisting in the uniform shop, coaching sporting teams, training and conducting eisteddfod choirs, contributing to stalls for the annual fete and participating in working bees.

Parents may be asked if they are interested in volunteering for these types of activities.

All volunteers are expected to participate in an induction program to ensure understanding of the behaviour expectations for volunteers, especially in the area of student protection.

## Decision making

Parents add a unique perspective to decisions affecting the priorities and future direction of our schools and so can expect to be asked to provide feedback to review and improve school performance.

Parents may be invited to contribute as a member of a focus group, a parent forum or as a participant in a survey.

The Parents and Friends Association (P&F), school boards and Parent Partnership Forum (PPF) are the three most prominent formal groups for parental involvement in decision-making processes.

## P&F

The primary purpose of this group is to support the principal and staff in the provision of high quality educational programs, resources and facilities.

## School board

The School board comprises members of the parent community who serve on the board for three years. The primary purpose of the Board is to support the Principal in the development of policy and provide advice in the areas of

- curriculum
- buildings and facilities
- finance
- enrolment
- staffing.

## PPF

The PPF is an amalgam of the responsibilities of the P&F and school board. This model, originally designed for use in smaller school communities, currently operates in some of our schools.

