



Clarity Around Behaviour Expectations Chatswood Hills State School

Dear Fantastic Families at Chatswood Hills State School,

Clarity builds trust. Chatswood Hills State School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment for all students, staff and families. Our Student Code of Conduct outlines our shared expectations:

I Am Safe. I Am Respectful. I Am Responsible.

These expectations apply at school, before and after school, and in the broader community where behaviour impacts our students or staff. I am writing to clearly outline what this means in practice.

As the new Principal of Chatswood Hills State School, I believe it is important to openly share my expectations and the way I approach student behaviour, so families feel informed and confident in our processes. I would like to acknowledge the terrific leadership of former Principal David and our Deputy Principal team, who have worked hard to build the strong, positive culture that exists at Chatswood Hills today. We are not changing course. Our high expectations remain the same. This letter simply provides additional clarity about how I respond to specific behaviour matters — always with fairness, consistency and a strong commitment to student safety and wellbeing.

Serious Behaviour

There are some behaviours that will always be treated as serious matters. These include:

- Racial slurs or discriminatory language
- Intentional Physical violence toward students or staff
- Swearing at or verbally abusing staff
- Threats, intimidation or harassment
- Bullying, including online

Such behaviour is inconsistent with our Code of Conduct and undermines the safety, wellbeing and learning of others.

At times, students may state that they “didn’t know what it meant” or that they “didn’t intend to cause harm.” As part of any investigation, we consider intention and individual circumstances carefully. However, it is equally important to recognise that words and actions can cause real harm — whether intended or not.

Where harm has occurred, it is our responsibility as educators to respond appropriately and ensure students understand the impact of their behaviour. We consider age, development, intent and a range of individual considerations as part of the management of any behaviour. However, learning from mistakes is part of growing up. Causing harm, even without claimed intent, does not remove accountability.



Our vision...

To empower our students to effectively use the 6Cs to make a difference and create a better world together.





What is Bullying?

In line with our Student Code of Conduct, bullying is defined as:

Ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour (including online), that causes harm.

Single incidents or disagreements are not defined as bullying, but they are still addressed seriously and promptly.

Possible Disciplinary Responses

Our Code of Conduct outlines a range of disciplinary options available to the Principal or delegate. Responses depend on the severity, frequency and impact of behaviour and may include:

- Restorative conversations
- RPR (Reflective Practices Room) / making up lost learning time
- Removal of privileges
- Behaviour support plans
- Discipline Improvement Plans
- Temporary removal from class
- Suspension (short (less than 10 days) or long term (more than 10 days))
- Exclusion (in serious cases)

We do not apply automatic consequences. Every situation is considered individually, taking into account student circumstances and ensuring procedural fairness. Suspension or exclusion is always a last resort.

Behaviour Outside of School

Under the Department of Education's Student Discipline Procedure, principals may respond to student behaviour that occurs outside of school hours where it impacts the good order and management of the school or the safety and wellbeing of students or staff.

While this has always formed part of departmental policy, it is always important to remind families and clearly outline this for our Chatswood Hills community.

This may include behaviour:

- At YMCA Outside School Hours Care
- Online, including cyberbullying
- While wearing school uniform
- In the community where actions disrupt learning or affect members of our school community

Where out-of-school behaviour has or may have a significant impact on students or staff at Chatswood Hills, school-based responses, including suspensions, may be considered in line with our Student Code of Conduct.



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Cyberbullying and Social Media

Cyberbullying is treated with the same seriousness as in-person bullying.

All students at Chatswood Hills are under 16 years of age. The Australian Government has now legislated that specific social media platforms are banned for anyone under 16 years old. We strongly encourage families to supervise online activity and ensure age restrictions are respected. More information can be found by visiting

- <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications/internet/online-safety/social-media-minimum-age>

We are aware of several incidents this year involving online interactions between students that have impacted learning and wellbeing at school.

When online behaviour harms another student, involves threats or harassment, or disrupts learning, it becomes a school matter and may result in disciplinary consequence in line with the student code of conduct.

Online behaviour has real-world consequences.

Working Together

As part of enrolment at Chatswood Hills, families agree to uphold our Student Code of Conduct and partner with us in maintaining a school environment free from harassment and violence.

We are currently reviewing aspects of our behaviour processes to ensure even greater clarity for students and families moving forward.

Our goal is always learning, accountability and growth — but safety comes first.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the relevant Deputy Principal in the first instance.

Thank you for your continued partnership in ensuring Chatswood Hills remains a school where every student and staff member feels safe, respected and able to give their best.

Best Wishes,

Michael Richards

Principal

Chatswood Hills State School



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