



Guidelines for Parents and Guardians

Ballarat Steiner School is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment. We also desire to maintain a culture that is nurturing, inclusive and respectful to all involved. The contributions of parents and guardians form an integral part of our school and kindergarten and are highly valued. These guidelines outline the expectations that apply to any parent or guardian of an enrolled student who attends or volunteers at Ballarat Steiner School, Kindergarten and Playgroup.

We respectfully ask that you:

- Treat students, staff and all members of Ballarat Steiner School, Kindergarten and Playgroup with respect, courtesy and consideration.
- Assist in the creation of an environment free of fear, harassment, discrimination, racism and intimidation.
- Act with care, being mindful of safe practices always.
- Work cooperatively with all staff.
- Report any illegal or concerning activity/situation to the Head of School or appropriate staff member.

The following is not acceptable on our school property:

- Smoking or using tobacco, possession of or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while on school property or providing any of these substances to any students or community members.
- Verbal harassment, abuse or intimidation of any person or the use of profanity while on school grounds, including the school car park.
- Taking advantage of or acting abusively towards any person.

Communication

Respectful communication should be the highest endeavour for everyone in our community.

We respectfully ask that you:

- Use appropriate communication skills, including the use of non-discriminatory, respectful and non-judgmental language in verbal and written communication.
- Consider the most appropriate form of communication for any concern you may have. Please organise scheduled meetings for important, complex or challenging issues.

- Consider carefully whether it is in the child/children's best interests to be exposed to the content that is being communicated.
- Refrain from gossip and negative discourse about members of our community.
- Seek clarity if necessary. If you are frustrated, upset or concerned about an issue, discuss this with your child's teacher or the Head of School, rather than seeking answers from others.

Confidentiality

We respect your right to privacy and require this to be reciprocated by parents and guardians. This requirement includes:

- Understanding work conducted with students and staff may be confidential.
- Respecting the privacy and dignity of all members of our school community including students, staff, Committee of Management members, visitors and volunteers.
- Maintaining confidentiality by not discussing student progress, behaviour or personal information to other persons other than the relevant staff member or the Head of School.
- Respecting the privacy of others, including their personal information.
- Not including email addresses in verbal and written forms of communication – please use BCC.

Consequences

The class teacher or the Head of School will seek to remedy any breaches of these guidelines in the first instance. If you choose to act outside of this policy, we reserve the right to:

- Limit physical access to the School, Kindergarten and Playgroup property and/or the participation in school activities.
- Limit communication with staff.
- Contact the appropriate authorities for support.
- Proceed to ceasing the enrolment if a resolution cannot be reached.

When the parent or guardian of a child engages in serious or persistent breaches of this policy which relate to a pupil, a member of staff, the Head of School, another parent or to the reputation of the school, Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten reserves the right to terminate the enrolment agreement between the family and school.

The school and kindergarten both have a Grievances and Complaints Policy. All complaints should be handled according to these policies.

Expectations of Parents and Guardians

We ask all parents and guardians to act within the School and Kindergarten's Child Safety policies and our Workplace Health and Safety policies and procedures.

When visiting the school or kindergarten for any reason (other than drop off or pick up), please record your arrival and departure times in the visitor's book at the front office or at the kindergarten to ensure that staff are aware of your presence on the premises.

Parents who accompany students on an overnight camp will be required to hold a current and valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) and provide the school with a copy of this. If you need further information about how to obtain this, please see the office. This is not required for events such as working bees, fairs, day excursions and festivals.

Specific directions from staff must be followed particularly in the instances of emergencies and during evacuation drills.

In order to support our work with your child, we ask that you participate in the following:

Learn about your child's education

- Take opportunities to find out about Steiner education and why our school and kindergarten does things the way that it does. This will help you support the teachers and understand your child's journey through our school.
- Attend all parent-teacher interviews and class meetings whenever possible. If you are not able to attend, please provide an apology and arrange another time with your child's teacher.
- Keep up to date with activities and announcements by reading your emails, texts and our fortnightly newsletter.

Support your child in attending school regularly, except if sick or on leave

- Ensure regular and punctual school attendance. This is important for establishing a healthy routine and rhythm. Please ensure that your child is ready to commence their schooling at 9am. If your child is unable to attend, please inform our office staff.
- Apply for leave from school attendance if you know in advance that your child will be absent.
- Please schedule holidays within the allocated school holiday periods.
- Please keep your child at home if they are sick. When your child is sick, please notify the school and kindergarten prior to 9.30am on that day. We are legally required to follow up all absentee students with families.

Keep us informed

- Provide the school with any important information about your child's health, including relevant health support plans or documentation, updates to plans, changes of medication etc.
- Provide the school with updates if there are changes to addresses, phone numbers and living situations.

Contribute to your child's education

- Communicate all health and well-being concerns in a timely way to your child's teacher including anything that may impact their learning and behaviour.

- Be aware that some sensitive or challenging discussions regarding your child require a scheduled child-free meeting.

Support your child's learning at home

- Assist your child in developing regular, healthy learning habits with a study environment which is free of clutter, noise and distractions.
- Encourage and model reading for pleasure. This is a great way to nurture good readers.
- Encourage and support regular music practise.
- Support your child in ensuring the punctual submission of homework and tasks (upper primary years). If there are reasons for work not being completed, please provide a written explanation to the teacher prior to the due date.

Supervise your child responsibly

- Please understand that we cannot offer supervision and access to the school premises outside of the supervised period from 8.30am to 3.45pm. At 3.45pm, if your child has not been picked up, they will await your arrival at the front office.
- Please ensure that all children in your care are always acting within the school rules whilst on school property. This includes after school, festivals, fairs or other events.

Dress your child appropriately

- Dress your child in clothing that is appropriate to the weather conditions and in accordance with our Clothing Policy (including hats in warmer months, warm socks and jackets in cooler months). Please ensure that long hair is tied back.
- Avoid overt branding, advertising and television or movie images on your child's clothing and items.

Pack the right things

- Send healthy, natural and unpackaged food in your child's lunch box. Please refer to our food policy.
- Keep personal toys and belongings at home unless prearranged with your class teacher.
- Please label your child's belongings including their clothing.

Connect with our Community

- Help out at our community events including at festivals, fairs and working bees.
- Get involved in our Parents and Friends group, reading/study groups or parent education forums.

Support our approach to technology at home

- Encourage and enable active, screen-free leisure activities and regular exercise.
- Place clear boundaries around the use of technology. Be active in monitoring your child's access to electronic and social media as well as the use of electronic games.

- Take care to closely monitor the ratings of television, film, electronic games and internet content that your child is exposed to. Violent and inappropriate content is to be avoided completely. Discuss this with your child's teacher if you have questions about content.
- Ensure that there is no television or device (including phones) that enables internet access in your child's bedroom.
- Please ensure that your child does not watch television or any audio-visual content or use electronic games on any device (including phones) before school or in transit to school.
- Please note that if your child has a phone, it needs to be dropped off at the office before school commences and can then be collected at the end of the day.