



# Handbook for Parents of Beaconhills Students

## Introduction

Beaconhills College is an ecumenical Christian College with a policy of open entry and a low fee structure. The College aims for excellence in the development of each student's potential, in an environment of care and concern.

Students are expected, in their work and co-curricular activities, to contribute to the welfare of the College. In particular, they are required to participate and be involved in all activities and functions which form part of the College's programme.

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the College is to foster the spiritual, intellectual, physical and social development of its students through their participation in programmes of study and other activities appropriate to their diverse needs, abilities and aspirations. It strives to achieve such a purpose through its five aims:

- Religious and spiritual
- Personal relationships and pastoral care within the College community
- Academic and attitudinal
- Personal well-being and co-curricular activities
- The wider College community

## Religious Ethos of the School

Beaconhills has associations with both the Anglican and Uniting Churches.

All members of the College are expected to respect the diverse interests and traditions of the community and to support its promotion of Christian values. Belief is not an entrance criterion to the College but tolerance and respect for Christian principles, which underline the whole existence and functioning of the College, are expected at all times.

## House System

Beaconhills College provides a caring, supportive environment in which students are not only well known by the staff but also where a genuine care for them is a priority.

The pastoral care system in the Middle and Senior School revolves around the eight Houses. These Houses are more than groups organised for the convenience of sporting competitions; they provide an opportunity for students to belong, and to contribute to a smaller group within the larger College



community. Every house is divided into three vertically integrated Tutor Groups, each consisting of 20 students in both Middle School and Senior School. Each student stays in the same House and Tutor Group throughout their time at the College. Students are assigned to the House of siblings.

The care of students in all Tutor Groups is the responsibility of the *Tutor*. For parents, their child's Tutor is the first point of contact in the College. The *Head of House* is responsible for the academic progress, discipline and pastoral care of all students in their House.

It is imperative that the *Heads of Sections* are contacted at any time if more serious or ongoing matters need to be discussed.

It serves no purpose to denigrate or express negative views about any member of staff to children as this will undermine the need to establish and maintain positive relationships. Parents should contact their child's Head of Section on all matters relevant to concerns about teachers.

### **Student Record Book**

A Student Record Book detailing procedures, rules, routines, and a map of the College, absence notes and compulsory attendance dates is issued to each student. This book forms the basis of communication between parents and teachers and assists students with the management of their time. A parent or guardian is required to sign the Record Book regularly to indicate that homework has been completed. Parents and teachers may exchange written comments via this book. The replacement cost of a Record Book is at the parents' expense.

### **Curriculum**

Beaconhills' curriculum provides the students, given their abilities and backgrounds, with the opportunity to undertake studies in a broad range of disciplines. The College aims for excellence in the development of each student's potential and while individual differences are recognised and enrichment programmes offered, tertiary study is the major goal of Beaconhills College's academic curriculum. A common and formal testing programme exists for all students and homework expectations and requirements are quite rigorous. All students in Year 7 will undertake testing which will assist teaching staff in the ongoing academic care and support of your child.

Special homework requirements are detailed in the student's Record Book. Parents are requested at all times to support their child in meeting the College's homework expectations and to inform the College if homework is not being set.

All students from Preparatory to Year 4 study Japanese and French. Students from Year 5 upwards are required to study either Japanese or French as part of the College's cultural and language enrichment programme.

It is expected that parents attend the relevant Information Nights with their children. These evenings are held annually and provide students with a full understanding of the demands, standards and expectations of that year level and so they may participate fully in College Life.

## **Standard of Behaviour**

For a complete education Beaconhills believes a safe, positive and harmonious environment is needed. In order to achieve positive self-esteem and mental resilience in our students it is vital that all parents form a strong, committed and supportive partnership with the College's ethos and culture.

All members of our community are required to treat others with courtesy and respect others' property so mutual trust is achievable.

As everyone has equal opportunities, no student should interfere with the rights of others to learn or feel safe.

Our College believes that values such as co-operation, respect and acceptance of differences help to give life meaning. Defiance of authority and irresponsible behaviour will not be tolerated whether it is offensive language, disruption to classes, stealing or injury to others.

Students displaying anti-social behaviour such as this, will be required to attend detention as a consequence. Detention classes are held on Thursday after school and Saturday mornings. It is the parent's responsibility to support this discipline system and to arrange transport home for their child after such detentions.

A student's position at the College will be reviewed if the school rules prohibiting smoking, alcohol or other illicit drugs are breached.

Any student involved in the sale or trafficking of alcohol or drugs is not welcome at the College.

It is expected that all members of the College conduct themselves, and regard others, with dignity and respect so their actions bring only credit to themselves and the College.

Harassment, whether physical, verbal, visual, victimisation or sexual, will not be tolerated *under any circumstances*. The Student Record Book details our Anti Harassment Policy. Bullies thrive on silence. Please report any bullying to the Heads of Section. The matter will be handled with discretion and sensitivity.

## **Uniform**

School uniform must be worn; this is also a condition of membership of the College.

There are certain expectations made of Beaconhills College students in regard to the wearing of uniform, hair and jewellery. Details of these requirements are outlined in the Student's Record Book.

School uniform should be clean, in good repair and worn correctly at all times. Parents have an obligation to ensure that, at all times, their children possess the full school uniform including all items of the sports uniform.

Caring about standards and appearance helps build self-esteem and promotes pride in the individual and the College itself. Parents' co-operation is actively sought in helping us maintain high standards of appearance. Students who persistently fail to comply with school uniform requirements will be sent home until the problem is rectified.

## **Authorisation**

In the case of any authorisation or approvals being required by the College in respect to a student, it shall be sufficient for the College to act upon, signed authorisation from either or both parents or by the designated guardian.

## **Attendance**

Legal responsibilities pertaining to students' attendance at the College demand that accurate attendance records be kept. A student may only leave the grounds during the school day if special permission is given from the Headmaster, the Head of Campus or appropriate Head of Section.

When a student is absent from school, parents are requested to notify the College by 9.00 a.m. on the morning of the absence. In addition, a written note signed by a parent or a completed absence note from the back of the Student Record Book, is to be given to the Tutor on the day of the student's return.

Failure to notify the College of such absences will necessitate the College ringing the parents for confirmation.

### **Valley Campus**

Rolls are marked at 8.50 a.m. in Tutor Groups.

### **Village Campus**

Rolls are marked at 8.45am in Tutor Groups.

It is essential that a student punctually attends Tutor Group; otherwise, it will be assumed that the student is absent and parents may be rung unnecessarily.

Students arriving late are asked to sign the 'Late Book' and students leaving the College early are required to sign the 'Early Leavers Book' and present a note from parents to the relevant Student Services Desk. This is imperative to ensure that the whereabouts of every student is known, at all times, during the school day.

## **Leave**

A written request for extended leave should be made in advance to the Head of Campus and the specific nature of, and reason for, the leave should be outlined. Leave is not granted automatically but permission is granted in exceptional circumstances including, participation in elite sporting competitions or overseas travel.

Except in the case of illness, attendance is compulsory (unless the Head of Campus has granted leave) on all designated school days, including:

- *House Church Service* - All Years 5 to 12 students are expected to attend their House's Church Service held annually at 7.30 p.m. on the day specified in the Student Record Book. Parents are encouraged to accompany their children.

- *Inter-House Competitions* - Students are required to attend all Inter-House Swimming, Cross Country, Athletics and Performing Arts events, whether or not they are participating. Parents are requested to ensure their child's attendance at these events, which the College regards as an integral part of the personal development of each child.
- *Outdoor and Environment Education Week* – An Outdoor Education programme for Years 2 to 10 is a *compulsory* component of the curriculum, and offers the individual student an opportunity to participate in an extensive range of outdoor activities. The College is mindful of the capabilities of students, at and within each level, and the programme is structured to allow each individual to build upon the skills developed in the previous year. Showing courage when facing challenges is an important life skill developed at camps, which in turn is reflected in a child's personal, social and physical development.

A medical certificate is required before any student is exempted from this valuable experience.

## **Co-Curricular Programmes**

The Co-curricular Activities Programme recognises that students have special skills and interests outside the classroom which, when developed further, may enhance an individual's self esteem. Co-curricular activities are normally run outside the school day and include Bands, Ensembles, Choirs, Dance groups, Debating, Duke of Edinburgh, Cadets, Equestrian, Kayaking, Sailing, School Musicals and Eisteddfods, Skiing and Tournament of Minds.

## **Excursions**

Excursions are an important part of the educational programme. Parents are required to sign a general permission slip at the beginning of each year which will cover all planned activities, such as bus trips to Inter-House sporting venues and any other activities that occur as part of the school day. Information will be sent home via Sectional Bulletins, prior to each excursion, outlining details of each activity.

Special permission is sought for such activities as camping and cadets.

## **Sunsmart Policy**

The College has a Sunsmart policy, which applies in Terms 1 and 4. All students are to wear protective hats and sunscreen when outside, whether travelling to and from school, at recess, lunch or during sporting activities.

## **Internet: Acceptable Use Policy**

Beaconnhills College Policy recognises that telecommunications and other new technologies change the way information may be accessed, communicated and transferred by members of our society. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to the preparation for life and employment. To this end, Beaconnhills College supports access by students to on-line information resources.

Whilst every reasonable measure is taken by the College to protect our students from unsuitable material, Beaconnhill's Policy requires that accessing online content by students be consistent with the Christian mission and practices of Beaconnhills College.

Parents or guardians are asked to sign the 'Network and Telecommunication Technology Acceptable Use Policy' which grants their child access to Internet resources at the College.

## **Newsletter**

The College View is published monthly on the College website.

## **Sectional Bulletins**

Sectional Bulletins are provided weekly on the College website.

## **Updated Information**

We ask that parents provide the College with up-to-date medical information, change of address, telephone numbers including mobiles, email addresses and any other change in family circumstances when and if they occur.

## **Family Involvement: Parental Assistance Programme**

The Parental Assistance Programme is a compulsory programme designed to assist in maintaining the present level of funding, thus helping to keep a lower fee requirement. At the commencement of each year, a Parental Assistance charge will be made to the Fee Account. Once a parent has completed or contributed according to the programme requirements, the charged amount will be credited.

Towards the end of each year parents will be asked to advise their choice of assistance for the following year.

The options available to parents are:

- Classroom activities
- Working Bees
- Uniform Shop
- Library
- Activities Programmes (e.g. sailing, kayaking)
- Sewing or set construction for school plays or musicals
- Donation of goods or services
- Financial contribution
- Building and maintenance

In some of these activities you will need to have a Volunteer Working with Children Check.

## **Finance**

In order to assist families and to enable the proper management of the College's finances, the College Board requires that:

- It is a condition of entry to the College that tuition fees are paid by the Direct Debit payment system at intervals agreed between the College and respective family
- In order for a student to commence class on the first day of term, all fees due and payable must be up-to-date unless the College Business Manager and/or Headmaster expressly agrees to an approved payment plan
- Signatories to the acceptance of an offer for enrolment acknowledge that they are jointly and severally responsible for all fees of whatsoever nature and kind payable as a result of enrolling a child at Beaconhills College
- Responsibility for these fees subsists with all enrolling signatories irrespective of what may happen to the relationship (if any) of enrolling signatories
- Enrolling signatories acknowledge that they remain throughout the attendance of the child at Beaconhills College jointly and severally responsible for all fees of whatsoever nature and kind payable as a result of enrolling their child at Beaconhills College
- Signatories to the Acceptance of Offer shall be responsible for the payment of all fees, avoidable breakages, damage to College property, eg library books, musical instruments, computers etc.

## **Notice of Withdrawal**

To withdraw a student from the College (other than at the conclusion of Year 12 studies) at least one complete term's notice must be given in writing to the Headmaster. Failure to provide such notice will require payment of one term's fees in lieu of notice.

## **Privacy and Information Management**

Beaconhills College is committed to providing our families with the highest level of service. This includes protecting your privacy. From 21<sup>st</sup> December 2001, we are bound by the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 as amended, which sets out a number of principles concerning the protection of your personal information.

The information supplied in the College Enrolment Application Form is collected to enable the College to provide education for your child and to satisfy the College's legal obligations especially with regard to its duty of care. The information is used for general educational purposes as intended under the contract of enrolment and for development and fundraising within the College community. The information will only be used for the purposes for which it has been provided.

The information is released to outside agencies only in de-identified aggregate or statistical format, except to authorised contractors or where required by law. Beaconhills College undertakes to enable individuals to examine and authorise changes to any of their personal information held by the College by contacting the College or in annual update forms.

By submitting this information you have consented to its use under the information management processes and policies at Beaconhills College and as outlined above. The Beaconhills College Privacy and Information Management Policy is available on the College website, or by contacting Reception on 1300 002 225.

*A condition of entry to the College is that parents or guardians agree to support the aims of the College and agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations of the College.*

*The College reserves the right to dismiss any child from the College on grounds of unsatisfactory conduct or performance, or failure to obey the Rules and Regulations of the College, or for any other reason. In such matters the Headmaster's decision is final.*

*The College reserves the right to change, from time to time, its rules and expectations of parents and students.*

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