



# MOAMA ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## School Handbook

### 2009

Moama Anglican Grammar School is an Anglican School of Excellence, open to all, in a caring, disciplined and Christian environment. The School sees its mission as caring for students and their families and preparing the students for the next phase of their lives so that they can move forward with hope and confidence. The School is pledged to operate at the lowest level of fees possible, while maintaining a very high quality educational offering, for families of Moama/Echuca and surrounding districts.

### Our Core Values

- *Establish a safe & caring community*
- *Foster a love of life and learning*
- *Set standards of honour & integrity*
- *Promote Christian values & beliefs*
- *Nurture resilience & independence*
- *Develop a sense of pride in the School*
- *Encourage community participation*
- *Challenge everyone to achieve their potential in all areas*
- *Create a climate of consideration, cooperation & encouragement*

### School Code

My Rights	My Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to move about the School without being laughed at, hit, pushed, threatened, or in any way molested or mocked.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am responsible to see that I do not laugh at, hit, push, threaten or in any way molest or mock other people at the School.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to be treated with respect and fairness, irrespective of my race, creed, intelligence, gender, physical prowess, language, shape, size or whether I may be different in any way from the majority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am responsible to see that I treat all people with respect and fairness even though they may differ in some way from the majority.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to expect my property to be safe within the School.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am responsible to see that I do not steal, damage or destroy the property of others.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to learn in pleasant, well-kept surroundings that are free from noise or litter pollution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am responsible to see that I treat my surroundings with respect, and that I do not contribute to any kind of pollution within the School.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to attend to my School work without interference of any kind from other students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is my responsibility to see that I do not interfere with, or distract, other students from their work.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to be taught by teachers who are fair, competent and sympathetic to my needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is my responsibility to co-operate and comply with the instructions of staff.</li> </ul>

## **A CODE OF CONDUCT**

Moama Anglican Grammar School exists as a place where a complete education may be undertaken in a challenging and co-operative environment. To develop such an environment, it is necessary to provide more than facilities for classes and cultural activity; we need to have an atmosphere that will foster the development of the soul, mind, body and character.

It is important therefore, that all associated with the life of the School regard themselves and other persons with dignity, courtesy and respect, and learn the importance of co-operating in a Christian learning community with diverse interests and traditions, but with a common concern for the well being of all its members, and for the promotion of sound values.

Being enrolled at the School acknowledges acceptance, by students, parents and guardians, of the above Code of Conduct.

## **THE SCHOOL DIARY**

The Diary is designed to be a record of work to be done by a student, dates to be remembered and deadlines to be met. It is also the primary means of communication between the School and parents. Teachers will often write comments in the diary concerning a student, addressed to parents, alerting them to some aspect of the student's performance, both positive and negative. Such comments should be signed by parents to show that they have received the note.

Similarly, parents should write notes for teachers in the Diary, who will sign them to show that they have been received. For instance, notes should be written if parents wish their child to be excused from some co-curricular activity, to be absent for medical appointments and the like, or to explain an absence due to illness.

Detentions will also be recorded in the Diary, as will late arrivals to the School.

Parents will be asked to sign their child's Diary every week, as part of their involvement with the education of their child.

Diaries should be taken by students to all lessons and taken home at night. Home Group teachers will inspect diaries each week.

## **DAILY TIMES**

The School day commences at 8:50am. Please note that students should not arrive before 8:10am (unless they are coming for an official school activity) as they will not be supervised before that time. Similarly the school day ends at 3:05 pm and students not involved in an official after school activity will not be supervised after 3.20pm. NSW country bus travellers are supervised until their buses arrive at 3:50pm

Each school day consists of six 50 minute periods, with a 20 minute recess and a 45 minute lunch. Students should be prepared to be responsible for their own punctuality and not rely on bells or other people.

Detentions and after School activities will take place at 3.20pm.

## **EXPECTATION OF PARENTS**

In assisting the Staff to meet the above ideals, the School expects that:

1. Parents will involve themselves fully in the education of their children in a partnership with the School that is essential for their proper education. To simply leave everything up to the School is to deny their child all that can be gained from an education at Moama A.G.S.

2. Parents will support their child, wherever possible, by attending co-curricular games, activities, performances with them.
3. In keeping with the low-fee nature of the School, parents will be expected to contribute to the physical maintenance and development of the School by participating in Working Bees. They are also encouraged to be generous and creative in helping to provide for the diverse physical, skilled and labour needs of the School and its students.
4. Parents will support the School in its expectation, care and discipline of their child.

## **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

### **EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE, HAPPY AND FREE FROM HARASSMENT AT THIS SCHOOL.**

Bullying is a repeated attack on another, be it physical, psychological, social or verbal, often with actual or implied violence or threats, by people using power for their own selfish gain or gratification. The consequences of such actions result in other people feeling distressed, pressured, insecure or fearful. All students should be able to pursue their education in a positive and supportive environment, and therefore the School will use its counselling and/or disciplinary structures to stop and resolve incidents of bullying for the well-being of all parties.

Harassment takes place when someone deliberately troubles, torments or distresses someone else. It takes the form of verbal and or physical abuse, and is closely linked with bullying. It can emotionally affect the people who are the victims of it, by unnerving, disturbing or worrying them. Harassment can badly hurt people. The comment "I was just joking" is no justification or defence for harassment, nor is retribution when the harassment becomes too bad to tolerate and the victim seeks help.

All students, parents and staff have a role in preventing or stopping harassment and bullying. Informing the School of bullying and harassment will help lead to its early resolution.

## **HOMESTUDY**

The classroom is the place where much of the learning activity begins. However, real understanding is often confirmed when, outside the classroom and some time later, students review the work introduced in class, test their understanding, work out what they do not understand, and extend their reading. This additional work comes under the heading "HOMEWORK".

Unless a student develops a sound pattern of study, academic success will be more difficult and a student will be unlikely to realise his/her potential. This is especially so when considering the competitive and state-wide School Certificate and Higher School Certificate examinations, but equally applies to gaining an apprenticeship, obtaining a place at a TAFE, gaining acceptance into the Police Force, the Armed Forces, or winning a suitable job in the workforce.

Work done in the students' own time is important to progress and becomes steadily more so as they proceed through school. The higher the goals, the more time will have to be devoted to study-related activities.

Homework will normally be checked, but not necessarily always marked, by the teacher. It is important that home study and assignment deadlines are strictly observed and that the effort and presentation should represent the best possible effort. Handwriting, ruling, setting out and general tidiness need every care. This is consistent with what an employer will require, so good habits need to be developed.

A summary of home study tasks is to be entered each day in the Diary, with special care to note the Due Date. It is your responsibility to know what work is set. If a teacher does not set any home study on a particular night, write "None set" against that subject.

If a student is absent, it is HIS/HER responsibility to find out what work was missed and negotiate with the teacher when it will be completed. This is required behaviour in any work situation.

A Homestudy Timetable will be issued at the start of each year.

Homestudy should be completed on five days of the week, Monday to Thursday and sometime over the weekend. The recommended minimum amount of time to be spent each week is set out below:

<b>Monday – Thursday</b>		<b>Weekend</b>
Year 5/6	30 minutes	30 minutes
Year 7	1 hour	1 hour
Year 8	1½ hours	2 hours
Year 9	1½ hours	2 hours
Year 10	1½ hours	2 hours
Year 11	2 hours	3 hours
Year 12	3 hours	4 hours

**“I don’t have any Homework to do tonight!” – a message to parents.**

How many times have you heard from your student offspring and despaired, saying to yourself “In my day, we had lots of homework, every night. What’s wrong with the school?” If your own personal student says this, then they are either a brilliant, well-organised scholar, or they are telling a little fib, or they are missing the point of Homestudy.

There are several sorts of Home study, as distinct from Homework (there is a difference):

- the sort that is due the next day and has to be done now;
- the sort that is due next week and has to be worked on progressively;
- revision of past work, to make studying for exams easier and more effective;
- re-doing past tests, essays, exams etc., to avoid making the same mistakes again;
- working ahead, so when the teacher discusses something new, it makes sense and you know which questions to ask;
- re-working class notes and drafts into a well-organised set of notes;
- wide reading.

Homework is confined in the minds of most students to the first two alternatives: preferably only the first one (at least until number 2 becomes number 1, i.e. a panic).

Homestudy is concerned with all 6 of the tasks outlined above and work done at home should involve a program that includes all of the tasks in a set rotation.

So if your son or daughter tells you that they have nothing to do, what they probably mean that there is nothing that they have to do which will result in some sort of punishment if it is not done by tomorrow: this is called the minimalist position.

**All students always have work that they can and should do at home.** There is not enough time for a student to learn all that they should during school hours; they need to indulge in a little Homestudy to make up the difference and to ensure that their schoolwork is as good as they can manage, so that they can achieve their personal best.

Any student who needs help with setting a Homestudy program should see their teachers or the Director of Studies: and do it sooner rather than later!

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

At the beginning of each semester each subject teacher will provide students with a written outline of the assessment requirements for that subject. The outline will provide details as to the overall value of each assessment piece and when the assessment is to take place.

There will be two major examination sessions at Moama Anglican Grammar School each year from Year 7 onwards. The first comes towards the end of Term 2 and the other towards the end of Term 4. Formal reports will be written for each student at these times and will be sent home.

At the end of Terms 1 and 3, interim reports are issued and parent/student/teacher interviews will be scheduled to discuss achievement and application.

Projects and assignments will be set in all subjects and there is a section of the student diary set aside for the recording of progress dates, due dates and results. Whenever an assignment extends beyond a week there will be a progress date set. On this date the teacher will check to ensure students are making reasonable progress towards completion of the assignment.

Regular assessment serves a number of purposes. Firstly, it breaks the year up into small units more easily managed by students. Secondly, it provides individual goals to aim for in maintaining academic progress. Thirdly, it provides an on-going record of how students are managing in the various areas of their study and shows quite clearly the areas of achievement, and the areas where more work is still required.

The most important grade lies in the Effort comment of any report. If marks are low but effort is high, the student will be praised by us.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

The development of leadership potential within students is seen as a major function of the School, and students will be given numerous opportunities to assist in the running of the School, the management of students within the School and in representing the School to the wider community. School Leaders have certain roles assigned to them, such as chairing various student committees.

House Captains have authority for executive and management action within a House.

To develop leadership, students must be given the opportunities to practise leadership, to reflect on their performance and to be instructed in the techniques and art of leadership. It is especially important to understand the close relationship of cause-and-effect in the application of authority. Students are expected to make mistakes, but also to learn from the experience and not make the same mistake twice.

Students are encouraged from Year 5 to develop leadership skills, through a number of opportunities. From the commencement of the School students will be involved in clubs and special interest groups. A Students Representative Council will be formed and will grow each year to include successive year levels. Teams and other group activities will be used to foster student leadership opportunities.

## **CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM**

The co-curricular program is an important part of a student's education at Moama Anglican Grammar School. It provides the opportunity for students to become involved in a wide range of cultural and physical activities in addition to the daily program.

Opportunities will be made available, with the assistance and involvement of local organisations and groups, for students to undertake a range of co-curricular activities.

Students in the Middle School are currently expected to take part in an annual production of some kind such as a play or musical.

## ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE

### Attendance

- Attendance is to be regular and punctual. No student may leave during school hours without specific, written authority (usually contained in the Diary) from the Principal.
- Attendance at Home Group and weekly Chapel/Assembly is mandatory for all students.
- Attendance at designated co-curricular activities, whether of a sporting, cultural or service nature, or involving excursions and camps, is a condition of enrolment at the School.

### Absence

- There are legal requirements for the School staff to be aware of the location of students each day. Students absent from the School for one or more days are to bring a note of explanation with them on their return, signed by a parent/guardian. Parents are requested to advise by telephone any absences by 9.00am **on the day of absence**.
- The School will contact parents concerning the absence of a student for whom no explanation or advice is received. This will be done by sending an SMS to the parent/guardian's mobile phone, to which a response by return telephone call is required to confirm such absence.
- Absence from co-curricular activities. Should a student be unable to attend such an activity, training or practice, they are to obtain leave from the teacher concerned, giving as much notice as possible.
- Absence not owing to sickness. Should a parent require a student to keep a special appointment that would interfere with school work or a co-curricular activity, a written request is required. Such an application, however, does not warrant the assumption that permission will be granted.

### Late Arrivals

Students who arrive late are required to report to the School Office to sign in the Student Late Arrival Register. Unexplained or regular lateness will result in disciplinary action.

### Leave

The School policy is that no students should attend the School during scheduled classes on those days as advertised in the Calendar as being in term time. The policy covers both the academic and co-curricular programs of the School.

The only exceptions to the above should be for urgent medical matters and for compelling or compassionate reasons. Except for illness, (where the School must be notified by 9.00am of each day of absence), permission for a student to be absent from school must be obtained beforehand. A written explanation from the parent or guardian is required for every absence from the School. **Students requesting leave are required to present a note from a parent or guardian to the Principal** allowing enough time for a written response from the Principal.

It is expected that any end-of-term travel bookings and arrangements will be made to occur **after** the final day of term or Speech Day. Requests for early leave or late return, for exceptional circumstances should be addressed to the Principal well in advance.

Parents have a right to remove their children from the School, but in doing so they act contrary to the School's wishes. Where parents do take their children away during term time a special program of work will not be set. Students must find out about and catch up on any work missed. Parents must understand that their child may face consequences. Usually no make-up tasks will be allowed for missing assessment tasks, tests and the like (i.e. scoring 0 on the tasks). There can be no expectation whatever of staff re-teaching whatever academic work was covered in the student's unauthorised absence.

## APPROACH TO DRUG EDUCATION

This, in today's Australia, is of vital concern to *all* families. At Moama A.G.S. we must develop our policies in such a way that the moral fibre of our students is strengthened. Elements of love, repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation ought to be woven into our plans. It is a part of our Christian teaching through action, not words. This means we must have a firm policy that clearly defines what we find acceptable and which will protect our young children.

## **General Comments**

We must teach our students to accept responsibility for themselves and others, in developing a healthy and caring environment.

We will inevitably have students enrol at the school who are in the habit of drug use and abuse, this being culturally acceptable to them.

We must have a policy that enables the drug pusher and supplier to be exposed, and not protected because of secrecy. This secrecy is established if student users have to protect each other from the School.

Any drug use by students of the School which affects the life of the School in the opinion of the Principal, shall be acted upon by the Principal in the same manner as if it occurred at the School.

## **THE POLICY**

### **Policy 1**

*Aim: To define our standard and position clearly.*

Any student caught in possession of illegal drugs (including marijuana), by a staff member will be expelled by the Principal, who shall notify the Police.

### **Policy 2**

*Aim: To enable students to define their standards and allow repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation.*

Any student, with perhaps encouragement by other students, who reports his/her use or possession of illegal drugs to the Principal, and voluntarily confesses involvement, will receive strong discipline, but not expulsion, providing the confession is total and otherwise unavailable to the Principal.

### **Policy 3**

*Aim: To enable students to report to staff, to discourage cover-ups and a growth of the problems.*

Any student may speak to a Chaplain confidentially, who may encourage those involved to come forward.

### **Policy on Legal (non-medicinal) Drugs (alcohol, cigarettes etc.)**

No student will be permitted to consume legal drugs at the School, in School uniform, or at School functions. Students who do so will be given at least a "within school" suspension, then suspended for the second offence, and then expelled for the third offence.

## **SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The School endeavours to create an environment where the rights of others are preserved at all times, so that the staff can teach and students may learn. This assists students to become responsible members of our society through the development of self-discipline. Adolescents are in a process of learning appropriate social skills and in most cases they benefit from advice and counselling, not punishment.

We believe everyone has the right to feel and be safe, that respect for all should be given and received, and that all students have the right to work and play without unwanted interference. They are to be recognised and praised for good and positive behaviour.

The discipline and behaviour management policies of the School are based on mutual respect between children and adults. Teachers are expected to build up students with firm, fair and reasonable discipline. At all times, the emphasis should be based on a dislike of the actions of the student rather than a dislike of the student as a person.

The School aims to have all students grow in self-discipline and to show care and understanding for the particular needs and circumstances of every student. At the same time, the School expects conformity to high standards of courtesy, public behaviour and uniform.

The Principal has the responsibility for students, staff and the curriculum and has the authority to suspend or expel a student from the School. These last resorts will only be taken if the student shows that they are not responding to the procedures at the School, and that the School has little chance of changing their behaviour.

### **Corporal punishment is not allowed within the School.**

The following sanctions allow the School a graded ability to exert influence on the behaviour of its students, and eventually to 'force the issue' with chronically misbehaving students (not necessarily acute ones), in an attempt to modify their behaviour and allow them to be more successful at their schooling. These policies have the capacity to allow students to change, to be forgiven, and to start over with a 'blank slate'.

This brief explanation of the discipline policy is intended to explain what will happen to students who habitually refuse to conform to the expectations of the School. Much of the discipline of the School will be carried out informally in the normal course of teachers interacting with students in their care, as well as by counselling.

**Under normal circumstances, very few students would be expected to be subject to the higher forms of discipline.**

### **Weekday Detention**

These will be issued for classroom or playground misbehaviour.

### **After School Detention**

These will be issued for serious and/or repeated breaches of School rules and the requirement of good behaviour – e.g. students failing to attend a detention, insolence, bullying and harassment, repeated misbehaviour.

### **Progress Card**

When a student's behaviour is becoming of increasing concern, and they are not responding to the normal discipline measures of counselling, detentions and feedback to parents, a Progress Card will be issued for an initial period of four weeks.

### **Contract of Good Behaviour, Attitude and Performance**

If the behaviour of a student warrants it, they will be placed on a Contract of Good Behaviour, Attitude and Performance as a condition of their continuing their enrolment at the School, which they and their parents will be expected to sign. If the student is to continue at the School, they will be asked to accept full personal responsibility for a change in their behaviour, attitude and performance at the School.

### **Suspension**

The Principal has the right to suspend any student, for any period of time, for activities considered serious enough to warrant such action.

There are two kinds of suspension:

- Within School suspension: Where a student is excluded from certain activities or lessons for a period of time and must complete class work and other set tasks.
- Suspension from School: This would usually only be for a period of days, it may be that a student who is suspended from the School will not be permitted to attend the School for a period of 12 months. In this case, the student may apply for re-admission to the School at the end of that period.

### **Expulsion**

Any student, who behaves in a manner which, in the Principal's opinion, damages the School, its reputation and the health and safety of the School community to a sufficient degree, will be expelled from the School immediately. Such a student will not be permitted to re-enrol in the School at a later date.

## **Exclusion**

Within the Education Act exclusion means that a student will be banned from enrolling in a number of schools (for example: a school system). As Moama Anglican Grammar School is not a member of a system it is unlikely that it would ever be a party to the exclusion of a student.

## **Procedural fairness**

It should be noted that the School is committed to procedural fairness in matters of discipline. This particularly applies to situations where the potential penalty involves suspension or expulsion.

Procedural fairness involves the following principles:

- a) For any student suspected of a serious breach of school rules, both the student and his/her caregiver, will be provided with an explanation of:
  - the nature of the accusation;
  - the seriousness of the matter and the likely consequences;
  - any other information which would be likely to be taken into account in considering the matter;
  - how the matter will be dealt with;
  - the opportunity to answer the accusation and;
  - an understanding of how to seek a review of any decision.
- b) The manner in which the investigation is undertaken and the decision-making will be structured to ensure:
  - Impartiality of investigation and;
  - absence of bias in decision-making

## **SCHOOL RULES**

Some rules are essential in order to contribute to the harmonious and efficient operation of the School. These are based on courtesy, commonsense and consideration for others – the injunction to “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” is a guiding principle. The following 5 points summarise the expectations of students upon which the School rules are based.

- 1 Students will respect teachers, parents, visitors and their fellow students.
- 2 Students will be on time for School assemblies and classes.
- 3 Students will wear, and maintain in good order, their School uniform.
- 4 Students will care for the School property, buildings and gardens.
- 5 Students will stay in the areas set aside for them.

Specific rules, together with a brief reason for their establishment, are listed below, and apply whenever a student is under the jurisdiction of the School. They also apply, where reasonable, whenever a student is identifiable with the School, for example, when wearing the School uniform or when at a School-sponsored event.

The School has specific rules with regards to:

### **1. COURTESY**

Courteous behaviour is expected of students at all times.

### **2. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

Students should be in attendance at all School sessions. A written explanation from a parent, in the Diary, is required if a student is absent from all or part of the School day.

Punctuality for all periods is essential, especially to periods at the start of the day and after recess and lunch breaks.

**3. LATECOMERS**

Latecomers must present themselves to the School office on arrival, to sign the Student Late Arrival Register.

**4. UNIFORM**

The standard of grooming required is consistent with what would be expected of employees in an office situation.

**5. HEALTH AND HYGIENE**

Smoking, the consumption of alcohol or the taking of drugs other than for medicinal reasons is not permitted.

**6. AREA REGULATIONS AND BOUNDS**

Students are to remain within the bounds of the School property during School hours unless permission has been obtained from the Principal or Class Teacher.

Each student is expected to respect and take care of the School property and facilities so that all may benefit from their good order. Any damage should be reported immediately so that it may be repaired.

**7. OUT OF HOURS SUPERVISION**

The School will provide supervision of students between the hours of 8.10 am and 3.20 pm. (Unless the student is a NSW country bus traveller. These students are supervised until 3:50pm.) Students are not to arrive at school before 8.10 am and should not remain after 3.20 pm unless they are travelling home by NSW country bus or by specific arrangement with staff, such as for training or clubs.

**8. LITTER**

We are all responsible for condition of the School grounds and buildings.

**9. HAIRSTYLES & JEWELLERY**

The School requires students to be groomed appropriately. The standard of grooming required is consistent with what would be expected of employees in an office situation. Girls with hair longer than the collar should have it tied back. Hair should not be dyed a colour other than one which occurs in nature among humans. Boy's hair is to be no longer than the collar and not over the ears. Beards and long sideburns are not permitted.

Girls are permitted one plain sleeper or stud in the bottom part of each ear lobe. No other jewellery is permitted for boys or girls.

**10. MEDICATION**

Any Student who requires medication to be administered during school hours must bring their medication to School Office at the beginning of the day. All medication must be clearly named with the details of dosage and time to administer medication. All Students must bring a signed note from their Parents/Guardians giving School Staff permission to administer the necessary medication.

Medication that needs to be refrigerated will be kept in the refrigerator in the Main Staffroom. Any other medication will be kept in a locked drawer in the School Office.