



Family Law Matters Policy

PREAMBLE

Cairns Catholic Education Services and St Gerard Majella School recognises that some families are subject to family breakdown. St Gerard Majella School is committed to providing a safe, secure, disciplined and quality learning environment in which all students can develop intellectually, physically, socially, religiously and spiritually. St Gerard Majella School strives to ensure that Family Law Matters do not impede upon the education of the children involved. In the absence of any court order to the contrary, generally either parent can enrol a child at St Gerard Majella School and except in specifically defined circumstances using the name that appears on the child's birth certificate as well as each parent being entitled to know at which school the child is enrolled. Generally, each parent will be given the opportunity to participate in school related activities including parent/teacher interviews and can have access to school documentation relating to his or her child. Unless specifically authorised by a residential parent, children will not be permitted to leave school during the course of a school day.

POLICY

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school immediately if any changes in family circumstances occur which have the potential to impact on the relationship between the school and the parents and/or students. If court orders are obtained by one or both parents, a copy of the orders should be provided to the school as soon as possible.

In the absence of any notification to the contrary (such as a court order), it will be assumed that both parents retain a shared and equal parental responsibility for their children. This means that the school will recognise that each parent has equal duties, obligations, responsibilities and opportunities in relation to matters involving their children's education at the school.

VALUES

Faith, Community, Service, Justice, Compassion, Inclusivity, Responsibility, Respect and Trust.



St Gerard Majella School

Family Law Matters Policy- continued

PRINCIPLES

In meeting its obligations to students and parents, Cairns CES and St Gerard Majella School relies on the following principles.

- The education of a child is primarily the responsibility of the child's parents;
- Decisions should be made on the basis of ensuring the continued effective and efficient operation of the school; school decisions are based on what is considered to be in the best interests of the child;
- Where parents cannot agree between themselves on what is in the child's best interests, it is the role of the court, not the school, to determine those interests;
- The school is not the appropriate place for family disputes to be resolved nor is it appropriate for school staff to resolve such issues;
- Decisions will be made in an unbiased manner and as far as reasonably practicable, without favour to either parent;
- The obligations imposed by other legislation, such as the *Commonwealth Privacy Act* need to be considered when dealing with family law related issues; and
- The continued effective and efficient operation of the school and parents' obligations under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school or received home schooling take precedence over any interests parents may assert they have under the *Family Law Act 1975*.

EVALUATION

This policy is to be reviewed as part of the School's renewal cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Board on 14 June 2017

Chair Signature.....