



ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE GEELONG

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PARENT – SJC RELATIONSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

At St Joseph's we are committed to nurturing respectful relationships and active partnerships with you as parents, guardians and caregivers (referred to as 'parents' for the rest of this document). We believe that our students' learning journeys are enriched through positive and reciprocal home and school relationships.

As parents, you act as one of the most influential role models in your child's life. We therefore seek your support in promoting and upholding the core values of the school community and its culture of respectful relationships.

The values and culture at St Joseph's allows children to learn, teachers to teach, and other community members to participate in education, free from harassment, violence, intimidation or vilification. Parents should set an example for their children and the children of others.

This Code of Conduct is intended to guide you in your dealings with staff, other parents, students and the wider school community. It articulates the school's key expectations of both staff and parents with regard to respectful relationships and behaviours. It also specifies the school's position with regard to unacceptable behaviours that breach our culture of respect.

This Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with:

- EREA Code of Conduct
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Child Safety Policy

Our Culture of Respectful Relationships

Among students, staff and parents we strive to develop the following:

- a respect for the innate dignity and worth of every person;
- an ability to understand the situation of others;
- a cooperative attitude in working with others;
- integrity, honesty and candour in all dealings;
- acceptance of others regardless of their background, age, race, gender, sexuality, religion or race;
- open, positive and honest communication;
- the ability to work respectfully and courteously with other people;
- an inclusive community; and
- personal responsibility for all actions.

In promoting and upholding this culture, we expect that parents will:

- support the school's Catholic ethos, traditions and practices;
- support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment;
- understand the importance of healthy parent/teacher/child relationships and strive to build the relationships;
- adhere to the school's policies, as outlined on the school website; and
- treat staff and other parents with respect and courtesy.



In promoting and upholding this culture, we expect that staff will:

- communicate with you openly and honestly regarding your child's learning, development wellbeing and safety;
- engage with, and listen to, the views of parents about our child-safety practice, policies and procedures;
- commit to transparency decision-making with parents where it will not compromise the safety of children or young people;
- commit to acknowledging the cultural diversity of students and families, and being sensitive to how this may impact on student safety issues;
- provide opportunities for involvement in your child's learning;
- maintain confidentiality over sensitive issues;
- ensure a timely response to any concerns raised by you.

Extracurricular and Sporting Events

We recognise that parents are often actively involved in the sporting and extracurricular events of their children. We encourage parents to participate in such activities and to support their children, however we also make it clear that we have high expectations of parents at these events and activities.

At these events, especially sporting events, parents are expected to:

- encourage their children to participate;
- never ridicule, berate, discourage or otherwise interfere with your child or another child;
- uphold the principles of good sportsmanship and fair play;
- never yell, abuse or otherwise interfere with a sporting official, coach or other person;
- never incite, encourage or commit acts of violence;
- never use foul or abusive language;
- never interfere in an activity.

Raising Concerns and Resolving Conflict

(Refer also to our Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure)

In raising concerns on behalf of your child, or making a complaint about the school's practices or treatment of your child, **we expect that you will:**

- listen to your child, but remember that a different 'reality' may exist elsewhere;
- observe the school's stated procedures for raising and resolving a grievance/complaint;
- follow specified protocol for communication with staff members, including making appointments at a mutually convenient time and communicating your concerns in a constructive manner; and
- refrain from approaching another child while in the care of the school to discuss or chastise them because of actions towards your child;
- refer the matter directly to your child's teacher for follow-up and investigation by the school.



In responding to your concerns or a complaint, **we expect that staff will:**

- observe confidentiality and a respect for sensitive issues;
- ensure views and opinions are heard and understood;
- communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, fair and respectful;
- ensure a timely response to concerns/complaints; and
- strive for resolutions and outcomes that are satisfactory to all parties.

Staff Safety and Wellbeing

St Joseph's College places high value and priority on maintaining a safe and respectful working environment for our staff. We regard certain behaviours as harmful and unacceptable insofar as they compromise the safety and professional wellbeing of our staff. The behaviours that compromised the safe environment and are not tolerated include, but are not limited to:

- shouting or swearing, either in person or on the telephone;
- physical or verbal intimidation;
- aggressive hand gestures;
- writing rude, defamatory, aggressive or abusive comments (emails/social media) to or about a staff member;
- racist or sexist comments; and
- damage or violation of possessions/property.

When a parent behaves in such unacceptable ways, the principal or a senior staff member will seek to resolve the situation and repair relationships through discussion and/or mediation.

Where a parent's behaviour is deemed likely to cause ongoing harm, distress or danger to the staff member and others, we may exercise our legal right to impose a temporary or permanent ban from the parent entering the school premises. In an extreme act of violence that causes physical harm to the staff member and his/her property, the matter may be reported to the police for investigation.

Conclusion

At St Joseph's College we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.

(Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, n. 9).

