

Parent Code of Conduct

Rationale:

At St. Catherine's Catholic Primary School, we aim to provide an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all.

The Parent Code of Conduct has been developed to clearly articulate the expectations and aspirations for our school community.

The Code highlights the importance of the partnership between school staff and community members for the benefit of the students at school and reflects the school's mission and vision.

The Code recognizes and respects the diversity of individuals in a learning community and emphasises the importance of the role parents have as educators.

This Code applies all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, babysitters and any others while involved in activities or communication related to St. Catherine's Primary School.

All members of this community or visitors to the school should read and familiarise themselves with this Code of Conduct Policy.

Prior to signing in at the office all parents, visitors and volunteers should read the Code of Conduct and are therefore in agreement with the policy upon their signature.

General Principles that always apply:

a) Communication

Parents, guardians and carers will use courteous and acceptable written and spoken language in all communications with students, staff and other parents and members of the school community. No profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language may be used.

b) Ethical Conduct

Parents will act in the best interests of all students, their families and staff members. They will not engage in malicious or judgemental gossip and should ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful.

c) Respect

We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own and all members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification.

As Parents:

We are all Individuals:

- We accept that others may have different views, opinions & values
- We foster individual talents and accept differences in children
- We maintain confidentiality when dealing with issues related to other people's children
- We accept and abide by decisions made by the staff as being professional, discrete and based on the best interests of all parties
- We encourage our children to accept responsibility for their own mistakes and encourage them to be learning risk-takers
- We use appropriate channels and protocols to discuss concerns relating to children as set out in the *Anti-bullying and Positive Behaviour Policy*.

We value Teamwork:

- We accept that we have a major role to play in the education of our children
- We value staff as professionals and recognize the strong partnership between home and school
- We are active members of the school by attending Parent/Teacher Meetings
- We celebrate the educational successes of all students
- We maintain regular communication through school & reading diaries, by reading the school newsletter and initiating conversations with staff.

We Are Responsible citizens:

- We value the Catholic ethos of the school and demonstrate our commitment to Catholic Education
- We treat all other community members with dignity and respect
- We set an appropriate example in matters of language and behaviour when at school
- We ensure regular and punctual attendance of our children at school
- We ensure that our children are well nourished and well rested to maximise learning potential
- We encourage community involvement for our children
- We Aim/We Achieve
- We uphold the high expectations of the school community as outlined in the St Catherine's *Code of Conduct*
- We accept that we have a leadership role within the school especially as learning role-models and through parent groups
- We show and encourage a passion for learning
- We accept and embrace educational initiatives provided by the school
- We actively support Home Learning initiatives including cyber-safety protocols.

When visiting St. Catherine's Catholic Primary School:

- a) *The Victorian Schools Reference Guide item 4.16.2* requires visitors to the school during school hours to sign a visitors' register located at the school office, so that their presence in the school is recorded in the event of an emergency.
- b) Parents will comply with all safety and emergency procedures in place at our School and in the event of an emergency while they are on school grounds, they will follow the instructions given by any member of school staff.

- c) When attending any kind of school assembly or public meeting parents will listen respectfully, in the same manner required of students and staff and will refrain from creating any inappropriate noise or disturbance during performances or speeches by students, staff or visitors.
- d) A parent may not interrupt or distract a teacher while instruction or learning activities are underway.
- e) A parent may not discipline a child who is not theirs or speak to a child who is not theirs about their behaviour. This is the role of teaching staff. Being approached by an adult they do not know, can be distressing for children. Parents should therefore raise any behavioural, bullying or peer group issues with a member of the teaching staff. (Common sense would apply in an emergency where a child is at risk of harm or where a parent is supervising a small group of students on an excursion.)
- f) When visiting a classroom, parents accept the authority of the teacher (or teachers) and realise that they are in attendance on the teacher's terms. Teachers value parental involvement and assistance, but they may ask a parent to leave a classroom or Hub activity for any reason, but not limited to:
- g) Parental assistance not being required at the time; (ii) parental presence in the classroom or at the activity is disturbing or distracting to any student or teacher; (iii) the parent is not in control of their emotions.

Communication

When communicating with school staff:

- a) All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our children as well as staff themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety.
- b) The priority for school staff is the welfare and education of all children in the school. School staff are therefore not required to respond to emails and telephone calls instantaneously. At St. Catherine's, our preference for communication is via face to face contact or a phone call. If you do need to email, please be aware that a response time for emails may be up to 24 hours. Responses are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays.
- c) The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt the classroom. Parents should be mindful of the teacher's time, communicate the reason for the meeting and allow the teacher time to prepare, unless there is a genuine emergency that needs to be discussed.

When communicating with other parents:

- a) Parents will respect the privacy of other parents' email addresses and will not send unsolicited emails or "spam" to school parents or forward unsolicited emails or spam that they receive to other parents. Parents will not forward other parents' email addresses without their permission. Parents provide their email address to the school in order to receive communications from the school about school related matters and their child. The school will not give out the email address of parents to other parents without permission.
- b) Parents who act as volunteers in the school such as Parents' & Friends, Parent Representatives or for specific fundraising or social events, are valued volunteers who play a critical role in our community and commit a great deal of time for the benefit of all. Apart from the general principles that always apply,

parents should be particularly sensitive about the manner in which they provide feedback and ask questions of hardworking volunteers.

When using social media

Parents are not permitted to create a website, blog, podcast, Facebook page, Instagram or Twitter account or any other social media in the name of the school without the written permission of the Principal. The posting of photographs or videos containing other students is **not permitted** without the expressed permission of the student's parent.

When making a complaint

Parents have the right to raise issues and concerns related to the education of their child or school matters. Parents should ensure that they raise their issues and concerns with the right person and follow the correct communication channels. When making a complaint parents should refer to the *Grievances Policy*, which is available on the School Website; and parents must follow the procedures outlined in this Policy. It is a breach of this *Parent Code of Conduct* to make a complaint in a way that is not consistent with the *Grievances Policy*, especially when the complaint is about a teacher or member of school staff.

Consequences of a Breach of Parent Code of Conduct:

Any parent, member of school staff or student may notify the Principal or Deputy Principal of a possible breach of the Parent Code of Conduct. The Principal or Deputy Principal will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred which impacts on the school's duty of care to students or staff:

- a) Provide a first and final warning that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated
- b) Where the breach concerned unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the school, issue a trespass warning to the parent, if the behaviour continues, may accelerate to a trespass notice requiring the parent to stay away from the school unless on the school grounds with the express permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal
- c) Following a further incident, the school will consider its options including further participation/enrolment at the school.

Correspondence that is in breach of this Code of Conduct, because of the language and expression used or the manner in which it is sent or delivered, will not be responded to.



Parent/s/Guardian Declaration

I/We _____

have read and understand the conditions outlined in the *Parent Code of Conduct* as a condition of ongoing enrolment of my child/children at St. Catherine's Primary School.

Signed: _____ Mother/Guardian and/or

Date:

Signed: _____ Father/Guardian and/or

Date: