



## Parent–School Relationships Code of Conduct

### Introduction

At St Joseph's School Wonthaggi, we are committed to nurturing respectful relationships and active partnerships with you as parents, guardians or carers. We believe that your child's learning journeys are enriched through positive and reciprocal home and school relationships.

As parents, guardians or carers, 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.

This Code of Conduct is intended to guide you in your dealings with staff, other parents, guardians, carers, students and the wider school community. It articulates the School's key expectations of both staff and parents, guardians and carers 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 the policies, as varied or replaced from time to time outlined in the Enrolment Handbook and available from the School and Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) website. The following additional policies should also be read in conjunction with this Code of Conduct:

[Enrolment policy](#)

[Complaints and Grievances policy](#)

### Our Culture of Respectful Relationships

Among students, staff and parents, guardians and carers 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
- open, positive and honest communication
- the ability to work respectfully with other people
- trusting relationships
- responsible actions.

**In promoting and upholding this culture, we expect that parents, guardians and carers 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, guardian or carer / teacher / child relationships and strive to build these relationships

- adhere to the School and DOSCEL policies, as outlined on the School and/or DOSCEL websites
- treat staff and other parents, guardians and carers with respect and courtesy.

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

- communicate with you regularly regarding your child's learning, development and wellbeing
- provide opportunities for involvement in your child's learning
- maintain confidentiality over sensitive issues
- relate with and respond to you in a respectful and professional manner
- ensure a timely response to any concerns raised by you.

**Communication with School Staff**

At St Joseph's, we value clear, open and respectful communication between families and staff. Maintaining healthy communication boundaries enables staff to support the wellbeing of all students.

We ask parents ,guardians and caregivers to :

- Direct all classroom or wellbeing related concerns to the appropriate staff member (e.g class or specialist teacher or Learning Adjustment Leader)
- Use official communication channels (e.g Seesaw, phone calls to the office)
- Understand that staff will respond during work hours, generally within 2 days unless the matter is urgent
- Avoid excessive or repetitive communication regarding matters already addressed or under review, as this can hinder effective support and limit staff capacity to respond to all families
- Contacting teachers through unofficial means is inappropriate (e.g personal social media or text messaging)

**Raising Concerns and Resolving Conflict**

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 and positive manner
- 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 your views and opinions are heard and understood
- communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, fair and respectful
- ensure a timely response to your concerns/complaint
- strive for resolutions and outcomes that are satisfactory to all parties.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which a complaint has been treated by the School, or your complaint is

about the principal of the School, contact should be made with the Executive Manager: Industrial Relations / Human Resources, DOSCEL.

### **Contact:**

Executive Manager: Industrial Relations / Human Resources

Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited

Email: [complaints@ceosale.catholic.edu.au](mailto:complaints@ceosale.catholic.edu.au)

All concerns and complaints lodged with DOSCEL about a Catholic school in the Diocese of Sale will be addressed in accordance with the DOSCEL [Complaints and Grievances Management Policy](#).

### **Staff Safety and Wellbeing**

The school 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. These behaviours 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 to/about a staff member (including via email or social media)
- use of language which would be considered racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory on religious or gender grounds
- damage or violation of possessions/property
- harassment through excessive communication (e.g. repeated emails, messages or meeting requests that are not urgent or are already addressed) and /or ongoing unreasonable demands that interfere with a staff member's capacity to support all students

While we welcome family engagement, communication must remain respectful and purposeful. Teachers are not expected to respond to messages outside of working hours.

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 a staff member or others, the School and/or DOSCEL 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.

### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of St Joseph's review cycle or as required.