

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Purpose

Marymede Catholic College aims to provide an open, welcoming and safe environment for all. We strongly believe in working in partnership with parents/guardians in the education of their child/ren. We also acknowledge the valuable role that volunteers can play in the life of the school.

This code of conduct for parents/guardians and volunteers outlines the type of practice we require all adults interfacing with the College community and volunteering in our school to follow. It will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff. The Code of Conduct is a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals. This policy will provide guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure that all interactions that parents/guardians have with staff or students are respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive tactful and considerate.

Marymede Catholic College has a legal and moral responsibility to provide a safe and happy environment for all students and staff. Parents/guardians have an obligation to ensure that their interactions support these responsibilities.

Policy Statement

Values

Marymede is a Catholic School and has as its mission to provide students with a rich, balanced and comprehensive education in an open, safe and friendly environment, where the potential of each student is recognised and developed within a community where, in the way of Mary, Christ and this message is the focus.

The College is committed to:

- The wellbeing of each student having fundamental importance,
- The provision, as far as practical, of a safe and secure environment for students and staff,
- Providing an open, welcoming environment where everyone's contribution is valued and respected, and
- Encouraging parents/guardians, volunteers and community members to support and participate in the life of the college.

Scope

This code of conduct applies to all adults, including parents/guardians, volunteers, extended family, past students, visitors and others while involved in any activities related to Marymede Catholic College.

This code of conduct covers all forms of communication whether written, spoken or through social media.

Marymede Catholic College needs to ensure " that the children's service is operated in a way which ensures the safety of the children being cared for or educated and that their development needs are met" Children's Services Act 1996 Section 18(4), Education Act.

As an employer, Marymede Catholic College has an obligation to ensure a safe and discrimination free working environment for staff in accordance with relevant legislation.

Marymede Catholic College needs to ensure all parents/guardians, volunteers, staff, students and any other persons involved in the school, adhere to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interaction and communication with one another, and with staff and students at the College.

Procedures

General guidelines for interactions

- Safety: comply with all relevant policies and procedures. These are available through the College. Be aware of the emergency management procedures.
- Ethical conduct: Always act in the best interests of students, their families, and staff members.
- Support: Work in a co-operative and positive manner.
- Communication: Use courteous and acceptable written, spoken and electronic language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language. Response to emails and telephone calls are not expected to be instantaneous or out of normal working hours, unless of an urgent nature. Normal service standard suggests that an acceptable response time for emails is within 2 business days.
- Respect: Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment or discrimination.
- Confidentiality: Comply with the schools Privacy Policy.
- School Programs: If participating in a school program on a voluntary basis seek guidance and direction from staff. If unsure ask staff for further information. Behaviour guidance of the students is the responsibility of staff. Immediately refer any issues or concerns related to managing student's behaviour to staff.

Marymede Catholic College is responsible for:

- Ensuring all parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, students and visitors have access to a copy of this policy.
- Maintaining currency and relevancy of the Code of Conduct policy.
- Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in this policy below.

The Staff are responsible for:

- Respecting the individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of families in all interactions, both verbal and non verbal.
- Working with colleagues, school leadership, the Board and parents/guardians to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports restorative practices.
- Providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and when appropriate, clear and respectful directions.

The Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Reading the Code of Conduct policy; and
- Abiding by the standards of conduct set out in this policy below.

Procedures for dealing with a breach in the Code of Conduct:

On notification of a possible breach of the code the appropriate Marymede Catholic College Leadership Team member will investigate the complaint and recommend a course of action to the Leadership Team which may include, but is not limited to:

- A meeting with a Leadership Team member to discuss the possible breach in the code.
- A first and possible final warning meeting and subsequent letter being issued to inform the relevant person/s of the outcome of the investigation and that a further breach of the code of conduct will not be tolerated.
- Communication with the Delegated Canonical Administrators and/or Chair of the College Board regarding the breach(s) of the code of conduct.
- Notification to the Catholic Education Office Melbourne.

- Legal options such as a restraining order being sought against the relevant person. The restraining order would likely detail the limitations, and constraints imposed on the named individual in their actions and interactions with the College.
- Reviewing the ongoing enrolment of the student/s if the parent/guardians again seriously breaches the code of conduct (parents/guardians annually sign an agreement to support the College and its policies). This action will only be taken if no other alternatives are deemed appropriate.

Standards of Conduct

In relation to students:

- Be a positive role model at all times
- Always speak in an encouraging and positive manner
- Listen actively to students and offer empathy, support and guidance where needed; and
- Regard all fellow students equally and with respect and dignity.

In relation to other adults (including staff):

- Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education including all compulsory school events.
- Work in partnership with the College for the common goal of achieving what is best for all.
- Support your child/ren in all educational endeavours by giving praise and showing interest in school activities.
- Model resilience – encourage healthy problem solving.
- Listen to your child/ren but remember that a different version of event may be interpreted by others.
- Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to the College in a constructive and appropriate manner.
- Adhere to the College's policies.
- Respect College Property.
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive learning and teaching environment.
- Maintain a positive and cooperative attitude and interact positively with other parents and members of the College community.
- Refrain from public criticism of children and staff at the school. Parents are expected to refrain from discussing the business of school or children attending school in any public forum, including social media sites.
- Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.
- Under NO circumstances should a student, parent/guardian or member of staff be approached in an aggressive or threatening or intimidating manner.
- Parents/Guardians should always respond immediately to communication (both verbal and written) from the Principals Office and meetings with the Principal or Principals delegate should always be made as a matter of priority.
- Smoking is prohibited on the College property at all times.

Other Information

Background and Legislation for this Code may include, but is not limited to:

- Children’s Services Act 1996 (Pre Prep)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2005
- Educational Act for State 2005
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Workplace Relations Act 1996
- Ministerial Order 870 – Child Safe Standards
- Educational and Training Reform Act 2006