Preamble

At Sacred Heart Catholic Parish Primary School we aim to provide an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all. We believe that parents are valuable contributors and participants in the life of our School.

Our School Vision, Mission and Values form the basis of respectful relationships which are expected at all times by all parents, carers and families.

School Vision:
‘Jesus I Trust In You’

As the Catholic Community of Sacred Heart, we pray, we work, we share together, to develop the whole child for a life following Jesus.

Mission:
“We are called to be spirit filled servants, following Jesus, who was the compassion of God.”

Our Values:
Jesus is our inspiration.

- Respect – We respect each person, as we believe all are created in the image of God.
- Compassion – We seek to understand each family’s journey.
- Excellence – We strive for excellence in teaching and learning.
- Relationships – We believe that through all our relationships, we reflect Jesus, our role model.
- Community – We work in partnership with our whole community, to foster a sense of welcome and belonging.
- Resilience – We strive to develop confidence, resilience and forgiveness.
- Trust – We strive to develop the potential of each child, because we treasure who we have been entrusted with.

Three values that are particularly relevant are:
Respect – we want our community to recognise and appreciate diversity, to value the contributions of others and to cooperate with and care for others.
Community – we want our community to promote partnerships between all members of our community and to interact positively.
Relationships – we want our community relationships to reflect respect at all times.
The conduct of school staff is regulated by the Victorian Institute of Teaching Code of Conduct for Teachers.

Student conduct at Sacred Heart is supported by the staff, the pedagogy and the physical environment and is based on deep respect for self, property and others.

This Parent Code of Conduct outlines the way in which our community requires all parents and family members to conduct themselves when visiting our school, participating in school activities and communicating with members of our school community (including students, school staff, other parents and visitors to our school).

Scope

This Parent Code of conduct applies to all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, babysitters and any others while involved in activities or communication related to Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School. For convenience, the term “parents” will be used throughout the document.

Other School Policies Relevant to the Parent Code of Conduct:

- Child Safety Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Working with Children Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Resolution Procedure

Other Legislation Relevant to the Parent Code of Conduct:

- Working with Children Act
- Privacy Act

General principles that always apply

(a) Communication
Parents are expected to use courteous and acceptable written & spoken language, in all communication with students, staff, other parents and members of the school community. No profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or offensive language will be tolerated.

(b) Ethical Conduct
Parents are expected to 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, truthful and respectful.

(c) Respect
We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs and practices of all Sacred Heart’s community members and their families. We recognise and celebrate our differences, respecting all individuals in our community, regardless of their differences. Under no circumstances should parents use these differences as a basis for
discrimination, ridicule or exclusion. We respect points of view that are different from our own and all members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviours which may constitute harassment, discrimination or vilification.

When visiting Sacred Heart Catholic Parish 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 are expected to **comply with all safety and emergency procedures** in place at Sacred Heart Primary School. In the event of an emergency, while they are on school grounds, they will be expected to follow the instructions given by any member of the school staff group.

(c) When attending any kind of school assembly or public meeting, parents are expected to **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, including turning Mobile Phones off.

(d) Parents are expected to **treat all other visitors** to our school with **courtesy and respect**.

(e) A parent may **not interrupt or distract a teacher** while in the act of teaching or who may be responsible for the care of children, during settling in time, packing up time or whilst on yard duty. Where a parent wishes to discuss any matter with a teacher, this will need to be done via a prearranged appointment time with the teacher.

(f) A parent may **not discipline other children’s 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, as a parent helper.

(g) When visiting a classroom or learning area, parents **accept the authority of the teacher** (or teachers. Teachers value parental involvement and assistance, but they may ask a parent to leave an activity for any reason, but not limited to:

i. parental assistance not being required any further 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.
When communicating with school staff

(a) All school staff are entitled to work in a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our children, as well as for the 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 Sacred Heart Primary School 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 3 working days. Responses are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays, unless it is an emergency.

(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 or staff employment commitments. 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 with some urgency.

When communicating with other parents

(a) Parents are expected to respect the privacy of other parents’ email addresses & contact details. Under no circumstances should parents send unsolicited emails or ‘spam’ to other school parents or forward unsolicited emails or spam that they receive, to other parents. Parents should, under no circumstances, forward other parents’ email addresses or contact details, unless they have sought the permission of the other parent. Parents provide their email address & contact details 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 or contact details of parents to other parents without seeking prior permission.

(b) Parents who act as volunteers in the school, for events such as Mother’s Day & Father’s Day stalls, are valued volunteers, who play a critical role in our community and commit a great deal of their 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 to and ask questions of hardworking parent 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
Parents will not use social media as a platform for personal agendas or grievances about school matters. Parents will not name children or any other members of the school community in posts or public notices on social media, for any reason.

**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 appropriate person and follow correct communication channels. When making a complaint parents should refer to the school’s Complaints Handling Policy, which is available on the School Website; 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 Complaints Handling Policy, especially when the complaint is about a teacher or member of school staff.

**Consequences of a breach of the Parent Code of Conduct**

Any parent, member of school staff or student may notify the Principal, Deputy Principal or a School Leader, of a possible breach of the Parent Code of Conduct. The Principal will investigate the complaint and if satisfied that a breach has occurred:

(a) provide a first and final warning that a breach of the Parent Code of Conduct has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated;

(b) determine whether a breach may be rectified by the parent making a private or public apology, depending on the circumstances, to an individual or group of individuals;

(c) where the breach concerned is of unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the school, may issue a trespass warning to the parent, which, 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.

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

Nothing in this policy precludes any person from exercising their individual legal rights in respect of obtaining restraining and intervention orders, reporting an assault, bringing action for defamation or exercising their rights under vilification or discrimination laws or in any other way.
Review

This policy will be revisited annually and reviewed as part of the School Improvement process or more often if necessary, due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Policy Written in September 2018