



Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School



Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct

Rationale:

At Our Lady Help of Christians 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 states that *"We are a welcoming and encouraging community that fosters positive relationships with thanks and forgiveness."* We strongly believe in developing authentic relationships.

Two 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.
-  Sense of community – we want our community to promote partnerships between all members of our community and to interact positively.

Aims:

The conduct of school staff is regulated by the Victorian Institute of Teaching Code of Conduct for Teachers. Student conduct at Our Lady Help of Christians School is supported by the teachers, the pedagogy and the physical environment and is based on deep respect for self, property and others.

This Parent-School Relationships 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).

Implementation:

This Code applies to all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, babysitters and any others while involved in activities or communication related to Our Lady Help Of Christians Primary School. For convenience, the term "parents" will be used throughout the document.

General Principles That Always Apply

Communication

Parents 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.

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.

Respect

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School values our diverse community and respects the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own. All members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification.

When visiting Our Lady Help of Christians 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 (Passtab), 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. 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) Parents will treat all other visitors and guests to our school, including visiting Members of Parliament, with respect.

When communicating with Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School staff:

(a) All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our students 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 students in the school. School staff are therefore not required to respond to emails, telephone calls, requests at the school office to see them instantaneously.

(c) At Our Lady Help of Christians School our preference for communication is via face to face contact, phone call or email. If you do need to email, please be aware that a response time for emails may be up to 3 working days. Responses to emails are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays.

(d) The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt the school. Parents should be mindful of the teacher's time, communicate the reason for the meeting and allow the teacher time to prepare for a meeting, 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 or contact details 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 or contact details of parents to other parents without permission.

(b) Parents who act as volunteers in the school for such things as Uniform Shop, Mother's Day and Father's Day stall etc 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.

(c) 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.

(d) Parents are not permitted to post images/video of students on social media unless they have prior permission of a student's parent/guardian who is in the image/video.

(e) 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 as per the school **Home – School Communication Policy/Complaints Management Policy**.

(f) When making a complaint or a compliment parents should refer to the **Home – School Communication Policy/Complaints Management Policy**, which is available on the School Website. Parents must follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

It is a breach of this Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct to make a complaint in a way that is not consistent with the **Home – School Communication Policy/Complaints Management Policy**.

Consequences of a Breach of Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct

Any parent, member of school staff or student may notify the Principal or Assistant Principal of a possible breach of the Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct.

The Principal/Assistant Principal or nominee 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-School Relationships 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 unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the school, a trespass warning to the parent/guardian will be issued, 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 or Assistant Principal.

(d) Correspondence that is in breach of this Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct, because of the language and expression used or the way it is sent or delivered, will not be responded to.

This Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct policy does not preclude any person from exercising their individual legal rights in respect of obtaining restraining and intervention orders, reporting assault, bringing action for defamation, exercising rights under vilification or discrimination laws or in any other way.

Evaluation:

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.

This policy was last ratified by OLHC School Staff Term 1 2019



Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct: Volunteers

Our Lady Help of Christians School is a Catholic Parish Primary School inspired by the person of Jesus. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, we are guided by their service and values of respect, compassion and justice.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional codes and school policies and procedures.

All volunteers at Our Lady Help of Christians School are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Acceptable behaviours

All volunteers are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- following directives given by school staff
- working with students under the guidance of teachers and school leadership
- adhering to the school's vision and child-safe policy and upholding the CECV's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- reporting any child safety concerns to the classroom teacher/teacher in charge and/or school leadership

Unacceptable behaviours

Volunteers must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- put children at risk of abuse
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.)
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- disclose information about a child's behaviour or academic progress to parents, guardians, friends or family
- approach a child to discuss concerns, concerns must at all times be directed to the classroom teacher/teacher in charge and/or school leadership
- approach another parent or guardian to discuss concerns, concerns must at all times be directed to the classroom teacher/teacher in charge and/or school leadership

I, _____, agree to abide by this Code of Conduct and confirm I have been provided with a copy of it.

Signed: _____ Date: _____