



St Mary's School

12 Watkin Street,
Robinvale
PH: 03 50263 483

Email: principal@smrobinvale.catholic.edu.au
Web address: www.smrobinvale.catholic.edu.au

We are **RESPECTFUL**

We are **SAFE**

We are **LEARNERS**

Parent & School Relationships - Code of Conduct

St Mary's operates with the consent of the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat and is owned, operated and governed by Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL).

Introduction

At St Mary's we are committed to nurturing respectful relationships and active partnerships with you as parents. We believe that our students' learning journeys are enriched through positive and reciprocal home and school relationships.

As parents (including guardians, stepparents, grandparents, extended family, caregivers and any other persons involved in activities or communication related to the school), 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. For the purpose of this document, the term "parent" refers to all as listed above.

This Parent & School Relationships - Code of Conduct is intended to guide you in your dealings with staff, other parents, students and the wider school community. It articulates the school's key expectations of all adults involved with the school about respectful relationships and behaviours both in person or electronically, (the Safeguarding Children and Young People – Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all employees).

This Parent & School Relationships - Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with the school's (available on the school's website):

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- Bullying Prevention (including Cyberbullying) Policy
- Digital Technologies Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy.

Our Culture of Respectful Relationships

Among students, staff and parents 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 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/teacher/child relationships and strive to build the relationships
- adhere to the school's policies, as outlined on the school website
- treat staff and other parents 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.

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 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.

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
- making rude, defamatory, aggressive or abusive comments to/about a staff member/the school, both verbally and or in writing or on social media platforms
- racist or sexist comments
- damage or violation of possessions/property.

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 in the first instance. Where a parent's behaviour is deemed likely to cause ongoing harm, distress or danger to the staff member and others, we 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.

Use of Social Media

Social media can be defined as how we use technology to communicate and connect with others. Despite the range of positive uses for social media, there are also a number of ethical and legal issues associated with its use. Many people may hold the mistaken belief that anything published online will be without legal consequence. However, parents should be aware that there are several potential legal liabilities that may arise, particularly in relation to issues pertaining to reputational damage, and defamation.

Parents can ensure they abide by the laws and the school's expectations of its parents, by complying with the following:

- The school, its staff and members of its community should not be mentioned or discussed in a negative or defamatory way.
- Photographs of students in school uniform represent the school and its students and should not be posted if they have the potential to bring negative connotations towards the school or its staff and students.
- Photographs containing other students should not be posted without the express consent of the other child/children's parents.
- Email addresses of parents, staff and students should not be given to other people without their express consent.
- Parents are not permitted to make contact with other students via any form of social media without the express consent of the student's parents.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct.

With these guidelines in place it is hoped that parents can appropriately direct their concerns and contribute to a harmonious school community that reflects and builds on the school's values.

The consequences for breaches of this Parent & School Relationships - Code of Conduct will be determined by the Principal and may include any of the following:

- Banning a parent from entry to school grounds or from attending co-curricular activities or other events.
- Directing that a parent may only communicate with members of staff through a nominated school representative.
- Involving other authorities, where appropriate.
- Taking other such steps as appropriate according to the nature of the breach.