

# ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

## KEALBA



2019

## PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### Preamble

At St. Paul's Primary School, we aim to provide an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all.

We believe that parents & guardians are valued contributors and involved participants in the life of our school.

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, guardians & visitors to our school).

### ***ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL***

#### ***VISION STATEMENT***

***As a Catholic school community inspired by the Gospels and in the spirit of St. Paul...***

***We believe that Christ lives in us. (Galatians 2:20)***

***We work together for the common good, by building deep and genuine relationships.***

***We work with diligence and intent to protect all children in our care,  
prioritising their safety and wellbeing at all times and in every situation.***

***We are lifelong learners, encouraging each other's passions, talents and dreams.***

***We seek to make a difference.***

Central to our school vision is the belief that Christ lives in each of us. At the core of all we do is our vision to build deep & genuine relationships with & amongst all members of our community. The values detailed herein are fundamental to these relationships within our community.

The conduct of students at St Paul's Primary School is supported by the teachers, the pedagogy & the physical environment and is based on the ***School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Model***.

We recognise that all members of our community can be **S.T.A.R.S.**, as the following explains:

**St Paul's** Community: within our St. Paul's community we promote partnerships between all community members, as well as encouraging positive interactions with one another.

**Try our best:** we strive to always do our best in our interactions with others, in what we say and in what we do.

**Act responsibly:** we want to respond to situations within our community in a responsible & ethical manner.

**Respect others:** we want all members of our community to recognise and appreciate diversity, to value the contributions of others, to cooperate with and care for others.

**Stay safe:** as a learning & teaching community, we prioritise safety in all that we say and do.

The conduct of school staff is regulated by the Victorian Institute of Teaching's (V.I.T.), '***Code of Conduct for Teachers***' and the Australian Institute of Teaching & School Leadership's (A.I.T.S.L.) '***Australian Professional Standards for Teachers***'.

### **Scope**

This code applies to all adults, including parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents, extended family members, carers, babysitters & any other adults, whilst involved in activities or communications with and related to, St. Paul's Primary School.

For convenience, the term 'parents' will be used throughout this document.

### **Other School Policies Relevant to the Parent Code of Conduct:**

- Child Safety Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures
- Working with Children Check Policy

### **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 communications with students, staff, other parents, guardians & 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 & respectful.

### **(c) Respect**

We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs & practices, of all St. Paul'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 & behaviours, which may constitute harassment, discrimination or vilification.

## **When visiting St. Paul's 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 (V-pass), 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 & emergency procedures, in place at St. Paul's 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 & staff and will refrain from creating any inappropriate noise or disturbance, during performances or speeches by students, staff or visitors.

(d) Parents are expected to treat all other visitors to our school with courtesy & 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 a child who is not theirs or speak to a child who is not theirs, about that child'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) and realise that they are in attendance on the teacher's & school's terms. 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 (Work Health Safety & Occupational Health & Safety). 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 & 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 St Paul's 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; in which case the Principal should be cc'd into any email.

(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 which needs to be discussed with some urgency; in such emergencies, teaching staff will call for the support of the Principal or a School Leader.

#### **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 form of social media, in the name of the school, without the written permission of the Principal.

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 form of 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 & Procedures***, which is available on the school website ([www.spkealba.catholic.edu.au](http://www.spkealba.catholic.edu.au)) & provided to parents, at the start of the school year; 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 & Procedures, especially when the complaint is about the Principal, a teacher or any other member of the school staff group.

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

Any parent, member of school staff or student, may notify the Parish Priest, Principal, Deputy Principal or a School Leader, of a possible breach of the Parent Code of Conduct. The Principal, in consultation with the Parish Priest, 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, the school (Parish Priest and/or Principal) 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 Parish Priest & 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/or 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.

Written: 2018

Ratified: 2018

Reviewed: 2019

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