

St. Therese's School, Essendon

Parent Code of Conduct Policy



Rationale

St Therese's School is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and where the teachers are outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

At St Therese's 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, "As a Catholic community grounded in faith and love, we will develop life long learners committed to building positive relationships.. " Three of our core values that are particularly relevant are: Fostering relationships - treat others as we would like to be treated; Integrity - do what is right because it is right; and Teamwork and Support - work together and help each other.

The conduct of school staff is regulated by the Victorian Institute of Teaching Code of Conduct for Teachers. Student conduct at St Therese's is supported by the teachers, 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 Code applies to all St Therese's School parents and visitors to the School. The application of this Code is not limited to the School site and School hours. It extends to all activities and events that are school-related and when visiting or representing the School, including without limitation at all times when wearing the School uniform. The Code also requires that parent/guardian or visitor actions do not bring the School into disrepute at any time regardless of whether the action occurs within or outside of School activities.

Other School Policies That May Be Relevant to Parent Conduct

- Child Safety Policy
- STS Communication Policy
- STS Concerns and Complaints Policy
- Working with Children Policy
- STS Code of Conduct - Volunteers and Contractors
- STS Enrolment Policy
- STS Discipline Policy
- STS Pastoral Care Policy
- STS Social Media Policy - Students and Parents

Other Legislation That May Be Relevant to Parent Conduct

- Working with Children Act
 - Privacy Act
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**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

We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own and all members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification.

This Code of Conduct is based on the following Principles that everyone at St Therese's School:

- has the right to be safe
- has the right to be treated with respect and be valued even in disagreement
- has the right to participate within a secure environment without interference, intimidation, harassment, bullying or discrimination
- is encouraged to be respectful, polite, courteous and considerate of others
- has the right to be supported and challenged as ongoing learners.

**Expected
Conduct and
Bearing of All
Parents and
Visitors**

It is expected that every parent and visitor will:

- uphold the School's core beliefs and values
 - behave in a manner that does not endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves or others
 - abide by all health and safety rules and procedures operating within the School and other locations at which they may visit whilst representing the School
 - ensure that their actions do not bring the School into disrepute
 - respect School staff and accept their authority and direction within the exercise of their duties at the School
 - observe all School rules as required
 - strictly adhere to the School's policies and procedures as required
 - behave with respect, courtesy and consideration for others
 - refrain from all forms of bullying and harassment
 - refrain from any form of verbal insult or abuse and from any form of physical abuse or intimidation
 - refrain from activities, conduct or communication that would reasonably be seen to undermine the reputation of the School, employees or students of the School (including activities on social media);
 - respect School property and the property of staff, contractors, volunteers and other students
 - not be intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other
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substances harmful to health whilst visiting the School site, attending School functions or engaging in School based activities

- respect school staff and accept their authority and direction within the exercise of their duties at the School
- use the School's Complaints Handling Policy to seek resolution for any problems that arise, and accept the school's procedures for handling matters of complaint.

Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- touching, handling, pushing or otherwise physically or sexually engaging with students, children or others in a manner which is not appropriate and may endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of that person
- any form of physical or verbal violence including fighting, assault or threats of violence
- approaching a child that is not your own with a view to disciplining that child for their behaviour (such matters are only to be dealt with by school staff)
- approaching other school parents to resolve issues arising between students at school (such matters should be referred to school staff)
- any form of cyber bullying or cyber abuse that is directed towards the school, staff members, students or parents or any member connected to the School
- any form of threatening language, gestures or conduct
- language or conduct which is likely to offend, harass, bully or unfairly discriminate against any student, employee, contractor, volunteer or other
- theft, fraud or misuse of School resources
- the use of inappropriate or profane words or gestures and images
- visiting School, attending social, sporting or other functions whilst intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other substances harmful to health
- smoking on the School premises or within the immediate environs of the School
- claiming to represent the School in any matter without explicit permission from the School Principal to do so.

When visiting St Therese's School

- 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.
 - Parents will comply with all safety and emergency procedures in place at our School and in the event of an emergency while they are on school grounds they will follow the instructions given by any member of school staff.
 - 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.
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When communicating with school staff

- Parents will follow and adhere to all guidelines and procedures within the STS Concerns and Complaints Policy and STS Communication Policy.
- All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of our children as well as staff themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety.
- The priority for school staff is the welfare and education of all children in the school and as such, school staff are therefore not required to respond to telephone messages instantaneously. As outlined in our Communication Policy, avenues of parent to teacher communication are via face to face contact or a phone call. Teachers are not to be contacted via email other than through info@stessendon.catholic.edu.au.
- The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must be scheduled at a time that does not disrupt the class. 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.

When communicating with other parents

- Parents will follow and adhere to all guidelines and procedures within the STS Concerns and Complaints Policy and STS Communication Policy.
- 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 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 of parents to other parents without permission.
- Parents who act as volunteers in the school for such things as Mother's Day and Father's Day stall organisers and so on, 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.

When communicating with their own child

- Parents will follow and adhere to all guidelines and procedures within the STS Concerns and Complaints Policy and STS Communication Policy.
- Parents are not permitted to contact their child during school hours by any other means than a phone call to the front office. Any important messages will be communicated to your child by school staff. Sending messages to your child via any web or cellular service is strictly prohibited - this includes all types of digital messaging (SMS, email, shared documents, using any type of 'chat' service etc).

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. Parents should also adhere to all points in the STS Social Media Policy - Students and Parents.

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. When making a complaint parents should refer to the STS Concerns and Complaints Policy, which is available on the School Website; and 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 STS Concerns and Complaints Policy, especially when the complaint is about a teacher or member of school staff.

Consequences of a Breach of Parent Code of Conduct

Parents and visitors who breach the Code of Conduct will be contacted by the School Principal. Appropriate action, which may include being banned from coming onto School grounds, attending School functions or School based activities, is at the discretion of the School Principal.

Parents who continually breach the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Principal, who has full discretion to take action which may include termination of this enrolment agreement.

In accordance with applicable legislation and the School's Child Protection Policy, the Police and/or Department of Human and Health Services will be informed of any unlawful breaches of this Code.

Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of a cyclical process in accordance with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Document Control

Version	Author	Purpose/Change	Date
0.1	Various STS L'ship Members	Initial policy drafting	Pre 2018
0.2	STS Leadership Team	Various updates throughout policy	Mid 2018
1.0	STS Leadership Team	Policy Reviewed	Mid 2019
1.1	STS Leadership Team	Policy Reviewed	Early 2020
1.2	STS Leadership Team	Various updates throughout policy	Early 2021