Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

# Code of Conduct – Parents and Carers

For MACS Schools

St Mary's College
Seymour

## 1. Introduction

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) was established in 2021 by the Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to govern and operate Catholic schools across the Archdiocese. MACS subsequently established Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Specialist Schools Ltd (MACSS) to provide educational services to children with additional needs, and Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Early Years Education (MACSEYE) to deliver early years care and education.

MACS schools operate with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and are owned, operated and governed by MACS.

## 2. Purpose

MACS schools are committed to safe, positive and respectful learning environments for all students, staff and visitors. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of parents, carers and the visitors they bring to school – whether on the school site, parish site, at school events, or in any other school-related context. Parents, carers and their visitors are expected to uphold the school's core values at all times.

## 3. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all parents and carers of students attending MACS schools, including primary, secondary, combined and specialist schools. It applies not only on the school site and during school hours, but to all school-related activities and events.

The Code is based on the principles that everyone in a MACS school community:

- has the right to feel safe
- has the right to be treated with respect and value, even in disagreement
- has the right to participate in a secure environment free from interference, intimidation, harassment, bullying, discrimination or any harmful, threatening or abusive behaviour
- is expected to be respectful, polite, courteous and considerate of others
- has the right to be supported and challenged as a learner.

## 4. Expected behaviour of all parents and carers

As a parent or carer, you play an important role in shaping a positive and child-safe school community. In both physical and digital environments, parents and carers are expected to:

- uphold the school's core beliefs and values
- support your child's full participation in a Catholic education
- prioritise the wellbeing and best interests of all children at all times
- behave in a way that does not endanger the health, safety or wellbeing of yourself or others
- follow all health and safety rules and procedures at school and at any school-related location
- respect school and parish staff and accept their authority and direction in the exercise of their duties
- observe school rules and comply with all MACS and school policies and procedures
- treat all members of the school community with respect, courtesy and consideration
- avoid all forms of bullying, harassment, verbal abuse and physical intimidation

- avoid any conduct or communication – including on social media – that could reasonably be seen to undermine the reputation of the school, its staff or students
- respect school property and the property of staff, contractors, volunteers and other students
- not attend the school site, school functions or school-based activities while intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other harmful substances
- use the MACS and school *Complaints Handling Policy* and procedures to resolve any concerns, and respect the school's processes for handling complaints
- ensure that family members and friends visiting the school behave in accordance with this Code
- acknowledge and respect the role of the Parish Priest or Canonical Administrator in the spiritual leadership and Catholic identity of the school community
- comply with staff directions regarding photography, filming or recording of students, staff or school-related activities
- not photograph, film or record students, staff or school-related activities using any device – including wearable technology – unless expressly permitted in writing by the principal or their nominated staff member.

# 5. Unacceptable behaviour

The following behaviours are unacceptable in both physical and digital environments:

- any form of physical or verbal violence, including assault, threats or behaviour that is harmful, threatening or abusive
- approaching a child other than your own to address or discipline their behaviour – all such matters must be referred to school staff
- approaching other parents or carers to resolve issues between students – these matters should be directed to school staff
- committing an offence that jeopardises the safety or security of the school community or has the potential to seriously harm individuals or the reputation of the school
- touching, handling or physically engaging with students or children in any manner that is inappropriate or that may endanger their health, safety or wellbeing
- behaviour that vilifies, defames or humiliates any person based on characteristics protected under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- inappropriate conduct towards staff through online platforms or social media
- cyberbullying, cyber abuse, sharing violent imagery or text, or using artificially generated content, deep fakes or other digital media to target the school, staff, students, parents or other members of the school community
- language, gestures or conduct that is harmful, threatening, abusive or likely to offend, harass, bully or discriminate against any member of the school community
- communicating with school staff in a manner that is unreasonable in frequency, volume or tone, including via email or messaging apps
- theft, fraud or misuse of school resources
- the use of inappropriate, profane or offensive language, gestures or images
- attending the school site or school events while intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other harmful substances
- smoking or vaping on school premises or in the immediate vicinity of the school
- claiming to represent the school in any matter without the explicit permission of the principal.

# 6. Breach of this code

As a condition of your child's enrolment, parents and carers are required to read, sign and comply with the *Enrolment Agreement*, this Code of Conduct, and all relevant MACS policies and procedures.

If a parent or carer breaches this Code or the *Enrolment Agreement*, the principal will make contact to discuss the matter. Appropriate action may be taken at the discretion of the principal or other authorised persons.

A breach of this Code may result in the school taking lawful steps to address the behaviour, up to and including termination of the enrolment of the student and any siblings enrolled at the school.

Before any decision about termination of enrolment is made, the family will be given an opportunity to provide information or comments for consideration.

## 7. Acknowledgement and signature

To be signed by all parents or carers with legal decision-making responsibility for the child's education and enrolment.

By signing below, I/we confirm that I/we have read and understood this Code of Conduct and agree to comply with its terms.

| **Parent or carer** | |
|---|---|
| Full name: | |
| Signature: | |
| Date: | |

| **Parent or carer** | |
|---|---|
| Full name: | |
| Signature: | |
| Date: | |