

## RATIONALE

This policy outlines the School's commitment to the creation of a safe, tolerant and disciplined environment within which young people prepare to be active and reflective Australian citizens with a disposition to life-long learning. They will be able to participate in and shape community and economic life in Victoria and the nation. They will be able to engage confidently with other cultures at home and abroad.

## AIMS

In accordance with the ethos and philosophy of the School, staff members will adhere to the following:

### Commitment to Students

- Recognise and promote the understanding of diversity
- Provide an environment which promotes the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing of all students
- Develop appropriate, non-sexual relationships with students
- Base teaching on best practice and individual needs
- Work within ones expertise
- Protect the student's right to privacy and confidentiality

### Responsibilities to Parents/Guardians and Families of Students

- Establish a relationship based on courtesy, mutual trust and open communication
- Respect family privacy and treat information with an appropriate level of confidentiality
- Respect parents' and guardians' rights of enquiry, consultation and information with regard to their children
- Respect the uniqueness and characteristics of each student's family background

### Commitment to Colleagues and to the Teaching Profession

- Build an atmosphere of trust, mutual respect and candour
- Act within the educational and wider community in a way which enhances the status of the profession
- Update and improve effective learning and teaching strategies
- Assist newcomers to the profession

### Responsibilities to the Community and Society

- Provide students with a positive role model
- Promote co-operation among all agencies and professionals working in the best interest of students and families

### Responsibilities to the School

- Provide a high standard of professional service through active participation in the activities of the School
- Promote and actively contribute to the School philosophy and culture
- Observe contractual commitments
- Develop by precept and example, a respect for laws and policies which protect and promote the wellbeing of students, families and the community

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

- Staff members should speak with others in a manner that is encouraging, respectful and supportive.
- Language or behaviour that is offensive, aggressive, profane, insulting or hurtful must be avoided at all times. Courtesy is expected at all times.
- All adults should be mindful of, and sensitive to, the presence of students and consistently encourage and model sportsmanship and other pro-social behaviour on School premises and at all School events.
- Staff should discourage harassment, bullying, anti-social and violent behaviour in students and should communicate any concerns directly to the appropriate staff.
- Management of students during school activities is the responsibility of the School's staff.
- Staff are encouraged to be positive ambassadors for the School and refrain from public criticism of School community members, including staff, students and other parents.
- Staff should refrain from discussing any grievances regarding the school in front of students.
- All adults should dress appropriately on school grounds, or at official school events\*. Revealing clothing, clothing with offensive messages or beachwear should be avoided whilst going barefoot or without a shirt is not appropriate.
- Smoking is not permitted on the School's premises or at a School event involving children.
- All adults should not be in the possession of alcohol/drugs on School grounds/at official school events\*, or attending School grounds/official school events\* if affected by, alcohol or any other intoxicant.
- Alcohol must not be consumed on School grounds or at any official school event\* in the presence of the School's students, unless authorised by the School Principal.
- Staff are encouraged not to accept invitations to attend non-official events involving school students and parents. Acceptance of such invitations carries with it the risk of an ad-hoc duty of care responsibility being alleged against the staff member.
- Parent hosts of non-official events are likely to be directly liable in law for negligent acts and omissions resulting in injury, or for breaches of criminal law by themselves or young persons under their supervision or control.
- The school specifically disclaims any responsibility for non-official events, and for any accident or injury, or breach of the law, or other misconduct which might take place at these functions.
- The school retains the right under common law to punish a student at school for any unacceptable out-of-school behaviours, if such misbehavior can be shown to be related to the maintenance of good order and discipline in the school.
- Without authorisation by the School, staff are not permitted at any time to upload photos, videos or other materials containing footage of School activities onto any social media websites or forums.
- Parents who act as Committee or Council members, 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, staff should be particularly sensitive about the manner in which they provide feedback and ask questions of hardworking volunteers.
- Staff should refrain from social media contact with all current students and for Alumni, a minimum of one year should lapse post-graduation before any social media communication.

## GROOMING

The *Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014*, which commenced in Victoria on 9 April 2014, introduces the offence of grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 years. This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. The Betrayal of Trust report recommended the grooming offence, given the way in which many sex offenders target their victims. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails. Many perpetrators of sexual offences against children purposely create relationships with victims, their families or carers in order to create a situation where abuse could occur. For this reason, parents, carers or other family members who have been targeted by perpetrators in order to gain access to a child are also victims. The *Victim's Charter Act 2006* was amended to expressly provide that a child and a family member of that child are victims of a grooming offence and are entitled to provide a victim impact statement to a court.

In line with Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, all staff, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave at all times in a manner supportive of the welfare and best interests of all students.

Behaviour which exploits the special position of trust and authority between a staff member, volunteer or visitor and a student, regardless of age, is a breach of obligations and may be interpreted as grooming or illegal behaviour. Such behaviours may include:

- Transporting a student, regardless of age without seeking the consent of a parent or caregiver and without informing the Principal
- Seeking to visit a student, regardless of age at his/her home without the consent or knowledge of the parent or caregiver and Principal
- Inviting a student, regardless of age, to the staff member, volunteer or visitor's home unaccompanied without the consent of a parent or caregiver and without informing the Principal
- Sending or receiving personal written correspondence
- Exchanging personal phone numbers
- Corresponding with students using personal email addresses
- Taking photographs or videos of students on non-school equipment and without authorisation or approval
- Photographs or videos of students for non-school purposes
- Sending or exchanging images or videos of school staff, students or any aspect of school operations without authorisation or approval
- Personal communication such as phone calls, SMS, MMS and video calling
- Social networking such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube and Flickr
- Internet technologies such as Skype and chat rooms
- Inappropriate giving of gifts
- Physical or emotional aggression, violence or bullying
- Sexual exhibitionism
- Development of an intimate relationship incompatible with the professional relationship, initiated by either party
- Exposing to a student, regardless of age, pornographic material in any medium
- Inappropriate discussion of matters of sexual behaviour
- Obscene language, especially of a sexual nature
- Gestures or actions of a suggestive or obscene nature
- Jokes of a sexual nature told in the presence of student/s
- Voyeurism (gaining pleasure from secret watching of another)
- Repeatedly seeking to be alone with a student
- Detaining a student in locked facilities or facilities that do not have immediate access to relevant staff members

This is not an exhaustive list, any behaviour which exploits a student is unacceptable.

## SAFETY

- All staff members are asked to comply with all relevant policies and guidelines as they relate to the occupational health and safety of others within the School Community.
- All visitors to the School are required to sign in. Staff are especially asked to be familiar with the School's Emergency procedures and follow the directions of relevant staff should they be on-site or at a School event when an accident, drill or emergency occurs.
- All people visiting the School during business hours, must sign in and sign out at the conclusion of their visit.
- Should an adult's behaviour contravene the ideals and principles contained in this code, the School Leadership Team has a responsibility to protect the School's students and other community members from behaviour which is, or is potentially, physically or emotionally harmful.

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review.

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\*Official school events include:

- Any school event held directly under the school's name and imprimatur; or using the school's name by association; or adopted or endorsed by the school or under the auspices of the school
- Any evening or weekend out-of-school function that is part of the school's curriculum, such as concert attendances, drama performances and the like
- Any function where students are required to wear school uniform
- Any sporting or educational event, being curricular, extra-curricular, or co-curricular and involving school teams
- Any educational excursion, travel, visit or camp, run under the control of the school's staff or its agents
- Official school dances, celebration evening, graduation ceremonies, formals, valedictories, inductions and the like, involving the planning, attendance and control of school supervising staff