



Parent-School Relationships Code of Conduct

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Introduction

The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) is 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, 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.

This Parental Code of Conduct is intended to guide you in your dealings with school staff, other parents, students and the wider school community. It articulates the school's key expectations of both staff and parents with regard to respectful relationships and behaviours. It also specifies the school's position with regard to unacceptable behaviours that breach our culture of respect.

Our Culture of Respectful Relationships

1. *Everyone* – including students, staff and parents – will strive to develop the following:
 - Respect for the innate dignity and worth of every person.
 - The ability to understand that every family is different and has unique qualities and circumstances.
 - A cooperative attitude in working with others.
 - Open, positive and honest communication.
 - The ability to work with other people respectfully.
 - Trusting relationships.
 - Responsible actions.
2. *Parents* - in promoting and *upholding* this culture – you will:
 - Support your school's Catholic ethos, traditions and practices.
 - Support your 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 those relationships.
 - Adhere to your school's policies and those of DOBCEL, as outlined on the school and DOBCEL's websites.
 - Treat staff and other parents at the school with respect and courtesy.
3. *Staff* - in promoting *and* upholding this culture - 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 - as parents - 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 or 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. Instead, you agree to refer the matter directly to your child’s teacher or the nominated contact person at the school.

In responding to parental concerns or complaints, we expect that staff will:

- Observe confidentiality and respect for sensitive issues.
- Ensure parental views and opinions are heard and understood.
- Communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, fair and respectful.
- Ensure a timely response to parental concerns/complaints.
- Strive for resolutions and outcomes that are satisfactory to all parties.

Staff Safety and Wellbeing

DOBCEL 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.
- Writing rude, defamatory, aggressive or abusive comments to/about a staff member (emails/social media).
- 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.

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. This may impact on the enrolment of your child at the school. In extreme situations, for example violence that causes physical harm or distress, the matter may be reported to the Police for investigation.