

## Parent/Carer/Guardian Code of Conduct

### Introduction - College Mission and Vision

At Santa Maria College we are committed to nurturing respectful relationships and active partnerships with parents/carers/guardians. We believe that our students' learning journeys are enriched through positive and reciprocal home and school relationships.

Santa Maria College is committed to ensuring a respectful learning environment that is safe, positive and supportive for all students, staff and visitors of the school.

It is the intention of Santa Maria College to provide clear guidelines to all parents/carers/guardians and visitors regarding the conduct expected of them while on the College premises, engaging in school-related activities or representing the College. Parents/guardians/carers and visitors are expected to uphold the College core values at all times.

This Code of Conduct will guide your interactions and communications with staff, other **parents/carers/guardians**, students and the wider school community. It articulates the College key expectations of both staff and **parents/carers/guardians** with regard to respectful relationships and behaviours. It also specifies the College position with regard to unacceptable behaviours that breach our culture of respect.

This Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with the school's:

- [Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Complaints Policy and procedure](#)
- [Child Safe Policy](#)

This Code of Conduct is based on the following principles that everyone at Santa Maria College:

- 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.

The five pillars that underpin the essence of the College strategic plan speak of a community inspired by Scriptural values, grounded upon respectful relationships, holistic growth of young people, guardianship of all, by all and an environment that fosters a positive frame of working together within a spirit of kindness, safety, goodwill and respect. Pillar 1 from the Strategic Plan outlines the essence of living in positive relationships when it states:

**Pillar 1: Our Catholic community invites us to be people who live in life-giving relationships built on Scriptural values. We are called to:**

- Build respectful relationships, underpinned by dignity and respect which are key to our partnerships between students, staff, families and all those with whom we work.
- Be an authentic Christ-centred community in word and action, philosophical framework and identity.
- Nurture opportunities for all members of our community to find their voice as a means to enter into respectful dialogue.

**Our Culture of respectful relationships is based on our Catholic ethos and Benedictine tradition where we strive to develop the following:**

- A respect for the innate dignity and worth of every person
- A culture of listening deeply
- An ability and openness to understand the situation of others
- An ability to show empathy and compassion
- A positive, open and honest disposition
- A co-operative attitude in working with others
- The ability to work respectfully and professionally with others
- Responsible actions

**In promoting and upholding this culture, we expect that parents and guardians will:**

- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Understand the importance of healthy family/staff/student relationships and strive to build these relationships
- Treat staff and other parents/ guardians and students with respect and courtesy
- Adhere to school Guidelines, Protocols and Policies as outlined on the school website, in particular policies relating to Child Safety
- Follow protocols for communication with staff ie: call or email the appropriate staff member or Village Leader with issues in a constructive, polite and professional manner
- Refrain from approaching another student who is in the care of the school to discuss or chastise them because of actions towards a student. Rather; refer all matters to the College for review and possible investigation
- Empower and support students in making initial contact with staff about any concerns independently
- ensure that their actions do not bring the school into disrepute
- 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 posts on social media
- not be intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other substances harmful to health while visiting the school site, attending school functions or engaging in school-based activities

- 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.

**In promoting and upholding this culture, we as members of staff will:**

- Communicate regularly via google classrooms, PAM and emails (when necessary) in a timely manner within professional hours according to the online communication guidelines
- Ensure online reporting meets the timeline of subject unit deliveries
- Be respectful and professional in all matters
- Communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, fair and respectful
- Observe confidentiality and respect for sensitive issues
- Ensure parents and guardians views and opinions are heard and understood
- Ensure a timely response to any concerns / complaints raised by carers
- Strive for resolution and outcomes that are satisfactory to all parties

**Staff safety and Wellbeing**

The College places high value on maintaining a positive school climate and respectful working environment for all members of the community. We regard certain behaviours as harmful and unacceptable if they compromise the safety and wellbeing of a member of our College community.

With regard to staff there are certain behaviours that are deemed unacceptable and harmful insofar as they compromise the safety and professional well being of our staff. These behaviours include, but not limited to:

- ☐ Shouting or swearing, either in person or on the telephone, including using aggressive hand gestures
- ☐ any form of physical or verbal violence including fighting, assault, intimidation or threats of violence
- ☐ Writing rude, defamatory, aggressive or abusive comments to / about a staff member (emails/ social media)
- ☐ Any form of vilification of a staff member
- ☐ Damage or violation of possessions / property
- ☐ 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
- ☐ 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 cyberbullying or cyber abuse that is directed towards the school, staff members, students or parents or any member connected to the school
- ☐ corresponding or communicating with school staff in a manner which is unreasonable (including for example, via email or app's) in terms of the frequency or volume of communications, or the nature or tone of such communications
- ☐ theft, fraud or misuse of school resources
- ☐ visiting school, attending social, sporting or other functions while intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other substances harmful to health
- ☐ smoking or vaping 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 College Principal to do so

When a parent or guardian behaves in such a way or breaches this code of conduct, the Principal and / or member of the College Leadership Team will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and / or mediation. If a resolution is unable to be reached, Appropriate action, which may include being banned from coming onto school grounds, attending school functions or school-based activities or, setting mandatory parameters around methods and timing of communication may be required. This is at the discretion of the Principal.

Parents/guardians/carers who continually breach this Code of Conduct or who engage in a significant and/or serious breach, will be referred to the Principal, who has full discretion to take or to seek the taking of action which may include termination of the enrolment agreement of a student.

Termination of the enrolment agreement may occur in circumstances where any parent/guardian/carer repeatedly breaches the Code of Conduct (after the parent/guardian/carer, or the family collectively, has been warned that any further breach may result in a termination of enrolment), or should any parent/guardian/carer engage in conduct on a single occasion which constitutes a serious breach of the Code of Conduct (involving for example, conduct which poses a serious risk to staff or student health and safety), the circumstances may result in a termination of their child's enrolment.

A decision to withdraw or terminate the enrolment of a student may be made by the Principal.

Where the behaviour is deemed likely to cause ongoing harm, distress or danger, the College will seek outside advice as to the best course of action.

In accordance with applicable legislation and the school's Child Protection Policy, the police and/or 'Families and Children's Services' within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) will be informed of any serious and/or unlawful breaches of this code.

### **Raising Concerns & Resolving Conflict**

(Refer also to our [Complaints Policy](#))

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 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/complaint
- Follow specified protocol for communication with staff members, including making appointments at a mutually convenient time and communicating your concerns in a constructive and respectful manner
- Refrain from approaching another child while in the care of the school to discuss or chastise them because of actions towards your child. Refer the matter directly to a Deputy Principal for follow-up and investigation by the school

When an adult behaves in unacceptable ways, as listed above, the Principal or Principal's nominee will seek to resolve the situation in one or more of the following ways:

1. repair relationships through discussion and/or mediation.

2. exercise our legal right to impose a temporary restriction or permanent ban from the school premises
3. report the incident to the Police.

This Code of Conduct is endorsed by the Santa Maria College Board.

**Date of Implementation – October 2022**

**Date for Review – October 2023**

NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN /CARER:	Signature:	Date:
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