



# Star of the Sea College

## Respectful Relationships Policy

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Star of the Sea College is a Catholic Independent Girls' school, founded by the Presentation Sisters in 1883. Since 2014, Star of the Sea has been a member of Kildare Ministries.

At Star of the Sea College we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of our students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our College. Our commitment is drawn from, and inherent in, the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel (*CECV Commitment statement to Child Safety, 2022*).

The person of each individual human being, in their material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic School (Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, n.9).

### **Rationale**

Catholic schools have a moral, legal and mission driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe (*CECV Commitment to Child Safety*). The safety of students is the first responsibility of the College and it incorporates the seven standards of Ministerial Order 1359 outlined in Appendix 1 into all aspects of operations.

Star of the Sea College aims to provide students with rich educational opportunities that reflect best practice in learning and teaching.

The College is committed to nurturing respectful relationships and active partnerships with parents. Parents are one of the most influential role models in their child's life. We believe that students' learning is enhanced through positive and reciprocal home and school relationships. The College therefore seeks parental support in promoting and upholding core values of the College Community and its culture of respectful relationships. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns respectfully.

This policy acknowledges that parents and College staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every student. Whilst the term 'parent' is used for ease, it is intended to include parents, guardians, step parents, caregivers and extended family. It articulates the College's key expectations of both staff and parents with regard to respectful relationships and behaviours.

As part of our culture of respectful relationships, among students, parents and parents, we strive to develop:

- A respect for the innate dignity and worth of every person
- An ability to understand the situation of others
- A cooperative attitude in working with others
- Open, positive and honest communication
- The ability to work respectfully with other people
- Trusting relationships
- Responsible actions.



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### Responsibilities

#### The College Leadership Team will:

- Work collaboratively to create and maintain a school environment where respectful and safe conduct is expected of everyone.
- Behave in a manner consistent with the standards of the teaching profession and meet core responsibilities to provide inclusive, safe and orderly environments.
- Plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure that the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students in attendance at the school are protected.
- Identify and support students who are, or may be, at risk.
- Aim to ensure every student achieves their personal and learning potential. • Work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Respond appropriately when inclusive, safe or orderly behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required.
- Advise parents of the College's communication and complaints procedures. • Ask any person who is acting in an offensive, inappropriate or disorderly way to leave the College grounds.

#### Teachers and College Staff will:

- Model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of the education profession.
- Proactively engage with parents about student outcomes, learning, development and wellbeing.
- Work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs.
- Communicate with the Leadership Team in the event of any tension or challenging issues involving parents.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity.
- Maintain confidentiality over sensitive issues.
- Ensure timely response to any concerns raised.



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### **Parents will:**

- Support the College's ethos, traditions and practices.
- Model positive behaviour to their child.
- Ensure their child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- Take an interest in their child's school and learning.
- Work with the College to achieve the best outcomes for their child.
- Communicate constructively with the College and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns.
- Support College staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all.
- Treat all College leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect and courtesy.
- Adhere to College policies.

### **Students will:**

- Model positive behaviour to other students.
- Comply with, and model College values.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Respect themselves, other members of the College community and the school environment.
- Adhere to the principles that affirm the right of all College community members to feel safe at school and free from bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Actively participate in school.
- Make the most of the educational opportunities offered by the College.
- Avoid disrupting the learning of others.

### **Community Members will:**

- Model positive behaviour to the College community.
- Treat other members of the College community with respect and courtesy.
- Support College staff to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.
- Utilise the College's communications processes to communicate with the Star of the Sea.



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### Consequences for Failing to Uphold the Statement of Values

#### Unreasonable behaviours

Behaviours that are considered inappropriate on, and adjacent to College grounds, or in relation to school business, and that do not uphold the principles within this policy, include when a person:

- is rude, aggressive or harasses others
- uses communication devices to send rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages, and/or posts on social media sites
- is manipulative or threatening
- speaks in an aggressive tone, either in person or over the telephone eg. shouting or swearing
- makes sexist, racist or derogatory comments
- uses social media inappropriately as a forum to raise concerns/make complaints against the College.
- is verbally or physically intimidating eg. invading the personal space of others by standing very close, aggressive hand gestures.
- damages or violates possessions or property.

#### Consequences

The College Leadership Team will be responsible for determining what constitutes reasonable and unreasonable behaviour. Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this policy may lead to further investigation and action.

Further action may include:

- utilising mediation and counselling services to resolve the situation and repair relationships
- alternative communication strategies being applied
- formal notice preventing entry onto College premises or attendance at College activities
- written notice to follow any verbal notice given
- informing the police, which may result in a charge of trespass or assault
- an intervention order being sought.



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### For Students

Continual repeated behaviour contrary to the principles in this policy may include:

- formal meeting with Deputy Principal Students and/or Head of Student Wellbeing, Pastoral Leader and parents
- utilising College Counselling Services
- formal behaviour agreement between the College, student and parents
- withdrawal of access to certain privileges/resources at the College for a period of time
- suspension from classes
- police involvement
- in cases deemed serious, negotiated transfer to another school in consultation with Kildare Ministries and/or MACS.

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria proposes that **wrongful behaviour of a serious nature is defined** as activities or behaviour of a student which:

- seriously undermines the ethos of the Catholic school; and/or
- consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any lawful order of a principal or teacher; and/or
- is offensive, or dangerous, to the physical or emotional health of any staff member or any student; and/or
- consistently and deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities of other students.

Guidelines exist in MACS Policy 2.26 which inform the Principal of appropriate courses of action in the case of behaviour of a serious nature, negotiated transfer or expulsion.

In accordance with the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority, it is noted that corporal punishment is not permitted and the College prohibits this practice.

By agreeing to meet specified standards of positive behaviour, everyone in the College community can be assured that they will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, this will help to create a school that is safe and orderly, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.



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### Appendix 1

#### Ministerial Order 1359

There are eleven minimum child safe standards with an overarching principle of inclusion that applies across each of the standards:

##### **Standard 1**

Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

##### **Standard 2**

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

##### **Standard 3**

Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

##### **Standard 4**

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

##### **Standard 5**

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

##### **Standard 6**

People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

##### **Standard 7**

Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.

##### **Standard 8**

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

##### **Standard 9**

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

##### **Standard 10**

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

##### **Standard 11**

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.



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| Responsible Officer           | Deputy Principal – Students   |
| Approved by                   | Principal   |
| Approved and commenced        | 2017  |
| Reviewed                      | 2022, 2023  |
| Next Review                   | December 2025   |
| Relevant Legislation          | Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005(Vic)<br>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)<br>Education and Training Reform Act 2006(Vic)<br>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)<br>Ministerial Order 1359 – <i>Child Safe Standards: Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools</i><br>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)   |
| Related Policies & Procedures | MACS Policy 2.25 Parents as Partners<br>MACS Policy 2.26 Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools<br>Child Safety Policy<br>Child Safety Code of Conduct<br>Enrolment Policy<br>Fees Policy<br>Grievance Policy and Procedures<br>ICT Staff Policy<br>ICT Student Policy<br>Privacy Policy<br>Social Media Policy<br>Student Behaviour Management Policy<br>Student Wellbeing Policy |
| Version                       | 13  |



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| Amendments | Updated Policy index<br>Addition of Head of Student Wellbeing |
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