



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Expectations of Parents and Guardians

Reviewed: January 2020  
Ratified: November 2019  
Next Review: 2022

### **RATIONALE:**

Parents play a crucial role in the education, social and faith development of their children. At St. Francis Xavier Primary School we have a very supportive body of parents who are involved in all aspects of school life. As a result, we have obtained a very high standard of education and civic responsibility in our students and this is highly valued by all members of our community.

St Francis Xavier Primary School is committed to providing a respectful learning environment that is safe, positive and supportive for all students, staff parents and other members of the school community.

We believe that Parents, Guardians, Carers, (referred to as **Parents** in this document) are valuable contributors in the life of our school and play a key role in the education of their children. As such, it is imperative that they act, at all times, in the best interest of all students, their families, staff members and the broader school community.

It is the intention of St Francis Xavier Primary School to provide all parents with clear guidelines regarding the conduct expected of them whilst on the school premises, communicating with staff, engaging in school related activities, attending school events or in any other way representing the school. Parents are expected to uphold the school's core values & expectations at all times.

St Francis Xavier Primary School values & expectations include:

#### **We Are All Individuals:**

- We accept that others may have different views, opinions & values.
- We foster individual talents and accept differences in children.
- We maintain confidentiality when dealing with issues related to other people's children
- We respect the decisions made by the staff as being professional, discrete and based on the best interests of all parties.
- We encourage our children to accept responsibility for their own mistakes and encourage them to be learning risk-takers
- We use appropriate channels and protocols to discuss concerns relating to children as set out in the *Concerns and Complaints Policy*.

#### **We Value Teamwork:**

- We accept that we have a major role to play in the education of our children
- We value staff as professionals and recognize the strong partnership between home and school
- We are active members of the school by attending Parent/Teacher Meetings and major school events
- We celebrate the educational successes of all students
- We maintain regular communication through school & reading diaries, by reading the school newsletter and initiating conversations with staff.
- We Are Responsible citizens:
  - We value the Catholic ethos of the school and demonstrate our commitment to Catholic Education
  - We treat all other community members with dignity and respect

- We set an appropriate example in matters of language and behaviour when at school
- We ensure regular and punctual attendance of our children at school
- We ensure that our children are well nourished and well rested to maximize learning potential
- We encourage community involvement for our children

#### **We Aim/We Achieve:**

- We uphold the high expectations of the school community as outlined in the St. Francis Xavier Expectations of Parents and Guardians code
- We accept that we have a leadership role within the school especially as learning role-models and through parent groups
- We show and encourage a passion for learning
- We accept and embrace educational initiatives provided by the school
- We actively support Home Learning initiatives including cyber-safety protocols
- We actively support the school core values  
 ☑ Mercy                      ☑ Respect                      ☑ Compassion                      ☑ Excellence                      ☑ Justice

#### **All Parents, Guardians and members of the community using social media must:**

- Ensure any social media usage is supportive of St Francis Xavier Primary School. This also applies to all employees, staff, Board, sub-committee members and volunteers.
- Avoid any statement that might bring St Francis Xavier Primary School into disrepute.
- Not commit the school to any action or initiative without appropriate authority.
- Not disclose official information unless authorised to do so or unless it is already in the public domain.
- Be aware of laws covering defamation, libel, privacy and the protection of intellectual property.
- Be apolitical, impartial and professional, and avoid any statements that might be interpreted as being in contravention of the teachings of St Francis Xavier Primary School and the Catholic Church.

This Code of Conduct aims to support the school's existing *Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct*, which further consolidates the school's commitment to providing a safe, supportive and respectful environment for everyone at St Francis Xavier Primary School.

#### **SCOPE:**

The Expectations of Parents and Guardians code has been developed by the St. Francis Xavier Community to clearly articulate the expectations and aspirations for our school community.

The Code highlights the importance of the partnership between school staff and community members for the benefit of the students at school and reflects the school's mission and vision.

The Code recognizes and respects the diversity of individuals in a learning community and emphasizes the importance of the role parents have as educators.

St Francis Xavier Primary School Parent / Guardian Code of Conduct applies to all adults including parents, guardians, step-parents, grandparents, extended family, and any other person on the school premises, engaging in school related activities, attending school events or in any other way representing the school .

#### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

When visiting St Francis Xavier Primary School Parents are required to:

- a) Sign in and out during school hours, via the school's Visitor Register, so that their presence in the school is acknowledged and recorded. This not only supports the school's commitment to Child Safety, but also all ensures their safety in the event of an emergency.

- b) Comply with all safety and emergency procedures implemented by the school and in the event of an emergency, whilst on school grounds, follow the instructions given by any member of school staff.
- c) When attending any school assembly, celebration, mass or event, parents will listen respectfully, in the same manner required of students and staff, and will refrain from creating any inappropriate noise or disturbance during performances, prayers or speeches by the Principal, staff members, students, visitors or other members of the school community.
- d) Not to discipline any child, including their own, or speak to any child about their behaviour. This is the role of staff members and all parents are required to respect this.
- e) Treat others visitors to the school with courtesy & respect including the clergy, members of parliament, representatives from the Catholic Education Department, allied health professionals or other educational consultants.
- f) When visiting a classroom parents accept the authority of the supervising staff member/s. Staff members value and respect parental involvement and assistance, but they may ask a parent to leave the classroom or class activity for any reason including, but not limited to:
  - i. Parental assistance not being required at the time;
  - ii. Parental assistance in the classroom or at the activity is disturbing or distracting to any student or member of staff;
  - iii. The parent is not in control of their emotions.

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## **ETHICAL CONDUCT:**

When attending St Francis Xavier Primary School or any school-related event, parents must:

- a) Refrain from engaging in malicious or judgemental gossip (either directly or online) and ensuring that anything they say about others is fair and truthful;
- b) Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes bullying, harassment, discrimination or vilification;
- c) Refrain from offensive, insulting or derogatory language or conduct. This includes wearing clothing with offensive words or insignias;
- d) Dress appropriately according to the occasion;
- e) Not take a photo or video recording of another student or parent without their consent;
- f) Not post a photo or video recording of a child that is not their own on social media without obtaining consent from the child's parent beforehand;
- g) Disclose the personal details of a student or parent to another person without consent.
- h) Not smoke on school grounds within four metres of any entrance (Victorian Law);
- i) Not possess alcohol on school grounds, unless the event has been sanctioned by the School;
- j) Never possess illicit drugs on school grounds;
- k) Not attend school events if affected by alcohol or other intoxicants; and
- l) Show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others.

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## **COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION WITH STAFF AND OTHER PARENTS:**

All members of the school community including staff and other parents are entitled to feel respected and safe. To achieve this, parents are reminded that their actions should not create any unnecessary stress or anxiety.

When communicating, staff members and other parents must:

- a) Interact civilly with staff, students and other parents at all times;
- b) Not use abusive language or expletives, raise their voice, insult or engage in violent behaviour to anyone on school grounds or at any school-related events;

- c) Ensure that physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of and relationship with the student such that questions of impropriety do not arise;
- d) Not discipline or raise their voice or get involved in verbal altercations with another parent or child under any circumstances;
- e) Parents must respect the privacy of other students, parents, staff, and volunteers within the school community;
- f) Advise the school of areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and family court orders in accordance with relevant laws;
- g) The school expects parents to behave lawfully on school grounds and observe the terms of any order, obligation or undertaking they may be subject to.

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### **DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH THE PRINCIPAL AND STAFF MEMBERS:**

The priority for staff members at St Francis Primary School is the welfare and education of all students at our school. The school Principal & staff members are therefore not required to respond to emails and telephone calls instantaneously. They will; however, ensure that they attend to all correspondence within a reasonable timeframe. Parents are also reminded that a response to communication should not be expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays unless it is an emergency.

The time available for parents to meet with members of staff is limited and must be scheduled when this does not disrupt learning time. When arranging to meet with a member of staff, parents must communicate the reason for the meeting and allow the staff member time to prepare, unless there is a genuine emergency that needs to be addressed.

All correspondence with the Principal and staff members should be courteous and respectful at all times.

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### **THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:**

Despite the range of positive uses of social media, parents must be mindful that there are also a number of ethical and legal issues associated with its use, which can directly or indirectly affect the welfare of staff members, students, other parents and the school's reputation.

When using Social Media, Parents must:

- a) Not make contact with any student (other than their own) using any form of social media. This is a breach of the school's Child Safety Code of conduct and may be considered 'Grooming' In accordance with the Victorian Crimes Act 1958 - Sect 49m;
- b) Not post images or videos of other students without prior consent from their parents;
- c) Not discuss or mention the school, its staff or any members of the school community in a negative or defamatory way;
- d) Be respectful to staff, volunteers, other parents, and/or students;
- e) Not use it as a means to voice grievances about the school members of staff, other students or parents;
- f) Make reasonable efforts to ensure that their children comply with the school's Child Safety, Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Social Media Policy;
- g) Never disclose any confidential information relating to other parents, staff members, volunteers, and/or students to third parties without the individual's express consent;
- h) Never post sexually inappropriate or other material that may damage the reputation of the School.

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## **COMPLAINTS:**

The school takes seriously any issues that are brought to its attention. If parents express their concerns to the school, they can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect in order to try to resolve the matter.

As a general guide, minor issues may be raised with the child's teacher. Cases of more serious inappropriate conduct or misconduct ought to be directed to the Principal.

When making a complaint parents should refer to the School's Complaints & Grievances Policy, which is available on the School Website; and parents must follow the procedures outlined in this Policy. It is a breach of this Parent Code of Conduct to make a complaint in a way that is not consistent with the School's Complaints & Grievances Policy, especially when the complaint is about the Principal or other Staff Members.

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## **BREACHES OF THE PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT:**

Where a breach of the Parent / Guardian Code of conduct has been identified or reported, the Principal will investigate the complaint.

Where the Principal is satisfied that a breach has occurred they will:

- a) Provide a first and final warning that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and that a further breach will not be tolerated;
- b) Determine whether a breach may be rectified by the parent making a private or public apology, depending on the circumstances, to an individual or group of individuals;
- c) Where the breach concerned unacceptable behaviour on a visit to the school, issue a trespass warning to the parent, which, if the behaviour continues, may accelerate to a trespass notice requiring the parent to stay away from the school unless on the school grounds with the express permission of the Principal;
- d) Correspond that there has been a breach of this Code of Conduct, resulting from language or expression used or the manner in which it is sent or delivered, and no other correspondence will be entered in too.

Nothing in this Policy precludes any person from exercising their individual legal rights in respect to obtaining restraining and intervention orders, reporting assault, bringing action for defamation, exercising rights under vilification or discrimination laws or in any other way.

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## **REFERENCES:**

St. Francis Xavier Primary School Ballarat Vision and Mission Statement  
St. Francis Xavier Primary School Ballarat Concerns and Complaints Policy  
St. Francis Xavier Primary School Ballarat Procedure for Handling Complaints  
St Francis Xavier Primary School Ballarat Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct  
Catholic Education Ballarat - BDSAC External Complaints Policy