



Bacchus Marsh
Grammar

School Board Policy

Governance

GOV-014 School Community Code of Conduct

Approved by the School Board 30 August 2023



School Community Code of Conduct

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1 Statement of Context and Purpose

- 1.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar including the Early Learning Centre (ELC) (the School) promotes values that are in keeping with the School's Mission Statement and philosophy (available on the School's website). These are developed in accordance with the values that underpin the Victorian Ecumenical System of Schools, of which it is a member.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this School Community Code of Conduct (Code of Conduct) is to set clear standards of behaviour expected by the School and provide guidelines for the effective development of positive relationships within the School environment and School community. This includes (but may not be limited to) the **Principal, School Board members, staff, students, parents, guardians, step-parents, relatives, friends, supporters, direct and indirect contact volunteers, contractors, carers, invitees and visitors of the School (School Community) (referred to as School Community Members in this document).**
- 1.1.3 This Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour expected by the School from all members within the School Community.
- 1.1.4 This Code of Conduct also specifies the consequences and/or sanctions for any member of the School Community who does not comply with these standards of behaviour.

2 Principles of Conduct

The following principles provide the framework for this Code of Conduct:

- 2.1.1 Members of the School Community are encouraged to actively participate in School life.
- 2.1.2 Members of the School Community and visitors to the School have the right to be safe and feel safe in the school environment. With this right comes the responsibility to be both law-abiding citizens and accountable for actions that put at risk the safety or wellbeing of themselves and or others.
- 2.1.3 Members of the School Community have a responsibility to develop a harmonious and safe school environment and address conflict and difference in a manner characterised by respect, civility, and dignity.
- 2.1.4 Members of the School Community are expected to:
 - Adhere to the School philosophy, codes of conduct, rules, policies, and procedures; and
 - Agree to abide by the School's disciplinary process and outcomes.
- 2.1.5 The School has absolute discretion to act with regard to any and all matters of risk, conflict and/or discipline involving the conduct of students, their parents/guardians and or any other members of the School Community, if the Principal or their delegate forms the opinion that behaviour (or a series of behaviours) warrant such action. This includes but is not limited to the type, number and severity of sanctions imposed for failure to meet the standards of behaviour expected within the Code of Conduct, and any other consequences deemed appropriate up to and including termination of enrolment. [refer to the Conditions of Enrolment]

3 Application

- 3.1.1 This Policy applies to all members of the School Community.
- 3.1.2 This includes but is not limited to conduct that is in any way connected with a student's enrolment and/or participation in the School, has occurred either inside or outside a School site or otherwise related to School property, when engaged in any School related function or activity, interacting with or affecting any members of the School Community, representing the School in any way or acting in any other capacity that may impact the management of the School or which may bring the School into disrepute.
- 3.1.3 Parents/guardians agree to be bound by this School Community Code of Conduct when parents/guardians sign the Enrolment Agreement and /or Annual Acknowledgement with the School. [Refer to the Conditions of Enrolment]

- 3.1.4 Although step-parents, relatives, friends, direct and indirect contact volunteers, contractors, supporters and carers of students at the School may not be a party to these agreements directly, it is expected that this School Community Code of Conduct will also apply to their interactions when engaging with the School and/or members of the School Community in any capacity.

Notes:

- More detailed requirements of staff, contractors and volunteers dealing with children and students are outlined in other policies. [Refer to the **Related Documents** at the end of this document]
- Similarly, more detailed guidelines for students are outlined in the **Student Code of Conduct** and the **Student Discipline Policy**.
- The ELC has its own suite of policies available to view on the School's website.
- To the extent of any inconsistency between this Code of Conduct and any other School document, the other document will prevail, except at the discretion of the Principal or their delegate.

4 School Expectations

- 4.1.1 The School requires the following groups of people to comply at all times in the following ways:

4.2 Students are required to:

- 4.2.1 Take accountability for their own behaviour and actions.
- 4.2.2 Support and care for one another.
- 4.2.3 Be respectful and understanding of their fellow students and the relationships around them.
- 4.2.4 Follow the rules of the School.
- 4.2.5 Listen and respectfully engage with School staff if they are subject to any disciplinary actions and/or investigations under this Policy.
- 4.2.6 Comply with any disciplinary action that is issued to them under this Policy.

4.3 Parents/guardians are required to:

- 4.3.1 Support their child/ren to learn and achieve successful outcomes while at the School.
- 4.3.2 Engage with educators and other staff at the School in a respectful and appropriate manner regarding all aspects of their child's enrolment at the School.
- 4.3.3 Communicate with the School if they have any concerns regarding their child, or if there are any issues that the School should be made aware of.
- 4.3.4 Work collaboratively with the School to ensure a safe, healthy and positive learning environment for their child whilst they attend the School.
- 4.3.5 Support the values, rules, policies, procedures and operating practices of the School.

4.4 Staff are required to:

- 4.4.1 Engage in respectful and appropriate relationships with students, parents, and guardians.
- 4.4.2 Support and promote the health and safe learning environment of every student.
- 4.4.3 Encourage and support each student to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- 4.4.4 Apply the provisions of this Policy in a way that is fair, appropriate and has considered the relevant circumstances of each student.

5 Role of Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play an important role in the education of their child (and or children). To help fulfil this responsibility parents/guardians should:

- 5.1.1 Show an active but non-invasive interest in their child's schoolwork and progress;
- 5.1.2 Support the School's educational endeavours and reinforce the importance and value of academic and co-curricular pursuits, hard work and self-discipline;



- 5.1.3 Encourage and assist their child to meet the School's expected standards of behaviour for students;
- 5.1.4 Help their child/ren be neat, appropriately dressed in the correct school uniform, and prepared for School;
- 5.1.5 Ensure that their child/ren attends School regularly and punctually;
- 5.1.6 Ensure their child/ren is not on School premises outside of the "hours of supervision" (refer to the School's website) unless otherwise arranged (e.g. waiting for a school bus, school camps, excursions, functions, scheduled class) and promptly report any absence, late arrival or change in the arrangements for attendance/collection from School;
- 5.1.7 Maintain prompt, open and honest communication with staff on an "as needs" basis regarding matters of education, welfare and/or discipline affecting their child;
- 5.1.8 Support the School with the handling of concerns and or disciplinary matters, including the School's disciplinary process as outlined in the Student Discipline Policy and decisions made by staff, with regard to matters involving their child/ren.

6 Standards of Behaviour

6.1 School Community Members must:

- 6.1.1 Ensure they are familiar with the School's published rules, policies and procedures, including the Conditions of Enrolment, this School Community Code of Conduct and the Student Code of Conduct as appropriate;
- 6.1.2 Work with the School in a reasonable fashion to deal promptly with areas of concern and use reasonable efforts to resolve conflict peacefully;
- 6.1.3 Accept and agree to abide by the Principal's absolute authority and discretion to regulate, manage and respond to all actions and behaviours occurring in the School environment or impacting the School Community;
- 6.1.4 Comply with the reasonable direction/instruction of staff while on School property and all other circumstances in which this Code applies;
- 6.1.5 Comply with School safety directions (such as COVID-19 protocols), an intervention order or School imposed order made for the protection of the student or another person.
- 6.1.6 Show respect to others and due respect to the reputation and good name of the School;
- 6.1.7 Be supportive of the School and its program. This does not preclude raising reasonable concerns/issues about particular matters, however, if a member of the community has wide ranging difficulties with the direction, ethos or management of the School, they need to reflect on their continued involvement with the School.

6.2 School Community Members must not:

- 6.2.1 Intrude into the working space of the School in a way that distracts students or interrupts the learning of either their child or others;
- 6.2.2 Bring any item or substance onto the School premises which is used as or considered to be a weapon, or otherwise pose a risk of harm to others. Such items are strictly prohibited on or near School premises;
- 6.2.3 Use any object (whether as a weapon or otherwise) to assault, threaten or intimidate any other person;
- 6.2.4 Engage in acts or threats of violence, intimidation or aggression (physical, verbal or otherwise) against another person, including involvement in such behaviour (e.g. coordinating, colluding or promoting with others);
- 6.2.5 Harass or cause an individual to harass another person (including sexual or sex-based harassment);
- 6.2.6 Discriminate or cause an individual to discriminate against another person (deliberate and/or premeditated), including but not limited to their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin,

- citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability or any other attribute protected by law;
- 6.2.7 Communicate in a disrespectful manner, verbally abuse, or use obscene language in communication (verbal or written) with staff, students or and other members of the School Community;
- 6.2.8 Be in possession of, or under the influence of illegal substances including drugs;
- 6.2.9 Be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with alcohol. This exception is when, in the normal course of events, the School provides hospitality to members or guests of the School Community in keeping with appropriate legal and hospitality regulations;
- 6.2.10 Smoke, vape or use e-cigarettes whilst on school property, or within 4 metres of a pedestrian access point to the School's grounds.
- 6.2.11 Make public and or publish any written communication or correspondence between the School and the **School Community Member**, either directly or indirectly, without the express prior permission of the School.
- 6.2.12 Record any conversation in the course of their activities at the School using an electronic device or publish or communicate a recording of any conversation, without the express permission of all parties of the conversation. Explicitly exempted from this ban are conversations or aspects of meetings which may be recorded incidentally as part of the school's CCTV system.
- 6.2.13 Engage in any other action, behaviour or other which, in the view of the Principal or their delegate, is potentially harmful to the health, safety and wellbeing of another person(s) or to the reputation or management of the School.

7 Social Media

When using social media, members of the School community are expected to ensure they:

- 7.1.1 Respect the rights, privacy and confidentiality of others;
- 7.1.2 Do not use the School's name or logo to create social media pages;
- 7.1.3 Do not speak on behalf of the School, or imply that they are speaking on behalf of the School, on social media;
- 7.1.4 Do not violate another person's right to autonomy or privacy, including but not limited to:
- Filming, taking photographs, screenshots of another person without express permission from the School and/or person(s) involved.
 - Uploading or circulating same to a third party (whether via a private or public forum, social media or otherwise), without express permission from the School and or person(s) involved.
 - Dissemination of sensitive information, misinformation, rumours or gossip about another person (maliciously or otherwise) who is a part of or in some way connected to the School.
 - Possession of images or material that violates another person's right to privacy or is illegal.
- 7.1.5 Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person;
- 7.1.6 Do not post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, threatening, violent, racist, sexist, pornographic, infringes copyright or is otherwise lawful or might cause damage to the reputation of the School and/or individual staff; and
- 7.1.7 Do not otherwise engage in actions or behaviours that bring harm to the reputation and good name of the School.

Note – "Social media" refers to online tools which provide individual users and/or organisations with the ability to create and share content in online communities or platforms. For a detailed definition and examples, please refer to the Social Media – Student Usage Policy available on the School website.

We note that the above requirements apply regardless of whether a School or personal device is used for the purpose of creating and or sharing content.

8 Extra-Curricular Activities

Young people participate in extra-curricular activities principally for their enjoyment. They should be encouraged to value honest effort as much as victory so results may be more readily accepted without undue disappointment.

- 8.1.1 School Community members are expected to demonstrate the following behaviours when attending extra-curricular activities:
- 8.1.1.1 Helping young people work towards performance improvement and good sportsmanship and provide positive role modelling and examples of such achievements/behaviours;
 - 8.1.1.2 Never ridicule or yell at a person for making a mistake or for losing;
 - 8.1.1.3 Applaud good performance by all participants in an activity;
 - 8.1.1.4 Not publicly question the referee or presiding official's judgement and honesty;
 - 8.1.1.5 Not swear or physically abuse participants, attendees or event organisers and support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from extra-curricular activities;
 - 8.1.1.6 Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches, managers and officials. They give of their time and resources to provide recreational activities for all students;
 - 8.1.1.7 Not approach a referee or official at any stage during or immediately after an event, except in appreciation.

9 Responsibilities for Visitors/Guests

- 9.1.1 Any School Community member who invites a relative, friend, supporter, carer, or other person to be present at the School or any School related function or activity at any location must be responsible for that person and must ensure that they act at all times in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

10 School Community Safety Order

The Victorian Government has introduced measures to curb aggression and violence directed towards school staff, students, and other School Community Members.

The legislation came into effect on 28 June 2022 and provides for the making of certain orders to protect members of the School Community from harmful, threatening, or abusive behaviour and provide for civil penalties for the enforcement of those orders.

Under the laws, the Principal and their delegate has the power to:

- Direct a person to leave and remain off the School grounds, or other places related to the School (an **immediate School Community Safety Order**); or
- Prohibit a person from entering or remaining on School grounds or other places related to the School, or from engaging in certain types of inappropriate conduct (an **ongoing School Community Safety Order**).

Accordingly, a School Community Safety Order may be issued verbally or in writing by an authorised officer of the School.

Importantly, the laws will extend beyond the actual School premises to any place where a School activity is taking place (e.g. on camp, at a swimming carnival) and any area within 25 metres of that place. Persons who engage in inappropriate conduct on social media platforms in respect of the School or a School Community Member could also be banned from School grounds under the orders.

Ongoing School Community Safety Orders can be in effect for a maximum of 12 months.

Those who are banned from the School grounds will still be able to communicate with the School and can seek a review under the School's Complaints Handling Policy (if applicable) or an external review at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Anyone who contravenes an immediate or an ongoing School Community Safety Order can face enforcement action at the Magistrates Court, including fines and other court orders.

Refer to the *Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021 (Vic)* for further details.

11 Consequences of a Breach of this Code

- 11.1.1 The School emphasises the need to comply with the requirements of this Code of Conduct, any notice of a breach of this Code of Conduct including a School Community Safety Order and or any other correspondence regarding disciplinary matters issued by the School.
- 11.1.2 If the Principal or their delegate forms the opinion that a member of the School Community is in breach of the Code of Conduct (including but not limited to a breach of the School's philosophy, rules, policies, procedures or sanctions), then a sanction, or series of sanctions, may apply (refer to section below titled Types of Sanctions).
- 11.1.3 The School will review each issue or allegation on its merits, the circumstances of each matter and apply a suitable consequence.
- 11.1.4 The decision to impose sanction(s), and the type and severity of the sanction(s) will be based upon the absolute discretion of the Principal or their delegate, giving due consideration to the known facts and circumstances, the behaviour of the School Community Member(s) in question, the seriousness of the issue(s), and in consideration of any sanctions previously applied.
- 11.1.5 Sanctions will apply for a twelve (12) month period (from the date of the latest sanction imposed) unless otherwise specified.
- 11.1.6 The School will endeavour to notify persons in writing regarding a finding that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and or any sanction(s) imposed, where the identity of the person is known. This includes the issue of a School Community Safety Order. The order or sanction may be communicated verbally in cases where it is not reasonably practical to correspond with the person receiving the order or sanction in writing. An order or sanction is not invalid merely because the School has not given written notice to a person of the breach and or sanction(s) imposed.
- 11.1.7 Where sanction(s) involve removal of a student(s) from the School, such as suspension and/or termination of enrolment, the School will endeavour to hold a meeting with the School Community Member (whether by phone, online or in person) to provide the member with an opportunity to explain their conduct.
- 11.1.8 School Community Members may also request an appointment to discuss a notice of breach of the Code of Conduct, a School Community Safety Order and or sanction(s) imposed. Such an appointment will usually be held with a Head of Year, Class Teacher, Head of School or Executive Deputy Principal with the exception of the most serious issues which will be held directly with the Principal or their delegate.
- 11.1.9 Similarly, members of staff may from time to time request an appointment with a School Community Member to discuss disciplinary matters. It is expected that the member will attend all such appointments.

12 When restraint may be used

- 12.1.1 The Department of Education and Training defines restraint to mean the use of physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of a person's body or part of their body. Persons are not free to move away when they are being restrained.
- 12.1.2 Staff may only use restraint of School Community Members in an emergency when there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to a student or others, and where such action would be considered reasonable in the circumstances and there is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.
- 12.1.3 It should only be used as a last resort and the decision about whether to use restraint should be made in accordance with the staff member's own professional judgement.

- 12.1.4 When applying restraint, staff:
- 12.1.4.1 Must use the minimum force required to avoid the dangerous behaviour or risk of harm to others and only restrain the School Community Member for the minimum duration required and stop restraining the School Community Member once the danger has passed.
 - 12.1.4.2 Should continue to engage with the School Community Member in a calm and measured way and explain why the restraint is being applied and that it will cease once member is no longer a danger to themselves or others.
- 12.1.5 The type of restraint used must be consistent with the circumstances including the School Community Members' age, size, gender, anticipated response and any physical, mental, or psychological conditions or impairments (if known).
- 12.1.6 In some limited circumstances, restraint may also include restraining a person from imminent dangerous behaviours by secluding them in an area where such action is immediately required to protect the safety of a student or any other person.

Note: Refer to the Restraint of Students Policy for further information regarding restraining students.

13 Types of Sanctions

- 13.1.1 The consequences to a member of the School Community for breaching this Code of Conduct will be determined at the discretion of the Principal or their delegate and may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:
- a) Prohibition on attending School property or part thereof;
 - b) Ban on attendance at any extra-curricular activity;
 - c) Limit on communication with the School and/or members of staff;
 - d) Appointment of a nominated representative for the purpose of communication with the School;
 - e) Removal of a student from the School, including suspension and/or termination of enrolment;
 - f) A School Community Safety Order including any of the above sanctions: and
 - g) Any other measures considered reasonable and necessary, in the discretion of the Principal or their delegate, based on the nature of the breach.

14 Making a Complaint

- 14.1.1 The School's right to enforce compliance with this Code of Conduct is paramount.
- 14.1.2 While School Community Members may disagree with the School's decision with regards to a breach, for example sanction(s) imposed or the outcome of an investigation, they are expected to abide by the School's disciplinary process and outcomes, and follow the appropriate processes for seeking a review.
- 14.1.3 If a School Community Member wishes to make a formal complaint about a matter pertaining to the School, they can do so by following the steps outlined in the School's Complaints Handling Policy located on the School's website.

15 Investigation of a Disciplinary Matter

- 15.1.1 Where appropriate and depending upon the seriousness of the matter, the School may appoint at its discretion an investigator to review what has occurred in respect to a particular incident. The person appointed may be a staff member who is employed by the School or may be external to the School.
- 15.1.2 Should an external investigator be appointed, the School Community Member(s) required to participate in the investigation will be notified at the earliest available opportunity.
- 15.1.3 In addition to any disciplinary action the School may take with regard to a matter, the School may elect to seek police assistance, or assistance of other relevant authorities, if the Principal or their delegate believe such involvement is warranted. Such involvement may be sought without notice to School Community Member(s).

- 15.1.4 The School will assist Victoria Police or any other relevant agency with their inquiries and investigations, including provision of School records and any confiscated material, items and/or other evidence, to the extent required by law and in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy.
- 15.1.5 Where deemed appropriate by the Principal, the School may initiate and/or undertake an investigation independent of any Victorian Police or child protection matters and may determine an appropriate outcome at a relevant time.

Note: Once a matter has been referred for police investigation, the commencement, continuation and/or completion of any School investigation and/or the imposition of sanctions (if any), will be at the sole discretion of the Principal and/or their delegate.

16 Implications for Practice

16.1 At Board/Principal Level

To properly implement this Code of Conduct, Bacchus Marsh Grammar, the Board and/or the Principal must ensure:

- 16.1.1 That this Code of Conduct is reviewed and endorsed on an annual basis;
- 16.1.2 That copies of this Code of Conduct are made available to all relevant stakeholders, for example on the School's intranet, and School website or notice boards;
- 16.1.3 That this Code of Conduct is incorporated into the Board's / Principal's record of current policies;
- 16.1.4 That this Code of Conduct is incorporated into the School's induction program, to ensure that all staff are aware of the Code of Conduct, have read and understood the Code of Conduct, and acknowledge their commitment to comply with the Code of Conduct; and
- 16.1.5 That periodic training and refresher sessions are administered to all staff in relation to this policy.

16.2 At Other Levels

- 16.2.1 To properly implement this policy, all Bacchus Marsh Grammar's stakeholders must ensure that they will abide by this Code of Conduct and assist the School in the implementation of this Code of Conduct.

17 Related Documents

- Child Safe Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Grievance Resolution and Investigation Policy
- Student Attendance Policy and Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Bus Travel Code of Conduct

18 Reference Points/Background Papers

- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth);
- Australian Human Right Commission Act 1986 (Cth);
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth);
- Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Act 2021 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic);
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth);
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth);
- Race Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth);
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth);
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) (the Act)

19 Authorisation

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Board Document No. | GOV-014 | |
| Board Document Name | School Community Code of Conduct | |
| Approval Authority | Chair of the School Board | |
| Approval Signature | Cathy Jeffkins Chair of the School Board Bacchus Marsh Grammar | |
| Administrator | Company Secretary | Greg Gough |
| Approval Date | 30 August 2023 | |
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20 History

| Date | Amendment |
|------------------------|---|
| 19 Sep 2017 | 1. Reviewed |
| 26 Oct 2018 | 2. Reviewed |
| 22 October 2019 | 3. Revised to capture supervision times |
| 28 October 2020 | 4. Reviewed and updated reference to School Board |
| 27 October 2021 | 5. Revised and updated to include warning notice and section on restraint |
| 25 May 2022 | 6. Revised to include the new School Community Safety Order |
| 30 August 2023 | 7. Reviewed and added in ELC under the School definition |