

SCHOOL VISION

To encourage children to strive to be their best self, now and in the future, for the betterment of all humanity and the planet.

We action our Vision through our School's Values

- **COURAGE** to do the right thing.
- **CURIOSITY** to know and learn.
- **CHARACTER** to be one's best self.
- **RESPECT** to live wisely and compassionately with others and the planet.

Our School values of Courage, Curiosity, Character, and Respect have been developed through engagement with key stakeholder groups (students, parents, staff, alumni and our Council) and sit at the heart of our education community, guiding every aspect of our learning and decision making.

Purpose

Growing good people in an intellectually rich, supportive and stimulating environment so that they are ready for life.

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

At St Margaret's Berwick Grammar, ensuring every child feels safe is our top priority. We have a zero-tolerance towards child abuse and strive to create a safe and welcoming environment where children feel secure at all times. We foster positive relationships among students, staff, and peers, based on trust and respect. We actively identify and address any potential safety risks for students, taking any concerns about child safety seriously and responding promptly and thoroughly.

Our staff are dedicated to safeguarding students from abuse or harm within the school environment, working with students to establish a supportive and collaborative atmosphere for learning and quality teaching. They adhere to child safe standards and expectations for appropriate behaviour when interacting with children.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At St Margaret's Berwick Grammar, we prioritize cultural safety and inclusivity for all children, including those from diverse backgrounds and those with disabilities. We believe these principles are essential for the safety of every child. We pay special attention to the safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families, culturally diverse students, students with disabilities, and those who may be vulnerable. Any inappropriate or harmful behaviour, directed at students based on these or other characteristics, is not tolerated at our school. We take immediate action to address and resolve such instances.

INTRODUCTION

The School is committed to ensuring a respectful learning environment that is safe, positive and supportive for all students, staff, parents and visitors. This Code of Conduct is to provide clear guidelines to all parents of the School, expectations with regard to their interactions with the School, its staff, other parents and students whilst on the School premises, engaging in School-related activities or representing the School.

DEFINITIONS

See table below.

Term	Definition
staff	all school employees, contractors, agency staff and volunteers including teaching and non-teaching staff.
parent	includes a guardian and those with parental responsibilities for the child (such as guardians, stepparents, grandparents, extended family and care givers) including parental responsibility under the Family Law Act 1975 of the Commonwealth and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

SCOPE

This Parent Code of Conduct applies to all School parents. The application of this Code of Conduct is not limited to the School site and school hours. It extends to all activities and events that are school related and when visiting or representing the School.

The Code of Conduct also requires that a parent or visitor actions do not bring the School into disrepute at any time regardless of whether the action occurs within or outside of School activities.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT

It is expected that every parent and visitor will:

- Uphold the School's core beliefs and values (see above).
- Support the School in its use of student management policies.
- Respect school attendance hours by ensuring that students are on time to school classes and events and are collected in a timely manner at the end of classes, school activities or commitments.
- Behave in a way that does not endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves or others.
- Abide by all health and safety rules and procedures operating the School and other locations at which they may visit whilst representing the School.
- Ensure that their actions in person and online do not bring the School into disrepute.
- Respect the authority of members of staff and observe school rules as required.
- Strictly adhere to the School policies and procedures as required.
- Behave with courtesy and consideration to staff and other parents at School events (including sports and performance) and online.
- Where parents are separated or divorced refrain from involving the School in any parental disputes; the School will not be a party to making judgments in claims made against each other.
- Where grievances occur use appropriate channels to air concerns.¹

Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable conduct includes but is not limited to:

¹ See 2025 Complaints and Grievances Policy – Community (under development)

- Touching, handling, pushing or otherwise physically or sexually engaging with students, children or others in a manner which is not appropriate and will endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of that person.
- Any form of physical or verbal violence including fighting, assault or threats of violence.
- Any form of cyber bullying or cyber abuse.
- Setting up a social media group or site in the School's name without the School's permission.
- Any form of threatening language, gestures or conduct.
- Language or conduct which is likely to offend, harass, bully or unfairly discriminate against any student, employee, contractor, volunteer or other.
- Theft, fraud or misuse of School resources and grounds.
- The use of inappropriate or profane words or gestures and images.
- Visiting the School, attending social, sporting or other functions whilst intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other substances harmful to health.
- Smoking on the School premises or within the immediate environs of the School.
- Distributing any contact details without the express permission of the people on the contact list.
- Recording a meeting (face-to-face or online) or phone conversation without written consent from the staff member is unacceptable and illegal.²
- Engaging in gossip, rumour and or innuendo about another member of the School community and specifically School staff.

Engaging and Communicating with Staff

The School arranges regular meetings between staff and parents to discuss students' progress. There may be other times when a parent or staff member requests a meeting, to discuss particular issues that may arise during the course of a student's schooling.

Guidelines for this engagement are as follows:

- All meetings should take place on the School premises at a mutually convenient time
- Parents should never attempt to contact a staff member on their personal phones
- Parents and staff should engage respectfully at all times
- Parents who have a concern about a staff member can raise the issue with that staff member directly or with an appropriate senior staff member
- Communications may be verbal or written, and includes face to face, telephone and email interaction
- Staff have many responsibilities during the school day such as teaching, preparation, coaching, assisting students and attending meetings; parents who contact a staff member, whether by telephone, email or another medium, should not expect an immediate reply; **staff try to respond within 24-48 hours but may not always be able to do so; staff will respond as soon as time permits.**

² As per The Surveillance Devices Act 1999 VIC: To record such private activity, the law requires the consent, express or implied, of all parties to the private activity be obtained.

- Parents should email teachers sparingly; the majority of a teacher's working day is spent teaching or preparing for teaching; dealing with copious emails can significantly detract from a teacher's primary role

BREACH

Parents and visitors who breach the Parent Code of Conduct will be contacted by the relevant member of the Senior Executive. Appropriate action, which may include being banned from coming onto School grounds, attending School functions or School-based activities, is at the discretion of the Principal.

Parents who continually breach the Parent Code of Conduct will be referred to the Principal, who has full discretion to take action, which may include exclusion/expulsion of your child.

In accordance with applicable legislation and the School's Child Protection Policy, the Police and/or Department of Families, Fairness, and Housing Victoria (DFFH) will be informed of any unlawful breaches of this Code.

COMMUNICATION

This Code of Conduct will be shared with parents on enrolment and parents will be requested to acknowledge that they have read this document and agree to comply with this document for the period of their child's enrolment at the School.

This policy will be published on the Parent Lounge and on the School website.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy should be read in conjunction with other School policies and procedures.

Child Protection, Mandatory Reporting and Reportable Conduct Policy

Child Safety Policy

Raising Concerns and Complaints Policy

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or queries relating to this policy please contact the Risk and Compliance Manager (compliance@smbg.vic.edu.au) in the first instance and they will direct you to the appropriate responsible person.

REVIEW

Document Owner	Head of Junior School
Approved by Principal	November 2024
Published – Nexus	March 2025
Next Review	November 2027