

# Community Code of Conduct



## POLICY OBJECTIVE

The Community Code of Conduct ensures that all members of the College Community are aware of and meet the College's expectations with regard to their interaction with the College, its teachers, parents and students. Adherence to this Code is central to promoting and building positive and productive relationships within the Mercy College Community. All members of the College Community are expected to behave with dignity, respect, civility and in a manner supportive of the College's Catholic and Mercy tradition.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### Role of the College

The College is responsible for establishing and administering the policies, procedures and rules that govern the day to day operations of the College. Parents/carers are expected to recognise, respect and support the College's decisions.

### Student Management

The College expects students to comply with its rules and to not engage in behaviour which is harmful to others or is contrary to the ethos and values of the College. Parents/carers are expected to support the College in relation to its Student Management policy and not undermine its authority. In the case of minor disciplinary matters, the College will be the arbiter of what took place and what constitutes fair punishment. It will not engage in debate about the details of the conduct or the appropriateness of the punishment.

In relation to serious disciplinary matters, which may result in suspension or expulsion, the College will inform parents/carers of the matter and manage the matter in accordance with the College's Student Management Policy. While parents/carers will be consulted, the final decision will rest with the College.

### Interaction with Staff

Members of the College Community are requested to follow the communication channels identified in the Communication and Notification of Concerns and Complaints from Community Members Flowchart (refer Appendix 2).

- **Email**

The preferred method of communication between staff and members of the College Community is via a courteous email (eg. Appendix 1a) or by making an appointment for a face to face meeting at a mutually convenient time. College staff may not reply to parents/carers who communicate via email in a discourteous manner (eg. Appendix 1b).

- **Conferences**

The College conducts yearly conferences between staff, students and parents/carers at which the student's progress can be discussed. There may however, be other times when a parent/carer or staff member requests a meeting to

discuss particular issues that may arise during the course of a student's schooling.

- **Additional Meetings**

A face to face meeting may be arranged through the College office with the relevant contact as identified in the Communication and Notification of Concerns and Complaints from Community Members Flowchart (refer Appendix 2). Parents/Carers can also make an appointment to see the Principal about issues of a sensitive nature. No attempt should be made to contact a staff member at their home.

- **Response Time**

Throughout the day staff are engaged in teaching and learning and therefore may be unable to respond immediately to parent/carer phone calls or emails, depending on the nature of the communication. Staff will attempt to reply to all communications within two working days. It is unreasonable to expect staff to respond after 5 pm on weekdays and/or on weekends or during the holidays.

- **Raising Concerns**

It is important that parents/carers show respect for staff and not publically criticise them or seek to undermine their authority. If a parent/carer has a particular concern about a member of staff, they can raise it with the staff member concerned or with the relevant line manager or Principal. However, when doing so they should observe the general rules of conduct set out in this Code. The College has a duty of care to protect all staff and for this reason any aggressive or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

In the event of an emergency, parents/carers must contact the College Office.

### Interaction with Students

During College hours, all communication and access to the College site must be through the Student Centre or College Office. Parents/carers should not bring to the College, late assignments, lunches or PE gear as all students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and learn the value of independence.

When a grievance may exist between students, parents/carers must not contact other students or parents directly.

### Positive Role Modelling and Expectations

All members of the OLMC Community are expected to role model good citizenship and ethical conduct, supporting the College in the application of the College's ethos and core values by:

- being inclusive
- being open minded and adaptable

- accepting cultural and religious diversity
- assuming positive intent from all
- interacting respectfully with staff, students, parents/carers and other members of the College Community and displaying appropriate and respectful conduct at functions (including sport and other college-related events)
- showing an active but non-invasive interest in their daughter's school work and progress
- advocating for their own daughters whilst remaining objective and supporting the College staff in their efforts to investigate and resolve matters
- discussing issues or concerns about the College, staff or students through correct procedures/channels with the utmost care for the dignity of others
- being supportive of the College uniform and other regulations by reinforcing positive messages at home
- supporting the development of resilience in students, allowing them to learn from their mistakes
- maintaining appropriate and respectful conduct whilst driving in the vicinity of the College
- becoming familiar with the Community Code of Conduct, Enrolment Policy and other relevant College Policies

### **Use of Social Media**

Social media should not be used to criticise or denigrate others in the College Community. The College, staff members and students, parents/carers and other members of the College Community should not be discussed or represented in a negative or defamatory way.

No member of the College Community may copy any photos from the College's website.

### **Classes**

Allocation to class is not a matter of negotiation or pressure or preference.

Parents/carers should have confidence that their daughter has been placed in an appropriate class, and that careful and proper consideration has been given to the decision, taking into account a variety of educational factors.

### **Complaints**

If a parent/carer has a complaint about an issue, they should contact the relevant staff member as per the Student Diary and the College's Complaints Policy. Rude or abusive language will not be tolerated.

### **Interactions Generally**

Communications whether verbal or in writing with other members of the College Community, (teachers, administration staff, other parents/carers or students) should:

- show respect, courtesy and consideration
- not harass or bully another person
- not use inappropriate language
- not be confrontational

### **Sport**

All members of the College Community are required to comply with the OLMC Sport Code of Conduct.

Parents/carers are welcome to attend sporting events, but should exercise restraint when supporting College teams. In particular, they should not abuse, threaten or otherwise seek to intimidate an umpire or referee or make comments directed against a player, or any College representatives.

The Sports coaches at the College pick teams based on their view of the most appropriate selection at the relevant time. It is not appropriate for parents/carers to complain about the failure of their daughter to be picked for a particular team or attempt to negotiate their daughter's place on a team.

### **Traffic Etiquette**

These guidelines are to ensure the safety of the OLMC Community in an area where they are at greatest risk with moving vehicles and pedestrians in one space. The College Community is asked to:

- adhere to the speed limit
- remain mindful and patient
- not overtake
- not use car horns (unless indicating danger)
- park only in those areas where parking is permitted
- not double park in the street
- not queue in the roundabouts near the College
- always choose safety over convenience

### **Separated Parents**

Where some students have parents/carers who are separated or divorced, parents/carers should not attempt to involve the College in any parental dispute that may arise. The College is not able to make judgements on the merits of claims made by one parent/carer against another and should not be asked to do so. Nor should it be asked to take any action, which would, or is designed to, disadvantage one party. The College will of course, observe any orders made by a Court in relation to a student or communications with parents/carers.

### **Failure to Observe this Code**

The consequences to a member of the College Community for breaching the Community Code of Conduct will be as determined by the Principal or Principal's delegate and may include one or more of the following:

- a ban on a member of the College Community from attending any College related activity
- limited access to a teacher or teachers
- a direction that communication with staff be limited to dealing only with a nominated College representative
- limited access to the College premises or sporting or other College events
- termination of the enrolment of the student

## SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

### Appendix 1a: Email Sample – courteous email

To: Mrs Anne Brown

Subject: Jessica Smith (Student in Year 7 – Callan 3)

Dear Mrs Brown

I am writing to you to let you know that my daughter Jessica appears to be experiencing some challenges in transitioning from primary school to Year 7. She is enjoying the new friendships that she has made and the College environment but is struggling with the workload, particularly the amount of homework she has to complete. Her father and I thought it would be helpful to ensure that you were aware of this and would appreciate having an opportunity to meet with you to see if we could identify some strategies that we could also implement at home to support her.

We could meet with you on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons after school or before school on Fridays if that is more convenient.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Mrs Karen Smith

Subject shows student name, House and Year

Salutation to open the email 'Dear Mrs...'

Tone is courteous and appropriate

Provides details to support convenient meeting time

Ends email in a formal manner

### Appendix 1b: Email Sample – discourteous email

To: Mrs Anne Brown

Subject:

not happy with my daughter's class NOT good enough I want someone CALL ME asap

Missing appropriate Subject

Tone is not courteous or appropriate

Lacking appropriate details to support timely resolution

Capital letters in an email represents shouting and should not be used

**Appendix 2: Flowchart** – Communication and Notification of Concerns and Complaints from Community Members

