



Engagement - Parent, Visitor and Volunteers Policy

*This policy relates to **Child Safe Standard 2, 3 & 6***

At St. Joseph's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children at St. Joseph's will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

General Principles

It is expected that parents/guardians/carers & volunteers may need to approach the school in order to:

- Discuss the progress, engagement or well-being of their child;
- Express concern about actions of other students;
- Enquire about school policy and practice;
- Engage with in-school/excursion activities e.g. class/year groups.
- Assist with reading/numeracy; P.E. etc, following an invitation/enquiry for assistance from staff;
- Participate in school community activities
- Convey information about change of address, custody details, health issues etc.;
- Express concern about actions of staff or member of the community.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the standards of behaviour expected of those who engage with the school and to detail the necessary procedures that will help solve issues as soon as possible so that a safe and harmonious school environment is maintained. This Policy extends to all school functions and events.

At St. Joseph's we seek to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors to our school. At the same time we recognise our duty of care to ensure a safe environment for our students, staff and parent community.


All parents, visitors and volunteers must familiarize themselves with the '**Child Safety' Code of Conduct** when signing in via PassTab (iPad) at the School Office.

The school reserves the right to pursue any appropriate course of action if any parent/guardian/carer or volunteer does not fulfil these requirements.

Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians/Carers and Visitors

All parents/guardians/carers and visitors are expected to:

- Treat **ALL** (staff, parents & students) persons associated with the school with respect and courtesy;
- Ensure their child/children are punctual to class everyday;
- Vacate the school grounds as soon as practical once classes commence;
- Sign in via PassTab (iPad) the office if assisting in class or other school based activities, etc;

St Joseph's Primary School	System Update: 21. 04. 2020	
CEM Approved 2018	Date of Next Review: 21. 04. 2022	

- Direct their child to the play area monitored by duty teacher as students are under the supervision of staff if waiting in the school grounds until classes commence;
- Monitor all pre-school children who must stay with the accompanying adult at all times (this includes any school special event such as BBQs, School Discos etc.);
- Make mutually convenient appointments to obtain an interview with school staff. Confidential or sensitive conversations should always occur face to face and after making an appointment. Staff should not be approached regarding an issue with other parents or students present. Teachers and visiting staff are not available during teaching time;
- Allow staff to supervise, investigate and manage students without interference;
- Discuss issues or concerns about the school, staff, other parents or students through the correct school procedures;
- Respect the School's Privacy Policy;
- Use class contact lists only for relevant school business and positive communications;
- When attending school functions where alcohol is present, adults must adhere to the Alcohol Consumption at School Events Policy and all attendees must set a positive example;
- Must not enter the school grounds when under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances.

Confidentiality is of primary importance

All parents/guardians/carers & volunteers are encouraged to use appropriate channels of communication to discuss any sensitive information they obtain at school. Appropriate channels would include: classroom teacher, Deputy, Principal and Parish Priest.

Appropriate Communication


It is important to understand that it may not be possible for teachers to respond immediately to phone calls or emails particularly out of hours or during teaching times (8:45pm-3:45pm). The classroom teacher will endeavour to return your call or email as soon as possible (24 hour turnaround). If you have a sensitive issue or would like to discuss a concern, please make an appointment with your child's classroom teacher to discuss in person (avoid doing so via email). Emails deemed to be inappropriately negative will be forwarded to school leadership and contact will be made directly with the parent. 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.

Parents/guardians/carers are encouraged to communicate with teachers but must be conscious of not monopolising the teacher's time to the exclusion of other parents/guardians /carers.

Staff Safety and Wellbeing

The school places high value and priority on maintaining a safe and respectful working environment for our staff. We regard certain behaviours as harmful and unacceptable in so far as they compromise the safety and professional wellbeing of our staff. These behaviours include, but are not limited to;

- Shouting or swearing, either in person or on the telephone;
- Physical or verbal intimidation;
- Aggressive hand gestures;

St Joseph's Primary School	System Update: 21. 04. 2020	
CEM Approved 2018	Date of Next Review: 21. 04. 2022	

- Writing rude, defamatory, aggressive or abusive comments to/about a staff member (emails/social media);
- Racist or sexist comments;
- Damage or violation of possessions/property.

If a parent/guardian/carer behaves in such unacceptable ways they will be asked to remove themselves from the school. The Principal or a senior staff member will seek to resolve the situation and repair relationships through discussion and/or mediation. Where a parent's behaviour is deemed likely to cause ongoing harm, distress or danger to the staff member and others, we may exercise our legal right to impose a temporary or permanent ban from the parent/guardian/carer entering the school premises. If an extreme act of violence causes physical harm to the staff member and his/her property, the matter will be reported to the police for investigation and other legal remedies will be sought. As per *Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines (Catholic Education Commission Victoria, 2014)*

Procedures for Volunteer Helpers

Throughout the school year, teachers need volunteers to assist in classrooms, school programs, performing arts, events (e.g. Mother's Day Morning Tea) and sports programs and/or other school initiatives.

Parents/carers and other volunteers assisting with school activities do so on the understanding that:

- Teachers are responsible for the programs operating within the classroom and/or school;
- Teachers have the ultimate responsibility for students under their care for the duration of their time at school
- They support the sensitivity and confidentiality of all students;
- They accept responsibility and supervision for pre-school age children under their care for the duration of their time at school;
- Their conduct and manners should at all times be acceptable and an appropriate model for all students;
- They should sign themselves in and out through PassTab at the School's front office when participating in school activities;
- They wear a VISITOR badge as identification whilst assisting students;
- They have completed and signed the "Working with Children Check" including the Prohibited Persons Declaration, available at the office, before undertaking any volunteer/student assistance at the school in the first instance;
- They report safety concerns, injuries or emergencies to a member of staff;
- They minimise noise or disruption to classes whilst on school grounds.
- Parents/guardians/carers & visitors are not to approach other parents' children, parents or staff in a disrespectful manner and to see the Deputy/Principal if they are having major concerns;
- If having a concern, parents/guardians/carers are encouraged where appropriate, to meet with their child's teacher before the Principal.
- They do not take photos on mobile phones or devices without the consent of the classroom teacher or staff member.

**Sacramental and Mass expectations**

Parents/guardians/carers are expected to:

- Support their children in preparation for all aspects of their sacraments. This will include attending Mass with their children during their sacrament preparation;
- Our School Parishes welcome all family members to celebrate Mass, however during all masses, including class masses, please have consideration for others and be respectful for example leave the pews tidy and avoid excessive speaking or having conversations during the mass.