

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

### **Purpose**

Emmaus College aims to provide an open, welcoming and safe environment for all. We strongly believe in working with parents/guardians in the education of their children. We also acknowledge the valuable role that volunteers can play in the life of the school.

This code of conduct for parents/guardians and volunteers outlines the type of practice we require all adults interacting with the College community and volunteering in our school to follow. It will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff. The Code of Conduct is a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals. This policy will provide guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure that all interactions that parents/guardians have with staff or students are respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful and considerate.

Emmaus College has a legal and moral responsibility to provide a safe and happy environment for all students and staff. Parents have an obligation to ensure that their interactions support these responsibilities.

### **Policy Statement**

#### **Values**

Emmaus College is a place of learning for students and the rights of the student will be considered first and foremost.

The school is committed to:

- The wellbeing of each student having fundamental importance.
- The provision, as far as is practical, of a safe and secure environment for students and staff.
- Providing an open, welcoming environment where everyone's contribution is valued and respected.
- Encouraging parents/guardians, volunteers and community members to support and participate in the life of the school.

### **Scope**

This code of conduct applies to all adults, including parents/guardians, volunteers, extended family, visitors and others while involved in any activities related to Emmaus College.

This code of conduct covers all forms of communication whether written, spoken or through social media.

## **Background and Legislation**

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Children's Services Act 1996 (Pre Prep)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2005
- Educational Act for State 2004
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Workplace Relations Act 1996
- Ministerial Order 870 2016
- Emmaus College policies and procedures located in the Emmaus College Staff Handbook

Emmaus College needs to ensure:

"..that the children's service is operated in a way which ensures the safety of the children being cared for or educated and that their development needs are met" Children's Services Act 1996 Section 18 (4), Education Act.

As an employer Emmaus College has an obligation to ensure a safe and discrimination free working environment for staff in accordance with relevant legislation.

Emmaus College needs to ensure all parents/guardians, volunteers, staff, students and any other persons involved in the school, adhere to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interaction and communication with one another, and with students and staff at the school.

## **Procedures**

General guidelines for interactions

- Safety: Comply with all relevant policies and procedures of each campus. These are displayed in the Emmaus College Staff Handbook. Be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.
- Ethical conduct: Always act in the best interests of students, their families, and staff members.
- Support: Work in a co-operative and positive manner.
- Communication: Use courteous and acceptable written, spoken and electronic language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language. Response to emails and telephone calls are not expected to be instantaneous or out of normal working hours, unless of an urgent nature. Normal service standard suggests that an acceptable response time for emails is within 48 hours.
- Respect: Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment or discrimination.
- Confidentiality: Comply with the schools Privacy Policy.
- School programs: If participating in a school program on a voluntary basis seek guidance and direction from staff. If unsure ask staff for further information. Behaviour guidance of the students is the responsibility of staff. Immediately refer any issues or concerns related to managing student's behaviour to staff.

Emmaus College is responsible for:

- Ensuring all parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, students and visitors have access to a copy of this policy.
- Maintaining currency and relevancy of the Code of Conduct Policy.
- Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in this policy as (Schedule1).

The Staff are responsible for:

- Respecting the individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of families in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal.
- Working with colleagues, school leadership, the Board and parents/guardians to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback.
- Providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and when appropriate, clear and respectful directions.

The Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Reading the Code of Conduct Policy; and
- Abiding by the standards of conduct as set out in this policy (Schedule 1).

Procedure for dealing with a breach in the code of conduct:

On notification of a possible breach of the code the appropriate Emmaus College Leadership Team member will investigate the complaint and recommend a course of action to the Leadership Team which may include, but is not limited to:

- A meeting with a Leadership Team member to discuss the possible breach in the code of conduct.
- A first and possible final warning meeting and subsequent letter being issued to inform the relevant person/s of the outcome of the investigation and that a further breach of the code of conduct will not be tolerated.
- Communication with the President of the Association of Canonical Administrators and/or Chair of the College Board regarding the breach(s) of the code of conduct.
- Notification to the Catholic Education Office of Melbourne.
- Legal options such a restraining order being sought against the relevant person. The restraining order would likely detail the limitations, and constraints imposed on the named individual in their actions and interactions with Emmaus College.
- Reviewing the ongoing enrolment of the student if the parents/guardians again seriously breaches of the code of conduct (parents/guardians annually sign an agreement to support the College and its policies). This action will only be taken if no other alternatives are deemed appropriate.

### **Related Documents**

The Code of Conduct is to be read with and operates in conjunction with Emmaus College Policies and Conditions of Enrolment.

### **Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved its values and purposes the Leadership Team will:

- Monitor compliance with the expectations and procedures set out in the policy.
- Take into consideration feedback on the policy from staff, parents/guardians and Emmaus College Board and Education Sub-Committee members.
- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues arising from this policy.

## **SCHEDULE 1**

### **Standards of Conduct**

Behavioural practices to follow

#### In relation to students:

- Be a positive role model at all times;
- Always speak in an encouraging and positive manner;
- Listen actively to students and offer empathy, support and guidance where needed; and
- Regard all students equally and with respect and dignity.

#### In relation to other adults (including staff):

- Use respectful, encouraging and accepting language;
- Respect the rights of others as individuals;
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Accept staff decisions. After consulting with staff, you may not always agree with a decision, but staff have act in the best interest of students and the wider school community;
- Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures;
- Discipline of students at school is the responsibility of staff and therefore any matters or concerns related to managing students' behaviour should be referred to staff immediately;
- Refrain from public criticism of children and staff at the school. Parents are expected to refrain from discussing the business of school or children attending school in any public forum, including social media sites. Parents are not expected to post pictures of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites. Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community;
- Under NO circumstances should a student, other parent/guardian or member of staff be approached directly or in a confrontational manner;
- Responses to emails and telephone calls are not expected to be instantaneous or out of normal working hours, unless of an urgent nature. Normal service standard suggests that an acceptable response time for emails is within 48 hours; and
- Smoking is prohibited on the school property at all times.