

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS

October 2019

## 1. Rationale

Catholic schools exist to further the mission of the Church. In Western Australia the Bishops' Mandate requires CEWA to make school education available to all Catholic children, as far as resources allow.

As a Marist school, Newman College has at its heart a distinctive spirituality. Marists commit themselves to living the gospel of Jesus with the same faith, hope and compassion that Mary did.

The founder of the Marist Brothers, St Marcellin Champagnat, taught 'to educate a child you must first love them and love them equally'.

## 2. Context

At Newman College we value our collaboration with families and guardians as we seek to establish relationships based on courtesy, mutual trust and open communication. Our Vision for Learning 'Shine through Discovery' – *Let your light shine* (Matthew 5:16) inspires our faith and learning community to Challenge, Collaborate, Create and Celebrate who we are and what we seek to achieve.

Newman College comprises a wide variety of individuals who work together to educate our students to become confident, well-educated members of the community who are prepared to contribute as citizens, to cooperate with others and act reflectively and ethically.

Our shared values and an understanding of acceptable behaviours enable the Newman College Community to work together with respect and appreciation for each other.

At Newman College we recognise our legal obligation to ensure the ongoing health and safety of students, staff, and families within our community. We encourage parents and guardians to support our educational environment that exemplifies our Marist charism that encourages our students to grow into the fullness of their humanity where they feel welcomed, accepted and valued.

### **3. Principles**

- 3.1 Newman College commits to providing a distinctly Catholic and Marist education for all students PK-12.
- 3.2 The Code of Conduct sits in the context of Newman College's commitment to upholding the values of the Catholic Church and providing a safe and supportive educational environment for students within the College. As a result, families at Newman College should become advocates and models for Christian values and lifestyle.
- 3.3 All parents, guardians and care-givers (referred to in this Code as Parents) of students enrolled in the College are requested to support and encourage the College in developing and nurturing relationships grounded in Gospel values.
- 3.4 Membership of the Newman College community implies specific relationships between students, parents, staff and volunteers. This will include parent groups and sporting clubs of Newman Sports Association. These relationships are founded on core Gospel values. Acceptance, respect and dignity must, therefore, be accorded to every member of the College community. For example, bullying, intimidation or threats to other persons are counter to Marist and Christian values and will not be tolerated.
- 3.5 Newman College commits to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of every person. The provision of a safe and supportive environment is essential to ensure that all families, students and staff are affirmed in their dignity and worth as persons.
- 3.6 Newman College fulfils its mission in partnership with parents who are the first educators of their children. We recognise that Parents are valuable participants in our community and we want to work in partnership with Parents to provide and support the safe and competent education and care of students.
- 3.7 This Parent Code of Conduct sets out the way the College expects Parents to conduct themselves in their interaction with others in the College community including but not limited to our administrators, teaching staff, support staff and students.
- 3.8 It is a requirement that all Newman College families adhere to principles and practices as outlined in the College's Enrolment Policy and Conditions of Enrolment, as signed by parents.
- 3.9 This Code of Conduct applies to all Parents and care-givers.

### **4. Appropriate conduct**

As members and participants in the Newman College community parents shall respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the College community. They are expected to act in accordance with the values of the Gospel and conduct themselves in accordance with the appropriate standard relevant to their relationship with the College.

When engaging with the College, Parents shall:

- 4.1 refrain from engaging in malicious or judgmental gossip;
- 4.2 ensure that everything they say about others is fair, respectful and truthful;
- 4.3 value the dignity of each person;
- 4.4 refrain from any conduct that may be characterised as bullying, harassment, discrimination or vilification;
- 4.5 ensure any complaint complies with the complaint process in this Code of Conduct;
- 4.6 use language which is impartial, respectful and honest and not offensive, insulting or derogatory;
- 4.7 dress respectfully for the occasion;

- 4.8 not possess alcohol on the College site unless the event has been endorsed by the College Principal;
- 4.9 not attend College events if affected by alcohol or other intoxicants;
- 4.10 show respect for College property and the property of other members of the College community; and
- 4.11 ensure all conduct is appropriate to ensure the occupational safety and health of all College employees.
- 4.12 The College expects that all written and spoken communication from Parents to anyone in the College community will be courteous and respectful.
- 4.13 ensure that relationships with students are strictly appropriate by avoiding any favouritism, special treatment or exclusion; and
- 4.14 advise the College of any areas of potential conflict such as parenting and family court orders in accordance with the relevant laws.

## **5. Social media**

There are ethical and legal issues with the use of social media that can be directly and indirectly damaging to the College and members of its community.

When using social media, Parents are to:

- 5.1 be positive and respectful about the College, its staff and students;
- 5.2 avoid expressing grievances about the College;
- 5.3 make reasonable efforts to ensure that their children comply with the College's ICT Policy;
- 5.4 not post a photo or video recording of another student without the prior consent of the student's Parent;
- 5.5 not post a photo or video recording of a staff member or Parent in any forum without their prior consent;
- 5.6 respect confidentiality and not disclose any confidential information about a member of the College community;
- 5.7 respect other Parents and not use social media as a means of making contact with other students; and
- 5.8 not post any material that may damage the reputation of the College or a member of the College community.

## **6. Process for making a complaint**

If a Parent wants to raise a complaint, they are required to comply with the complaint process in this Code of Conduct.

Generally, issues of a minor nature should be raised with the child's teacher and or Leader of Wellbeing. More serious or complex matters should be raised with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Parents may raise issues in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct and concerns related to the education of their child or other matters related to the College.

The College respects the rights of Parents to raise their issues or concerns. The College will respond to those issues or concerns with courtesy and respect, with a focus on resolving the matter in a timely manner.

Parents are to accept that it may take up to two school days to receive a response to an email sent to a teacher, but telephone contact can be made where an urgent response is required.

## **7. Breaches of the Parent Code of Conduct**

The College requires that all Parents comply with this Code so that their behaviour contributes to a harmonious College community and provides a role model for their child's conduct at the College.

If a Parent does not act in accordance with this Code of Conduct, the staff member may:

- 7.1 request that the Parent refrain from the inappropriate conduct before communication can resume;
- 7.2 advise the Parent that if the inappropriate conduct continues, there will be no further communication;
- 7.3 request that another staff member be present to continue the communication or for any future communication; and/or
- 7.4 lodge a complaint against the Parent with the Principal.

Where a Parent breaches the Code of Conduct, the Principal will determine the consequences which may include any of the following:

- 7.5 the Principal may restrict the Parent from entry to the College grounds or from attending College-related events for a specified period;
- 7.6 direct that the Parent only communicate with the College through a nominated representative;
- 7.7 report the conduct to other relevant authorities; and/or
- 7.8 where the breach is extreme or prolonged, the Principal may terminate the enrolment of the Parent's child or children.

## **8. Summary**

Parents are encouraged to discuss their preferences for their child's educational program; however, all final decisions about subject enrolment, pathways, curriculum and student wellbeing will be made by the Principal as per School Education Act 1999 – Sect 23.

## **9. Related documents**

- 9.1 College Code of Conduct
- 9.2 Enrolment of Students with Disability and Complex Social Emotional Needs
- 9.3 School Education Act 1999 – Sect 23
- 9.4 Offer of Enrolment, Conditions of Enrolment
- 9.5 National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Standard #3