

OLSH College Respectful Relationships Policy

Rationale

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College (OLSH College) prides itself on providing an environment of the heart in which every student can reach her potential and develop into a confident, responsible and articulate young woman, with a lifelong love and enjoyment of learning. As stated in the OLSH Proclamation:

We are Heart People who

- *Are Faith Filled*
- *Reverence Relationships*
- *Pursue Excellence*
- *Touch the Hearts of Others*

The College is committed to nurturing just and right relationships that recognise the dignity and uniqueness of each person and that uphold Gospel values. We acknowledge our responsibilities and obligations under law and we are steadfast in our resolve to maintain learning environments that are respectful, inclusive and professional. To this end, this policy articulates the College's key expectations of staff, students and parents, guardians and carers with regard to respectful relationships and behaviours.

The College notes that disrespectful behaviours, such as bullying, discrimination and harassment, infringe upon a person's self-worth and dignity and are major obstacles to achieving the College's mission. Such behaviours will not be tolerated. The College therefore has in place a number of issue-specific policies that are closely aligned with this *Respectful Relationships Policy*.

In presenting this policy, the College acknowledges that parents, guardians, carers and staff are strongly motivated to do the very best for their daughters and students. Everyone has a right to differing opinions and views, to raise concerns and to expect that their concerns will be addressed fairly and respectfully.

The College strictly adheres to the ban on corporal punishment under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic) and requires any disciplinary response to be fair, proportionate, non-discriminatory, procedurally fair and consistent with relevant student behaviour, wellbeing and engagement policies.

Purpose

This Policy establishes the standards of behaviour expected within the College Community and promotes a culture of respect, dignity, inclusion and safety. It provides the framework through which the College seeks to prevent, address and respond to bullying, discrimination, harassment and other disrespectful conduct, and should be read and observed in conjunction with the College's related policies and procedures including the College's *Complaints Resolution Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, Cyber Safety Policy and OLSH College Workplace Behaviours Policy and Procedure.*

Scope

This Policy applies to all members of the College Community, including students, staff, parents, carers, guardians, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

It applies:

- to conduct occurring on College premises;
- to conduct occurring in College-operated or authorised online environments;
- to conduct during College Activities; and
- where behaviour occurring outside the College Environment has a sufficient connection to the College or members of the College Community.

Principles – Respectful Relationships

- All members of the College Community have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and to feel safe in their relationships with one another.
- Gospel values which underpin the values outlined in the OLSH Proclamation, characterise our culture of respectful relationships. We respect the innate dignity of all, we uphold and live the values of gratitude, simplicity, inclusiveness, integrity, compassion and forgiveness.
- OLSH College is committed to nurturing a culturally safe and inclusive community which values diversity and difference and which protects the right of each student to feel safe and be safe at school. This commitment has particular application to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally/linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with a disability.
- Relationships and behaviours that are considered disrespectful, inappropriate or unlawful and that compromise the safety and wellbeing of College Community members will be responded to by the College Leadership Team in accordance with this Policy, unless a more appropriate issue-specific College policy applies.”
- The College Leadership Team will work positively, fairly and resolutely to address complaints that College Community members may hold in relation to disrespectful, inappropriate or unlawful behaviours.

Expectations and Responsibilities

In promoting and upholding a culture of respectful behaviours, the College assigns to various OLSH members and groups the following expectations and responsibilities.

The College Leadership Team must:

- Behave in a manner consistent with the principles of this policy and meet core responsibilities to provide respectful environments
- Work collaboratively to create an environment where respectful conduct is expected of everyone
- Respond appropriately when respectful behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
- Make known to parents, guardians, carers, staff and students, the College's expectations for respectful relationships and its complaints procedures
- Ensure concerns involving child safety, discrimination, harassment, bullying, cyber safety or other unlawful conduct are referred and managed in accordance with applicable law and the relevant issue-specific policy and reporting pathway
- Develop policies and procedures and monitor their effectiveness to ensure the care and wellbeing of all members of the College Community.

OLSH College staff must:

- Model respectful behaviours and behave consistently with professional standards and the principles of this policy
- Actively contribute to a learning environment characterised by respectful relationships
- Proactively and constructively engage with parents, guardians and carers about their daughter's learning programs, wellbeing and any behavioural concerns
- Communicate and collaborate with the College Leadership Team in responding to highly challenging behaviours from students, parents, guardians, carers or colleagues
- Ensure a timely response to any concerns raised by students, parents, guardians, carers or colleagues
- Maintain confidentiality over sensitive issues except where disclosure or reporting is required or authorised by law, child safety obligations, this policy or another College policy.

OLSH College students must:

- Respect themselves and other members of the College Community
- Adhere to all College policies, procedures and protocols including those that:
 - affirm the right of all College Community members to feel safe at school, to fully engage in their learning and to be free from bullying, discrimination, harassment and social exclusion
 - protect other students and the College's reputation from the harmful impacts of behaviour that is unacceptable in the light of the details in this policy

- Raise concerns about disrespectful, inappropriate, unsafe or unlawful behaviour involving themselves or others with a trusted staff member, Learning Mentor, House Leader, Child Safety Leader or other appropriate member of staff.

OLSH parents and caregivers must:

- Support the College's ethos, values and practices
- Model respectful behaviours that are consistent with the principles of this policy
- Understand the importance of respectful parent, guardian, carer, teacher and student relationships and strive to build these relationships
- Support the College in its efforts to maintain a positive, respectful and safe teaching and learning environment
- Communicate constructively with the College in raising concerns and follow the College's complaints process in seeking resolution of complaints
- Keep abreast of information provided by the College on procedures relating to this policy
- Adhere to the policy principles outlined herein.

Raising and Managing Concerns

OLSH College encourages members of the College Community to raise concerns about disrespectful, inappropriate, unsafe or unlawful behaviour as early as possible. Concerns will be taken seriously and responded to fairly, respectfully and in accordance with the College's Complaints Resolution Policy, applicable College policies and legal obligations.

Where appropriate, concerns may be resolved through discussion, education, support, restorative practices or other early intervention measures. Matters involving child safety or other issues subject to specific legal or policy requirements will be managed in accordance with the relevant policy and reporting pathway.

Disrespectful and Unacceptable Behaviours

By agreeing to meet specified standards of respectful relationships, everyone in the College Community should treat others, and be treated, with respect and fairness.

The College Leadership Team will determine what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and respond to such behaviour in accordance with the College's relevant issue-specific policies and procedures, applicable law, procedural fairness and the nature and seriousness of the conduct.

Examples of such behaviours include, but are not limited to, instances when a person (including a student, staff member, parent, guardian or carer):

- is rude, aggressive or harasses others
- exhibits bullying behaviour
- uses communication devices to send rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages, or posts on social media sites

- makes derogatory or discriminatory comments, or engages in conduct that targets, demeans or excludes a person because of a personal attribute
- disrupts and/or damages the learning and teaching environment.

Unacceptable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this policy may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences, as outlined in the College's issue-specific policies.

If the behaviour raises an immediate safety concern, involves alleged child abuse or may require external reporting, the matter must be escalated promptly in accordance with law and the relevant child safety, complaints, anti-bullying, cyber safety or workplace policy. If there is an emergency or immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted.

Related College Policies

- OLSH College Complaints Resolution Policy
- OLSH College Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- OLSH College Child Safety: Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy
- OLSH College Bullying Prevention Policy
- OLSH College Workplace Behaviours Policy
- OLSH College Student Mobile Phones and Digital Technology Policy
- OLSH College Staff Responsible Use of Social Media Policy and Procedure
- OLSH College Cyber Safety Policy
- OLSH College Child Safety Code of Conduct

Definitions

Where the following terms are used throughout this document, they have the meaning set out below:

College or OLSH College means Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College Bentleigh.

College Activities means any activity, event or program organised, authorised or facilitated by the College, whether conducted on College premises, online or at another location, including camps, excursions, sporting events, performances, retreats and co-curricular activities.

College Community means students, staff, parents, carers, guardians, volunteers, contractors, visitors and other persons participating in College Activities or using College Environments.

College Leadership Team means the Principal and senior leaders responsible for the relevant aspect of College operations.

College Environments means physical, online and off-site environments provided, authorised or managed by the College, including College Activities and digital platforms, online services and social media connected with College Activities.

Policy History And Review

At OLSH College, we are committed to continuous improvement of our policies and practices. We intend this policy to be a dynamic document that will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working in practice and updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance, regulatory guidance, College practice or emerging risks in physical and online environments.

Responsibility	Principal and College Board Policy Committee
Reviewed and revised	May 2017, May 2022, August 2026
Next review date	May 2028