

Parent/ Carer Respectful Behaviours Policy



Help for non-English speakers If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school on (03) 9428 8955 or melbourne.girls.co@education.vic.gov.au.

Purpose:

At Melbourne Girls' College (MGC), we ensure we keep the lines of communication open between our community including our parents, carers, staff, and students. We value the contribution and feedback of our parents and carers, and we strongly believe in the benefits of home school partnerships with all members of our college community.

Ensuring that our parents and carers share our college values and understand our respectful behaviours is essential to facilitating positive relationships and partnerships between the college and our parent and carer community. The purpose of our Respectful Behaviours Policy is to ensure cooperation and support by outlining MGC's expectations for all parents and carers regarding their respectful engagement in college related activities or representing MGC.

Melbourne Girls' College expects that all parents and carers and visitors to our college behave in a reasonable and courteous manner to college staff at all times. This policy is based on the following principles that everyone at Melbourne Girls' College:

- Has the right to a safe and supportive environment.
- Has the right to be treated with respect and be valued even in disagreement.
- Has the right to participate within a safe environment without interference, intimidation, harassment, bullying, discrimination or any harmful, threatening or abusive behaviour.
- Is encouraged to be respectful, polite, courteous and considerate of others.
- Has the right to be supported and challenged as ongoing learners.

Ethical Conduct in Communication:

When communicating with Staff, Students and Other Parent/Carers should:

- Act in the best interest of students, their families, staff, and the college community.
- Behave with respect, courtesy, and consideration for others.
- Behave in a manner that does not endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves or others.
- Understand that there is a zero-tolerance approach to any aggression, intimidation, threats, or harassment of MGC staff by any means (e.g. in person, by phone, by email, on social media etc).
- When attending the college or any school-related events, parents and carers must:
 - Show proper care and regard for school property, and property of others; and
 - Abide by all OH&S regulations.
 - Refrain from engaging in judgmental and malicious gossip (online or directly).
 - Refrain from behaviours and actions which constitute bullying, harassment, discrimination, or vilification.
 - Refrain from offensive, derogatory, or insulting language.
- Use the college's Complaints Policy to seek resolution for any issues that arise and accept the college's procedures for handling matters of complaint.
- Respect MGC staff and accept their direction within the exercise of their duties at the college.
- Advise Melbourne Girls' College of any areas of potential conflict, such as parenting and family court orders, in accordance with relevant laws.

Social Media:

Social media can have a range of positive uses for our students; however, parents and carers should recognise that there are also a number of ethical and legal issues associated with social media use.

Parents and carers must abide by the laws and Melbourne Girls' College's expectations by:

- Respecting a staff member's professional and personal boundaries, by not using their personal online presence to raise college matters (or otherwise engage in disrespectful behaviour).
- Not using social media to voice grievances about the college.

- Never disclosing personal information of staff, parents and carers, and/or other students to third parties without the individuals' explicit consent.
- Not posting photographs of students in our college uniform (therefore representing the college and its students) to meet Child Safe Standards and respect confidentiality of the college staff and students, without explicit consent.
- Never contacting students (other than their own) through any social media platform without the explicit consent of the student's parents and carers.

Communication and Interaction with Staff:

Melbourne Girls' College places high value and priority on maintaining a safe and respectful working environment for staff. We regard certain behaviours as harmful and unacceptable insofar 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.
- Writing rude, defamatory, aggressive or abusive comments to/about a staff member.
- Use of language which would be considered racist, sexist, homophobic, or discriminatory on religious or gender grounds.

Please understand that:

- Response times will vary depending on the individual however MGC staff will endeavour to respond during work hours and within a 24–48-hour timeframe, excluding weekends and term holidays. Please note that this may differ when dealing with complex matters.
- Repeated, ongoing communication around an issue will not alter the timeframe, the process undertaken to address the matter, or the outcome of the concern.
- In line with the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Act 2023, Right to Disconnect, staff are not expected to respond to communication outside of normal working hours.

Breaches of Behaviour

With these guidelines in place, we hope that parents and carers can appropriately address any concerns and work with us to ensure they contribute to a balanced college community that reflect our Melbourne Girls' College values.

The consequences for breaches will be determined by the principal and may include the following:

- These behaviours may lead to removal or exclusion from school grounds and school activities.
- The college may direct that a parent and carer may only communicate with members of our staff through a nominated MGC representative.
- The principal may report aggressive, intimidating, harassing, threatening or otherwise inappropriate conduct to Victoria Police.
- The Department of Education may also take legal or other appropriate action against community members or parents and carers who pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of MGC staff.
- This policy is in accordance with applicable legislation and the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, the police and/or 'Families and Children's Services' within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), and/or any other relevant bodies will be informed of any unlawful breaches of this policy.

Further Information and Resources

[Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy -](#)

[Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)

[MGC Acceptable Use Agreement](#)

[MGC Complaints Policy](#)

[School Safety Community Orders](#)

[Department of Education's Complaints Policy](#)

[Department of Education's Trespass Orders](#)

[Department of Education's Respectful Workplaces](#)

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our college community in the following ways:

- Available on the college website.
- Available to staff on Compass.

- Included into the MGC Parent Guide
- Discussed at parent and carer information nights (as required).
- Discussed at student forums and through communication tools (as required).
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request, or as required.

Policy, Review and Approval Policy

Consultation	Feedback from staff and MGC parents
Approved by Principal	Friday 20 September 2024
Next Scheduled Review	3 Years from date approved by Principal