



# Mernda Hills Christian College

## Respectful Behaviours Policy

### Document Control

Revision Number	Review Date	Implementation Date	Description of Changes	Prepared By	Approved By
Gilson College					
	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>NEW Policy</li></ul>	Exec Leaders	Gilson College Council
Mernda Hills Christian College					
1	May 2023	Jan 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>General review</li></ul>	Exec Leaders	Exec Leaders

## Rationale

Ref: DET [Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy](#)

Mernda Hills Christian College exists for the education and care of children from within the Seventh-day Adventist and wider communities. We accept children of all denominations and faiths, or no faith. We trust that parents requesting a position at our College know and understand that we are a welcoming community.

The dignity of the human person is fundamental to Christian teaching, and our College must be a place where everyone feels valued, safe, and secure.

Mernda Hills Christian College in conjunction with Adventist Schools Victoria is committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect. The College values are an underlying focus when dealing with any partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement, and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe, and orderly environments for children and young people. The College values encompass:

- the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment
- building relationships between students, parents, and staff
- providing a safe working environment for staff.

At Mernda Hills Christian College we foster a culture of respectful, responsible, and resilient behaviours.

This policy sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students, and visitors. It is also designed to support and assist families, informing them of the procedures expected of all in our community.

The College wants to work with parents and carers to achieve a safe and respectful College community. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building a safe and respectful College community. When parents/carers and school staff work together as one team, our students do better.

This policy outlines the shared roles of parents, carers, and school staff in creating a positive environment for learning. There are also other policies that set out clear standards of behaviours that are specific to school staff and students.

The expected standards of behaviours apply to different College settings. This includes at College events, camps, excursions, outdoor activities, online learning, and other places online related to schools.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in and around Mernda Hills Christian College environments.

This clear information outlines our school's expectations and parent's commitment to supporting this policy. By enrolling a child at our college, parents agree to support our College policies and procedures.

## Guiding Principles

Our College Statement of Philosophy, Core Values and Educational Vision acknowledges that school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child.

Parents/carers and school staff have a relationship that can last many years. This is an opportunity to work together to create a positive relationship in the best interests of the child.

When this relationship is built on respect and trust, students learn better and feel like they belong in the school. The foundation of a good collaborative relationship is based on:

- open and honest communication
- trust and respect
- working together
- fair and reasonable expectations by all

We acknowledge that everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

## Implementation

This policy should be used in conjunction with the *College Community Code of Conduct*, *Parent Code of Conduct* and *Community Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

### Shared Responsibility of Members of the School Community to Behave Respectfully

1. Positive school environments are important because everyone has the right to be safe and play a shared role in being respectful. Everyone at the College, particularly staff and parents/carers, plays a role in making school a better place for learning and work.
2. Respectful behaviours are important in building a strong, healthy, and thriving College community.
3. By treating everyone with respect, parents/carers and the College can make sure students feel supported and cared for.
4. College staff will build and maintain a respectful workplace, by:
  - a. treating each other with respect and consideration
  - b. being inclusive, valuing others and accepting their differences
  - c. recognising the efforts and achievements of others
  - d. considering our impact on others
  - e. calling out and addressing behaviour that can lead to bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
5. Parents/carers will create a positive environment for learning and work by:
  - a. modelling positive behaviour to their child/children and to the school community
  - b. communicating politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
  - c. working with the school to achieve the best outcomes for their child/children
  - d. communicating constructively with the school
  - e. making use of the expected processes and protocols when raising concerns
  - f. following the school's processes for communication with staff and making complaints
  - g. treating all school staff, students, and other members of the school community with respectfully raising complaints
6. The College and Adventist School Victoria supports your right to make a complaint and provides a Community Complaints and Appeals Policy to help you do this. Complaints from parents and carers help the school community by providing feedback to improve how the College operates.
7. The College welcomes complaints from parents and carers if they are communicated in a respectful and constructive way. We may ask that concerns be communicated in writing.

## Unacceptable Behaviours and Consequences

1. Schools are positive places of learning where everyone has a right to a safe and healthy learning environment. Schools are also workplaces, and school staff deserve to work in an environment where they don't feel threatened or unsafe.
2. When a small number of parents and carers behave unacceptably towards a staff member or another member of the school community, this can affect their health, safety, and wellbeing. The impact can also be felt by the wider school community.
3. The College Principal is responsible for determining what constitutes reasonable and unreasonable behaviour.
4. Unacceptable or unreasonable behaviours include, but are not limited to:
  - a. being violent or threatening violence of any kind, including being physically intimidating, aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
  - b. speaking or behaving in a rude, aggressive, manipulative, or threatening way, either in person, via email, social media, or over the telephone
  - c. sending demanding, rude, confronting, or threatening letters, emails, or text messages
  - d. discriminatory or derogatory comments
  - e. makes sexist or racist comments.
  - f. the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff, or students.
5. If a parent or carer behaves in an unacceptable way, the College principal may contact them to talk about this further and there may be consequences.
6. Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this policy may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences.
7. Consequences include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Utilising mediation and counselling services.
  - b. Alternative communication strategies being applied.
  - c. Formal notice preventing entry onto school premises or attendance at school activities via the College Principal issuing a School Community Safety Orders prohibiting people from:
    - entering or remaining on school premises (including any place where school activity is taking place e.g. on school camp, at swimming carnival etc., and any area within 25 metres of that place.
    - engaging in inappropriate conduct
    - engaging in threatening or abusive communication with staff members, including through social media and other channels.
    - Further information is available on the [Victorian legislation website](#)
  - d. Written notice will follow any verbal notice given.
  - e. An intervention order being sought.
  - f. Informing the police which may result in a charge of trespass or assault.
8. Unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour may be escalated to Adventist Schools Victoria, where it will be assessed and managed by:
  - a. requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
  - b. requesting all communications be in writing

- c. written warnings
  - d. conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
  - e. exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
  - f. reports to Victoria Police
  - g. legal action.
9. By agreeing to meet specified standards of positive behaviour, everyone in our College community can be assured that they will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, this will help to create a school that is safe and orderly, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.
10. If a parent is concerned or unsure of any information contained in this policy, please seek advice from the Principal or relevant Head of School

#### Helpful Links:

- Easy English version  
(pdf) [https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/parents/going-to-school/Respectful\\_Behaviours\\_Policy\\_Easy\\_English.pdf](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/parents/going-to-school/Respectful_Behaviours_Policy_Easy_English.pdf)
- Family Engagement in Learning  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/PAL/family-engagement-in-learning.docx>

#### Related Policies and Processes

- Community Code of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Student Code of Conduct
- Community Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Procedural Fairness Policy

#### Relevant Documentation or Legislation

- Education And Training Reform Amendment (Protection Of School Communities) Bill 2021