



Welfare and Discipline Policy

Effective Date	January 2020
Review Date	January 2022
Associated Documents	Pastoral Care Policy

"The pupil, when he or she has completed his training, will be like his teacher". (Luke 6: 40)

RATIONALE

Underlying the College's Welfare and Discipline Policy is our Motto, "Peace Through Justice". The way in which people relate to one another is crucial in the development of an environment conducive to learning and growth. The structures which are developed must facilitate positive relationships based on the rights and responsibilities of each member of the community.

Principles underlying behaviour management must be consistent with Christian belief accordingly; the unique dignity of the person must be paramount in our relationships. Similarly, procedures must enhance that dignity, strive to be liberating, help to promote the growth (maturity) of the individual towards personal autonomy and lead to a heightened level of moral reasoning.

Rather than deny individual responsibility by suppression and/or punishment, procedures must be such that the individual recognises and accepts personal responsibility for the consequences of all behaviour.

A balance must be struck between the need to provide the person with freedom to exercise initiative, to discover, to explore, to make mistakes and the need to establish limits which preserve the rights of all and which control impulse and irresponsibility. Limits and sanction must be educative and self-disciplining as well as controlling. Penalties, when applied, must be in keeping with the nature of the violation and as educative as possible.

Any rule or procedure, which may cause physical or psychological harm to any student, is inconsistent with and has no justification in a Christian community. Corporal punishment, therefore, is inappropriate within a Catholic College.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

If the College's policy on Behaviour Management is effective then it is probable that:

- relationships will be courteous and mutually respectful
- disagreements will be resolved by dialogue and negotiation
- misdemeanours will be few and imposition of punishments or sanctions will be infrequent
- students will accept that teachers and College requirements are fair
- students will be spoken of positively by staff
- property and the environment are respected (there will be an absence of rubbish, damage, breakage, graffiti)
- there will be a feeling of a positive College climate

AGREED PRACTICE

- Students will be made aware of the link between behaviour and consequences in the interests of learning, harmony and safety.

- Procedures and rules will be clearly spelled out to students.
- Teachers will endeavour to be consistent in demands and application of requirements.
- Behaviour, not motivation, worth or value, will be the focus of judgment / assessment.
- Staff must comply with and apply the principles and procedures of this policy.
- Structure and process of the Welfare and Discipline Policy will be followed and adhered to.

1. BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. Every teacher is responsible for her/his classroom discipline.
2. The College discipline policy should be followed in establishing an appropriate learning environment in the classroom and beyond.
3. Students should be referred to a LOL, in the case of subject specific issues.
4. Learning Vandals are those students who purposely destroy the learning environment in a classroom. Teachers need to discern between a 'Learning Vandal' and a student who is careless in her/his behaviour. Learning vandalism is unacceptable at St Joseph's College.
5. Teachers are expected to set the tone in their classroom and are required to model correct behaviour eg. in their professionalism, their speech, their promptness.
6. Consistency between teachers is central to the establishment of an effective academic 'tone' in the College.
7. Teachers are expected to set standards that both challenge students to do their best and that are achievable.
8. Every student has the right to learn and achieve to the best of her/his ability. Personal success is to be promoted as a value to be aspired to.
9. Food should not be eaten in classrooms or buildings.
10. Caps or headwear should not be worn in classrooms or buildings.
11. Students should not be out of timetabled classes without their teacher's permission.
12. On excursions students should follow teacher directions including wearing school uniform.
13. Students must meet Board of Studies requirements of sustained effort, diligence and meeting course outcomes.
14. The teacher is in charge of the classroom at all times therefore, argumentative or hostile language or behaviour or any behaviour that is uncooperative does not have to be tolerated.
15. If a safety risk assessment shows that a student continues a pattern of disobedience or misbehaviour then the school has the right to withdraw that student from a regular class or classes and implement an alternative educational program under the supervision of a teacher.

2. RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

As a student of St Joseph's College I have the right to:

- the best education I can achieve;
- a co-operative learning environment that is not disrupted by other people;
- a safe and healthy working environment;
- the support and assistance of school staff when I cooperate with my teachers;
- be treated with respect, understanding and fairness;
- be safe and expect my property to be safe;
- be educated in an environment which does not discriminate against me;
- be given reasonable requirements by my teachers.

As a student of St Joseph's College I have the responsibility to:

- cooperate with my teachers and follow their instructions;
- seek the best possible education I can achieve;
- support the education of those around me;
- take care of the school environment;
- treat other people with respect, understanding and fairness;
- come prepared for lessons;
- attend regularly and punctually and wear school uniform;

- meet course requirements set by the school;
- meet Board of Studies requirements for all courses studied;
- respect the property of other people;
- exercise self-control and negotiate with other people;
- respect teachers' rights to have their instructions obeyed;
- show respect to my teachers in all situations.

3. RIGHTS OF TEACHERS

The classroom is also extended to include all learning settings where a teacher is responsible for the learning and safety of students. As such,

- The teacher has the right to have instructions obeyed without public challenge;
- The teacher has the right to define and/or publish acceptable behaviour in his or her classroom;
- The teacher has the right to nominate where a student sits and what activities take place and at what time;
- The teacher has the right to insist upon orderly movement, entry and exit;
- The teacher has the right to address the class without interruption including calling out, talking or noise from students.

STRATEGIES FOR USE BY TEACHERS

- isolate student in the room from friendship group
- supervised lunchtime detention to make up for last time, work
- self-review reflection – this can be completed that night and signed by parents
- referrals to LOL if earlier strategies prove unsuccessful
- ask students to apologise to the class if the lesson has been disrupted
- restate expectations you have of students in your class
- take time to explain to students what is inappropriate about their behaviour

[(1), (2) & (3) – *The Vandalism of Learning: Crawford and Rossiter*]

4. BASIC EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

- Be at class on time.
- Wait outside the classroom and move into the room in an orderly manner, when instructed by the teacher. Year 11-12 may enter the room before the teacher arrives unless otherwise specified.
- Listen to and follow instructions by the teacher and listen to other students.
- Be courteous and polite to teachers and other students.
- Engage positively in classroom activities.
- Allow an appropriate learning environment to exist in the classroom.
- Complete homework as required and on time.
- Keep the classroom neat and tidy.
- Take personal pride in your school work and endeavour to achieve to your full ability.
- Bring appropriate books (including diary) and equipment to every lesson.
- Make sure the diary is signed weekly.
- Keep the diary free of graffiti and in a good condition.

THE CORE RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS AT ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

- *Respect* – Show respect for yourself, others and your environment
- *Safety* – Be safe and support others in being safe
- *Engaged* – Be productively engaged in the learning environment
- *Time and Place* – Be in the right place at the right time
- *Pride in your school* – Positively represent your school
- *Responsible Laptop Use* – Engage responsibly with your laptop

The tables that follows provide examples of the behaviours associated with each responsibility:

<p>Core Responsibility 1 – Respect</p> <p><i>Show respect for yourself, others and your environment is displayed in the following examples but is not limited to these:</i></p>	<p>Core Responsibility 2 – Safety</p> <p><i>Be safe and support others in being safe is displayed in the following examples but is not limited to these:</i></p>	<p>Core Responsibility 3 – Engaged</p> <p><i>Be productively engaged in the learning environment is displayed in the following examples but is not limited to these:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting the property and belongings of others • Allowing others the opportunity to speak • Listening to the opinion of others • Using other people's equipment only when given permission • Placing your rubbish in the bins • Leaving the classroom tidy • Using appropriate language • Having zero tolerance of bullying and harassment • Keeping the classroom and school environment free from graffiti • Treating students, staff and visitors with respect • Following correct canteen protocols • Offering assistance if needed to staff, students and visitors • Ensuring your verbal responses to staff and students are respectful • Communicating politely with students and staff • Keeping your locker tidy and locked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using equipment appropriately and under the adult supervision • Moving with caution when carrying your laptop or equipment • Keeping your hands and feet to yourself • Wearing appropriate footwear • Wearing a hat when outside, on the oval or doing sport • Not tampering with school equipment • Reporting any instance of bullying and harassment • Reporting safety hazards, damage or vandalism • Staying in bounds • Being inclusive of others • Not using anything as a weapon • No drug use including alcohol and tobacco • Informing staff of any serious misconduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in class discussions • Staying focused • Remaining on task • Allow others to learn • Completing set tasks • Completing homework on time • Listening to teacher's instructions • Being prepared for the lesson • Bringing appropriate equipment to class • Responding verbally in a positive manner • Assisting peers when necessary • Showing initiative and be proactive in your learning • Following instructions from staff • Cooperating with others • Using your time productively • Not distracting others • Working independently when instructed
<p>Core Responsibility 4 – Time and Place</p> <p><i>Be in the right place at the right time is displayed in the following examples but is not limited to these:</i></p>	<p>Core Responsibility 5 – Pride in your school</p> <p><i>Positively representing your school is displayed in the following examples but is not limited to these:</i></p>	<p>Core Responsibility 6 – Responsible Laptop Use</p> <p><i>Engaging responsibly with your laptop is displayed in the following examples but is not limited to these:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lining up outside the classroom before the lesson • Staying in your seat unless instructed otherwise • Being punctual • Moving about the classroom in an orderly manner • Staying in bounds • Playing games in the appropriate designated areas • Moving promptly to class • Gathering items from your locker early for the next two lessons (morning, recess, lunch) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying pride in your school by behaving appropriately when travelling to and from school, whilst on excursions, camps, at representative sport events or at local community venues • Treating visitors and replacement teachers respectfully • Using appropriate language • Keeping a tidy environment • Wearing full and correct uniform when travelling to and from school, whilst on excursions, camps, at representative sport events or at local community venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arriving each morning with a fully charged battery • Obeying classroom rules and instructions • Preventing damage to your laptop by not using it in the playground, at the bus lines or whilst travelling to and from school • Keeping your password secure • Not using your laptop for any form of cyber bullying • Not loading or accessing inappropriate content • No engaging in any activity that might compromise the school network security or performance • Respecting the privacy of staff and students and do not photograph, film or post images without permission of the person

- Respect yourself, others and your environment
- Be safe and support others in being safe
- Engage in the learning environment
- Be in the right place at the right time
- Positively represent your College
- Engage responsibly with your laptop



5. DISCIPLINE CODE

The school's discipline code can be summarised as follows. Procedures to achieve this code will be regularly communicated within the school community.

- Standards of behaviour expected from students should be positive at all times. Students should behave responsibly, respecting the rights of fellow students, teachers and the community. Responsible behaviour is expected in the classroom, on the sporting field, in the playground, while travelling to and from school, and while on excursions or school activities out of normal school hours.
- Students are expected to act safely in and around the school and at all activities. Students have a duty of care towards fellow students so that their actions do not cause injury to others.
- As teaching staff have clear requirements placed on them to provide safe supervision of students, it is essential that students obey their teachers' requests and instructions. Students who disobey teachers' instructions become a safety concern and may be required to participate in a comprehensive risk assessment process.
- Homework includes projects, assignments, major works, study, revision, extension work and specific homework tasks. These are set by teachers as part of courses studied. Students are expected to follow their programs of study so that they can successfully complete their courses in the time allocated.
- Board of Studies requirements for sustained effort, diligence and meeting course outcomes must be met by students.
- The school community has decided that this school will maintain appropriate and high standards of dress through adherence to a uniform policy. It is expected that all students will adhere to the dress code by wearing school uniform. Students will be excluded from certain school and school-linked activities:
 - If their clothing compromises agreed upon school community standards articulated in the school uniform requirements, and might be considered damaging to the image of the school in the larger community context;
 - Where the health and safety of the student or of other students, particularly as defined by occupational health and safety legislation, would otherwise be compromised.
 - While a student will not be suspended solely for not wearing school uniform, ongoing non-compliance will be regarded as disobedience which is an infringement of the School Discipline Code.
- Students are expected to attend regularly and punctually so that they can gain the maximum benefit from their educational opportunities.
- This school specifically forbids the possession or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco and weapons. This school will not tolerate violence or threats of violence, bullying, possession or use of illegal drugs, offensive weapons, persistent disobedience or criminal behaviour. The response to such actions will be suspension or expulsion in the most serious cases.
- Through positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community the learning climate of the school will be enhanced.

6. EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

(Please note these range from serious to minor and do not appear in any order of seriousness.)

- Failure to resolve N Award Warnings.
- Being in possession of or offering to supply/purchase a suspected illegal substance.
- Violent actions or harassment of others.
- Threats of violence or threats of harassment of others.
- Possession of a knife, weapon or explosive device.
- Threatening to use a weapon.
- Engagement in criminal behaviour related to the school.
- Failure to cooperate with course work requirements.

- Disobedience or defiance.
- Refusal to follow a teacher's instructions.
- Swearing, insolent or hostile language.
- Reckless or careless actions disregarding the safety of others.
- Harassment or abuse of others.
- Disruptive behaviour that prevents learning and teaching.
- Truancy from school or lessons.
- Failure to wear our school uniform.
- Being out of bounds.
- Leaving the school grounds without permission.
- Driving to or from school in a dangerous manner.
- Use of chewing gum.
- Failure to attend lessons punctually.
- Use of mobile phones or similar equipment without permission.
- Use of mobile phones, video or photographic equipment to harass others.
- Interfering with the property of others.
- Travelling in an unsafe manner to or from school or whilst on an excursion or school activity.
- Defacement and/or vandalism to school property.
- Lewd, suggestive, offensive language or behaviour.
- Failure to be prepared for lessons by not having correct equipment.
- Harassment or abuse of staff or damage to staff property outside school hours or away from the school.
- False and malicious statements about staff
- Abuse or improper use of school technology including internet, intranet and equipment.
- Using technology to harass, humiliate or invade the privacy of staff or students.
- Listening to music on portable devices is not permitted in classrooms.
- Argumentative and unco-operative language and behaviour that demonstrates unwillingness to resolve an issue with a teacher.
- Abuse including transmission by email, SMS or internet.
- Possession or use of cigarettes, matches, lighter, cigarette paper or any equipment associated with smoking or using illicit substances. This includes vape pens or e-cigarettes. (Please see below for further information)

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Students who are found in possession of, under the influence of or are found to be purchasing illegal substances at school will be dealt with severely. Whilst such materials are on school premises, the safety of students cannot be guaranteed and therefore, there will be no allowances made for students found to be associated with illegal substances. Such materials have no place at St Joseph's College and as such, there will be no place for students who choose to be associated with them.

Under no circumstances whatsoever will the use or possession of illegal substances of any kind, in any form, be permitted at St Joseph's College. Possession and/or use of any illegal drugs is absolutely prohibited. This includes attending the College or College events under the influence of illegal substances or using illegal substances in College uniform outside the College. The police will be informed and the matter handed over to them for investigation. Students who disobey this rule will face severe consequences. These offences incur an immediate automatic suspension, until an interview with the Principal is arranged. A student will be asked to leave the College at the discretion of the Principal, in consultation with the Parish Priest and the Catholic Schools Office, as this behaviour is regarded by the College as serious misconduct. (Refer to the Termination of Enrolment Policy).

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT – CLASS TEACHER

Problem	Action	Documentation
Inappropriate behaviour/work effort, eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insolence • Disruptive • Disobedience • Rudeness • Lack of cooperation • Lateness • Lack of equipment 	Verbal Warning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher speaks to the student • Identifies the problem • Explains expectations 	
Problem persists	Lunchtime Detention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is placed on lunch detention for the following day – failure to appear for detention, student internally suspended for Periods 5 and 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class teacher enters incident in student planner • Class teacher enters incident in the detention sheet in the staff room • Class teacher may enter 'Performance Log' for personal records
Continued inappropriate behaviour in the same subject	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class teacher discusses issue with LOL • Teacher and LOL decide course of action: EITHER Monitoring card OR Period of class exclusion (if a safety issue) • Year Coordinator to be informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent contact: Letter OR Email OR Telephone • Details entered into the SMS • Student's name listed on Year group whiteboard with subject
Lack of satisfactory improvement whilst on Monitoring card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOL discusses problem with Student Welfare Coordinator or Deputy • Student internally suspended • Suitability of counselling discussed (eg. underlying causes or simply bad behaviour) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent contact via phone and letter • Incident recorded in the SMS
Continued inappropriate behaviour following internal suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOL and class teacher refers matter to the SWC/DP • Student excluded from all classes (may be internal or external) until Parent/Guardian interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian telephoned • Written documentation in SMS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to the Principal • Further exclusions • Parent/Guardian interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian telephoned • Written documentation in SMS

UNIFORM

Problem	Action	Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student not correctly attired 	Year Coordinators detention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is placed on lunch detention for the following day – failure to appear for detention, student internally suspended for Periods 5 and 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry in student planner re: uniform problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem continues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At discretion of Year Coordinator: Afternoon detention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details entered into SMS • Parent notified of action and further consequences if problem persists • Exclusion from external representation • Parent interview • Suspension from learning (internal or external)

STUDENTS RECEIVING MULTIPLE LUNCH DETENTIONS ACROSS A RANGE OF

SUBJECTS

Problem	Action	Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student is placed on Monitoring card for a number of subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year Coordinator interviews student and identifies issues and consequences if the monitoring does not show satisfactory improvement, ie. suspension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent notified by telephone or letter if the meeting or consequences if no satisfactory level of improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student continues to be placed on multiple 'subject' Monitoring cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year Coordinator discusses the matter with SWC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent interview - Afternoon detention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent interview arranged Afternoon detention issued Details recorded in SMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued vandalism of learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCW suspends students and arranged re-entry interview with parent/guardian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details recorded in SMS including agreements/understanding reached at re-entry meeting

7. LUNCH 'VANDALS' DETENTION

The 'Vandalism of Learning' is defined as "a pupil who through a variety of distracting and disruptive behaviours cripple the effectiveness of the learning environment" [Crawford and Rossiter].

Learning vandals are those students who purposely destroy the learning environment. Classroom teachers need to discern between behaviours that are purposeful and deliberate attempts to disrupt lesson and careless behaviour or disengaged behaviour. Therefore the issuing such detentions must be consistent with this definition.

Lunch vandals detentions are not issued for:

- not bringing equipment
- being disengaged
- being late to class

or any other behaviours that do not directly impact on the learning of everyone.

Procedure

1. Issued ONLY after the appropriate steps have been taken.
2. Classroom teacher informs the student of the problem, re-states expectations.
3. The supervising teacher marks the roll against those listed on the Daily Notices (entered by office staff after period 6 for the following day).
4. Students given a vandals detention for the next day, eg. a detention is issued on a Monday (Periods 1-6) the detention is for Tuesday.
5. Teachers must enter detention date not incident date in the student diary.
6. Classroom teacher writes infraction in the student planner and when the detention is to occur – reminds them of their responsibility to remember.
7. Student brings a diary and a pen to the detention. Supervisor who checks diary entry, and marks the roll. Students to complete core responsibility.
8. Non-attendance will incur an internal suspension for periods 5 and 6.

Note Also:

- Parents will be sent an SMS Friday afternoon reminding them of afternoon detentions.
- Weekly 'Discipline Reports' are issues after lunch Friday to:
 - Leaders of Learning
 - Leaders of Welfare
 - Leaders of Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing
 - Leadership Team

These are an important 'tool' in the process and should be used to track and monitor.

- The Performance Log is another 'important tool' and provides us with the level of details

needed when dealing with students and parents.

- Not doing 'HW' and not bringing equipment is NOT included in the Vandals Detention system. This is an individual faculty response.

8. SEAAR REDEMPTION PROCESS

1. Students on a 'Red' are withdrawn from class for one lesson (Day 1 Period 2 or Day 6 Period 1) and taken through the process, their responsibilities and complete reflections on 'what needs to be done'.
2. These students are not issued with SEEAR Monitoring Cards at this point; rather they are only given the front page of the current card to paste in their diary. During their withdrawal lesson they also write into their diary the last lesson in the coming cycle that they have each lesson that they scored a 1 or 2 in, so as to remind them they still need to get signed off.
3. Following the two weeks, any student not signed off will be placed on an 'All Subjects' Monitoring Card (Red). The parents will be informed and exclusions will apply.
4. Students on two consecutive Yellow and/or Red will be required to attend a Parent Interview with either the Deputy Principal or Leader of Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing.
5. Staff are expected to use the 'Performance Log' to indicate under performance of those on redemption as this will form the basis of parent interviews and the monitoring card cycle.

NOTE

1. Parents are reminded (by SMS) on the day SEAAR is due that the results are available via the Parent Portal.
2. Students on 'Yellow' or 'Red' are issued with a parent letter informing them of such. The letter includes their Parent Portal login credentials.
3. LOLs are expected to print a list of students in their faculty area who are underperforming and to support the class teacher whenever possible. This support may be in the form of:
 - i. Discussing with the teacher the specific concerns and behaviours.
 - ii. Interviewing the student and stating expectations.
 - iii. Checking with the teacher regularly on progress or improvement.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

AFTERNOON DETENTION

After school detention is for serious discipline breaches (which include repeated offences) or for student failure to report for lunchtime detention. Consequently, students may be placed on afternoon detention only by LOLs or LOPCs. Detention notification will be recorded in the relevant section on Profiler by the issuing coordinator. Parents must be given reasonable notice of detention (at least 24 hours).

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is not permitted at St Joseph's College under any circumstances.

PHONE CONTACT

Parents should be contacted for serious breaches of the discipline code such as afternoon detentions. It is often best to speak personally with a parent, explaining the issue in advance to any written communication arriving home.

CONDITIONAL ENROLMENT CONTRACT

Following consultation with the Year Coordinator, Leader of Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing and the Assistant Principal, the Principal may arrive at the determination that a student will be placed on a conditional enrolment contract. Such a determination may be reached at the commencement of a student's enrolment if their behaviour at their previous school is questionable and concerns are aired regarding the student's record, or, at a point in a student's enrolment where they have displayed an inability to comply with College expectations.

The Conditional Enrolment contract is issued to families in a meeting between the principal, other relevant staff members and the student and their family. The length of the contract is usual, but not confined to, a length of two school terms.

SUSPENSION OR ISOLATION FROM CLASS

Students will be suspended or isolated from class for any of the following extreme cases -

- serious breaches of school rules;
- repeated disobedience or disregard for school uniform code;
- possession or use of drugs or weapons at school;
- outrageous behaviour;
- bringing the College into disrepute; and/or
- one-off situations, eg.
 - fractional truancy;
 - smoking;
 - stealing;
 - vandalism;
 - fighting;
 - disobedience having had reasonable direction; and/or
 - not serving a lunch detention.

Students returning to school/class will be placed on a monitoring card.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS

Statement of policy

Once students are enrolled in a parish school they and their parent(s)/carer(s) become part of the parish and the system of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lismore.

This policy embodies and guides the living out of *Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore*,

Foundational Beliefs and Practices - The Essential Framework in Parish School Communities.

Any decision to remove a student on a temporary basis from the full life of the school will be as a result of a documented and transparent process. This process will give due consideration to the confidentiality of all parties. Procedural fairness, consultation and appropriate pastoral and educational support will inform all decisions.

Scope

This policy and these procedures apply to students enrolled in parish schools in the Diocese of Lismore.

Principles

- Enrolment in a parish school involves mutual rights and responsibilities of the principal and staff, the parent(s)/carer(s), and the student.
- The parish school values the worth of every individual student and has a focus on student wellbeing and pastoral care.
- Restorative practices that focus on the rebuilding of relationships are important.
- The decision to suspend a student rests with the parish school principal. The principal will take into account the fact that students have different levels of maturity and understanding.
- The promotion of quality teaching and learning is a fundamental obligation of all who are involved in Catholic education.
- Parish schools are educational communities and all members are entitled to a safe environment conducive to quality teaching and learning.
- Procedural fairness is demonstrated in the decision making process.
- Confidentiality is an essential consideration when dealing with matters of suspension.
- Matters that have resulted in any suspension need to be attended to as soon as possible so a return to school plan can be enacted.
- The expulsion of a student is an option considered only in exceptional circumstances.

Definition

Procedural fairness

Procedural fairness includes the right to be heard, the right to be treated without bias, the right to be informed of complaints being made and to be provided with an opportunity to respond to them and the right to information regarding the status of the complaint.

In matters relating to suspension it is important that all involved are accorded procedural fairness.

Investigation and decision making

While separating the two steps of investigation and decision making may not always be possible it is advisable to do this as far as it is practicable. A suspension decision should not be made until all the facts are known, the student has had the opportunity to respond, the parents are involved and, in serious cases, the student has had an opportunity to obtain advice.

Further advice on investigation and decision making can be found in the appendix to this policy.

Suspension

There are two forms of suspension:

1. **In school suspension.** The school changes the formal learning arrangements of the student so that the student does not attend regular class and school activities for the duration of the in school suspension. Appropriate supervision and work are provided during this period in a space separated from the student body. Generally the student would not

participate in special school events held during the in school suspension period.

2. **Out of school suspension.** The principal has the delegated authority from the Director of Catholic Schools to suspend a student from school. While the principal is on the school premises the responsibility is not delegated to other staff. If the principal is off the school premises the responsibility can be delegated to the Assistant Principal or the next senior person on staff. A principal must inform the person prior to departing the premises that they have the responsibility to act on behalf of the principal.

Out of school suspension is designed to allow a period of time when the school, parent(s)/carer(s) and the student involved can work together on the resolution of the problem that has led to the student's suspension. In such cases the parish priest and Catholic Education Office should be informed and a record kept. Therefore, the student's right to attend school has been withdrawn for a defined period of time. Responsibility for the student's safety and welfare during this time is transferred to the parent or caregiver. The student is not to be on the school premises during this period.

Duration of suspension

The duration of any suspension is an important decision. Factors that must be considered include issues such as any previous suspension, the age of the student, family and personal circumstances, recognised disability, the behaviour in question and its impact on others.

Suspensions of 1-3 days can be determined by the principal without reference to the Education Consultant. Suspensions over 3 days are considered very serious and can be determined by the principal only after consultation with the Education Consultant. A suspension of 10 days or more is considered exceptional and can only be determined by the principal after consultation with the Director of Catholic Schools.

A complete record which includes the student's name, reason for suspension, the type of suspension and length of suspension must be kept at the school in all cases (see Appendix 2). In the case of long term suspensions (over 3 days) notification to the Assistant Director Education Services on the correct form is required within 24 hours. This information will be required by the Catholic Education Office as part of diocesan compliance.

The school has a responsibility for the educational wellbeing of the student while on suspension and must put in place appropriate measures to ensure the student's learning needs are catered for during this period.

Re-entry Meeting

A re-entry meeting must be conducted before the student's return to school. The principal will inform the parents who will be in attendance at the re-entry meeting. The student should be present. The principal may decide to extend the suspension if the re-entry meeting does not meet the desired outcomes.

Parent involvement in suspension

See Appendix 1 for information on parent involvement in suspension. Questions relating to the suspension can be made in the first instance to the Principal. If the issue cannot be resolved at that level the student, parent(s)/carer(s) may discuss the matter with the Education Consultant.

Negotiated Transfer

When all other pastoral and discipline measures, including suspension, have failed to resolve an issue of serious inappropriate student behaviour, a negotiated transfer may be considered. Negotiated Transfer means a documented and mutually agreed move to another school is arranged. Generally such transfers are managed by the Education Consultant in consultation

with all relevant parties in both schools, including the parish priest, and with the parents of the student involved. A Negotiated Transfer may be considered as a way of giving a student a “fresh start”.

Responsibilities

While the actions detailed in this policy will apply to a minority of students, it is essential that parish schools clearly communicate on a regular basis to all parents, carers, students and staff, school policies on student management, complaints handling and behavioural expectations.

Clear documentation and communication play an important role in ensuring that decisions and actions are based on published principles and follow pastoral and consistent processes. Reference to school procedures in matters relating to suspension should be made in school pastoral care / welfare / discipline policies.

Record Keeping

All records pertaining to any incident involving suspension must be carefully recorded, filed and retained according to the Diocesan Student Records Policy. The Catholic Education Office may seek information from schools on the number, reasons for and frequency of suspension and expulsion decisions.

Expulsion

The expulsion of a student from the community of a Catholic parish school should only be considered in exceptional circumstances. A principal can only expel a student after consultation with the parish priest and the approval of the CEO of Catholic Schools.

Parents are notified of the expulsion decision by the principal.

Right of appeal against expulsion

Students and their parent(s)/carer(s) have the right to request a review of the expulsion.

Parents have a right of appeal through the CEO of Catholic Schools.

Any review of a decision to expel will reference all relevant records to determine if principles of procedural fairness were followed in the decision making process.

APPENDIX 1

Investigation and decision making considerations

Before a suspension or expulsion decision is made principals are to ensure that:

1. A methodical and comprehensive investigation of the incident(s) has occurred and all available witnesses have been interviewed.
2. All matters raised in any interview/investigation are recorded in writing and kept according to the Diocesan Student Records Policy.
3. The student has been heard in the matter(s) under investigation and has had the opportunity to respond to the complaint(s).
4. The age, developmental levels and specific needs of the student have been taken into consideration in the investigation. Consideration has been given to extenuating circumstances before any action is taken.
5. The student understands the decision timeline and the steps that will be taken in any investigation.
6. Where possible a second school based adult should be present in interviews where the incident involves the possibility of suspension or expulsion.
7. As far as possible the student's parent(s) have adequate and timely information on the incident, time to assess the information and the opportunity to respond to the complaint(s). Parents have the right to be present for interviews particularly where suspension or expulsion is a possibility.
8. A letter detailing the incident and reasons for suspension is provided to the parent.
9. Parents are aware of the right of appeal mechanism.
10. The principal may decide that immediate suspension is appropriate and at times essential when issues involve possible criminality, intimidation, serious breaches of the school's Code of Conduct or concerns about the safety of staff and students.
11. in the case of an immediate suspension the Parent/Caregiver must be informed. Students are never to leave the parish school premises until parents/caregivers have been notified and arrangements for the student's return home have been confirmed.

APPENDIX 2

Record Keeping

A yearly record is to be kept at the school which includes the following information:

Year:	Detail
Student name	
Class teacher	
Date of suspension	
Length of suspension	
Reason for suspension	
Date of reentry meeting	
This was the student's [] suspension	Number
Location of all correspondence	

The Catholic Education Office will require schools to produce suspension data.

Student Suspension Record Short term suspension (1-3 days)

Suspensions of 1-3 days can be determined by the principal without reference to the Schools Services Consultant.

Student Suspension Record Long term suspension (4-10 days)

Suspensions of 4 days to 10 days are considered very serious and can be determined by the principal only after consultation with the School Services Consultant.

Long term suspensions must be recorded on the appropriate form in the Violence on Schools Package. A copy is to be forwarded to the SSC within 24 hours and a copy must be kept at the school. Also included in the Violence in Schools Package are copies of correspondence relating to suspension decisions.

Student Expulsion Record

A record is kept at the school of expulsion decisions. The record includes:

Year	Detail
Student name	
Class teacher	
Date of expulsion	
Reason for expulsion	
Date Director and Parish Priest first notified of concerns	
notified of concerns	
Location of all correspondence	

The Catholic Schools Office will require schools to produce suspension data.