



Whole School Discipline Policy V7.0

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1.0	15/04/08	Draft
2.0	29/04/08	Preliminary final
3.0	30/4/08	Final
4.0	08/08/08	Amendment to 4.4
5.0	19/02/13	Final
6.0	25/02/16	Revised
7.0	10/12/20	Reviewed in preparation for Registration to give the policy a clear scope and purpose, 2021

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the biblical framework and tenor of St George Christian School's ("the School's") whole school approach to Behaviour Management and Discipline. It will be used to inform the Departmental Behaviour Management Policies and particularly the procedures relating to the discipline of students.

2. CONTEXT

This policy arises out of a need to establish a set of guiding principles by which Departmental Behaviour Management Policies are established. It outlines aims, principles, expectations and certain specific formal and significant consequences pertinent to behaviour management.

2.1 Biblical Foundation

The Bible provides a framework which shows that sound and consistent discipline is a way of expressing love. In the Bible, God gently disciplines those he loves as a way of guiding them into right and God-honouring ways of living. A defining aspect of God's character is found in the way He disciplines His people "...God loved us while we were sinners..." (Romans 5:8) and "...the Lord disciplines those he loves..." (Hebrews 12:6).

This is the starting point for godly discipline and these biblical principles apply to the way we seek to discipline students at the School:

- *"Train a child in the way he should go"* Proverbs 22:6.
- *"Do not exasperate your children, instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord"* Ephesians 6:4.

In the Bible, these instructions are given to parents, but the School has been delegated the responsibility of training students whilst they are in our care, so we understand we have the role of applying biblical discipline whilst students are at school.

Reconciliation is a key biblical principle which informs how we are to relate both to God and to each other. The Bible tells us: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). Whilst this primarily relates to encouraging students to be reconciled to God, it is also about facilitating reconciliation between students and with other members of the community (Romans 12:18, Matthew 5:24) . As a result, the School's approach to discipline is designed to be restorative, encouraging students to seek reconciliation with those they have wronged or be wronged by.

2.2 Regulatory Framework

The Education Act, NSW (1992) requires that schools discipline students based on the principles of procedural fairness using both the hearing rule and the right to an unbiased decision. Further, schools are required to ensure that they are not using and not condoning the use of any form of corporal punishment.

As the regulatory body, the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) is responsible for ensuring that the School meets the requirements of the Act including having in place and implementing policies to discipline students which meet these requirements.

This policy seeks to outline how these requirements are met at the School across Kindergarten to Year 12.

3. DEFINITIONS

Consequences relate to implications that result from student behaviour including the formalised consequences of detention, suspension and ultimately expulsion.

Discipline is the process of training students to adhere to the School's behavioural expectations and involves both affirmation of adherence to expectations and correction when these expectations are not met.

Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from the School.

Procedural fairness refers to the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision':

The '**hearing rule**' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:

- Know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter;
- Know the process by which the matter will be considered;
- Respond to the allegations;
- Know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.

The '**right to an unbiased decision**' includes the right to:

- Impartiality in an investigation and decision-making;
- An absence of bias by a decision-maker.

Suspension is a temporary removal of a student from all of the classes that a student would normally attend at a school for a set period of time.

Training is the education of students about their social and personal behaviour and its impact on others.

4. POLICY & 5. PROCEDURES

4.1/5.1 Procedural Fairness

Policy

From the NESA Registration and Accreditation Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual):

"Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what are sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.

*The '**hearing rule**' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:*

- Know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter
- Know the process by which the matter will be considered
- Respond to the allegations
- Know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.

The '**right to an unbiased decision**' includes the right to:

- Impartiality in an investigation and decision-making
- An absence of bias by a decision-maker."

The School will apply the principles of procedural fairness in all discipline matters in a way which is appropriate to the seriousness of the matter.

Procedures

To ensure procedural fairness:

1. The School will make this, and all department Behaviour Management processes, available to parents;
2. The relevant details of specific incidents will be made available to both parents and the students (if developmentally appropriate) in the form of a general outline of the allegations and with respect to the Privacy of the other students involved (including the provision of an interpreter if required);
3. The Principal and Heads of Departments will always seek to act justly and fairly both in investigating and making decisions based on these investigations;
4. A different person will carry out an investigation (generally the Head of Department or Wellbeing Coordinator) and make a decision (generally, the Principal or Head of Department – but not if they are the one who has carried out the investigation) about behavioural consequences when suspension or expulsion is being considered;
5. When suspension or expulsion is being considered, the student will be allowed to have a support person or observer attend all formal interviews and a written record of the interview will be made & retained by the School.

4.2/5.2 Behaviour Management

Policy

The aims of the School's Behaviour Management and Discipline practices are to:

- Develop self discipline that shows respect and consideration of others;
- Build workable relationships;
- Encourage personal responsibility for behaviour.

Procedures

Each department has developed their own approach to Behaviour Management which are developmentally and contextually appropriate and are outlined in the:

- K-5 Behaviour Management Procedures
- Middle School Behaviour Management Policy
- Senior School Behaviour Management Policy

4.3/5.3 Corporal Punishment

Policy

The School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at School.

Procedures

The School **does not**:

1. Use corporal punishment in any form at the School;
2. Encourage or condone parents or caregivers to use corporal punishment as a result of any behaviour incident at the School.

4.4/5.4 Student Wellbeing

Policy

The School is committed to nurturing the wellbeing of each student at the School, in part as an affirmative approach to behaviour management. This positive approach is designed to enhance student wellbeing and promote positive attitudes, actions including kindness and courtesy as well as a growth mindset. This includes teaching students so they understand school rules and expectation. Pastoral care occurs in a wide range of ways which are outlined more specifically in the relevant Departmental Policies.

Procedures

Pastoral Support for the student as they develop self-discipline is offered through Class Teachers (K-5) Home Room Teachers (6-8), Year Advisers (9-12), then Student Wellbeing Coordinators, Director of Student Wellbeing and the School Counsellors. The intention is to proactively support the student to achieve this policy's stated aims.

4.5/5.5 Suspension & Expulsion

Policy

Each Department's Behaviour Policy outlines the processes they will use for the ongoing and daily behaviour management and discipline of students. But in cases when suspension and expulsion are being considered, the following procedures will be applied to ensure procedural fairness is applied.

Procedure

1. If the Head of Department/Wellbeing Coordinator is considering whether the appropriate consequence for a student's behaviour is more significant than the normal Behaviour Policy allows, they will consult with the Principal or their delegate.
2. The Head of Department/Wellbeing Coordinator will complete their investigation and consult with the Principal or their delegate about whether a suspension is the appropriate consequence.

3. If the decision is made to suspend the student, then the student and their parents are informed in a developmentally appropriate way and in a way which is appropriate to the situation, including providing written information about the basis for the decision (as per Section 4.1/5.1).
4. More than two suspensions raise the issue of whether the student's enrolment at the School is in the best interests of the student's education and that of the wider School community. In this case, the Principal will make a decision based on the investigation of the relevant Head of Department and using the principles of Procedural Fairness (see Section 4.1/5.1).
5. The Principal will expel a student after consultation with the student's parent/guardian and other relevant staff and only if they deem it to be for the good of the student and the general School community.
6. Formal records will be kept on the student's file of all aspects of the decision making regarding both suspension and expulsion.

6. CONGRUENCE WITH LEGISLATION AND RELATED POLICIES

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- SGCS Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- SGCS Senior School Behaviour Management Policy
- Middle School Behaviour Management Policy
- K-5 Safe and Supportive Environment Policy
- Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy
- Grievance Policy

7. SOURCES

NA

8. CONSULTATION

This document was revised in 2020 by the Director of Research, Compliance and Accreditation. Consultation with the Heads of Departments, Wellbeing Coordinators and the Principal was a part of this process.

9. ACCOUNTABILITIES

9.1 Implementation Plan

Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that their departmental behaviour policies align with the principles in this policy and that their staff are educated about the requirements of both policies.

9.2 Training Plan

Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that their departmental behaviour policies align with the principles in this policy and that their staff are educated about the requirements of both policies.

9.3 Compliance

The Principal, through the Heads of Departments and Wellbeing Coordinators, is responsible for ensuring compliance.

10. POLICY ADVISER

The Director of Research, Compliance and Accreditation is the Policy adviser.

11. FORMS

NA