



Discipline Policy

RATIONALE

“At St James, we seek to create a happy, safe and inclusive environment which enhances learning, nurtures young people and empowers them to live the Catholic faith in the spirit of Jesus Christ.”

We believe that St James School student behaviour management ought to seek to protect personal and school community safety, heal destructive behaviours and, restore relationships, encourage reconciliation enhance wellbeing, foster responsibility, enable personal growth and promote the common good. (Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools CECV Policy 2.26)

It is in this environment, that we can all grow into our full potential in a positive atmosphere. We believe that all students have the right to learn and all teachers have the right to teach.

Students and staff need a clear understanding of expectations; a positive approach to good behaviour and a consistent approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

We believe that discipline is **leading, guiding, encouraging** and **instructing** children within a framework of rights, responsibilities and rules.

St James draws upon **Restorative Practices** and **Canter's Model of Assertive Discipline** as the basis for its whole school behaviour management procedures. We strive for students *to learn* to be responsible for themselves and their actions, and to make genuine, positive contributions to their community. A **Restorative Practices** approach allows classroom and yard incidents/disruptions to be dealt with in a manner which sees conflict or wrongdoing, firstly, as an opportunity for students to learn about the consequences of their actions. It helps to develop empathy with others, and to seek to make amends in such a way as to strengthen the relationships that may have been damaged. **Assertive Discipline** is a program, which focuses on teaching students to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

GOALS

- To enable all students to grow and be affirmed in their dignity and worth

- To create an environment which facilitates the development of self-discipline, and empowers students to make appropriate choices
- To involve all community members in discussion about rights, responsibilities and rules
- To affirm positive behaviour and provide clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour
- To build a climate of trust and mutual respect
- To develop warm, positive teacher-student relationships
- To ensure that the rights of all members of the School Community are respected
- To implement a consistent approach which is understood by all
- To develop a consideration of, and a sense of loyalty for the culture of our school

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

At the commencement of each school year, the teacher and students of each classroom consider this question, *“What rules will help to make this classroom a safe and happy place in which to learn?”*

Classroom and Playground rules are as follows:

- Respect all people and property
- Keep hands feet and objects to yourself
- Follow directions immediately
- Use positive language, no teasing or put downs
- One person speaks at a time

These rules are unpacked discussed, listed and displayed in **each classroom**.

Posters displaying playground rules are also placed strategically around the **playground**.

Our endeavour is to focus on positive behaviour more frequently than negative behaviour and consistently acknowledge students who are choosing responsible behaviours.

Some of the positive recognition strategies include:

Verbal encouragement, classroom recognition and incentives, stickers, whole class rewards, notes sent home to parents, awards at assembly.

We use a range of strategies and programs to develop social and emotional learning. These may include our Buddy system, Circle Time, Social Skills programs and Student Leadership opportunities.

When children break rules that prevent maximum learning in the classroom, a tiered range of consequences is implemented ranging from the lowest - a verbal warning to the most serious - a student being sent to the principal for the safety and wellbeing of all involved. The stages followed within this framework will vary according to the age and year level of the child involved.

When the problem/issue is relationship breakdown in the playground and at times in the classroom e.g. exclusion from group or bullying, a restorative approach will be used to rebuild relationships between the affected parties.

The teacher will facilitate the following restorative questions

- What happened?
- How did it happen?
- How did you act in this situation
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

As a result of this process a student(s) will always be asked to plan steps to restore the relationship. As a consequence of their inappropriate choices a student may have to complete a behaviour reflection sheet, apologise (written and verbal) have time out or lose privileges, walk with the teacher, make up time, be referred to counselling support services.

There will be some occasions where a restorative practice approach is deemed not appropriate.

Severe disruption, violence or bullying behaviours will warrant immediate removal from the group. Safety of the children will be the overriding factor.

Teachers will notify parents of an incident if, in their professional judgement, it is deemed necessary.

Parents may be asked to come to the school to participate in program support meetings around behaviour management.

The school does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by school persons and non-school persons. Policy 2.26)

If a parent(s) have a concern about behaviour issues the first point of call should be the classroom teacher. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved then parents are asked to meet with the Principal or delegate. At **no stage** should a parent approach another parent's child to discuss behavioural issues.

In serious instances, where a person's safety and/or wellbeing are at risk or where a student has repeatedly engaged in serious wrongful behaviour, the principal or delegate shall use his/her discretion in whether suspension from school is an appropriate course of action to take.

Having completed the suspension, a student and his/her parent(s) must come to a meeting with the Principal/delegate(s) to discuss the process for his /her positive return to the school.

In some circumstances, a student's suspension can take place within the school. The principal or delegate will make this decision.

There may be instances where it is appropriate for the student to change school or move to an alternative setting. This is known as a negotiated transfer.

Expulsion from the school takes place in serious and extreme circumstances and when all other avenues have been exhausted. The Principal makes this decision.

(Ref: CECV Policy 2.26)

Refer also to Anti Bullying Policy.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year School Improvement Plan.

This policy was revised in 2016 by staff and ratified by the Education Board.