

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Section A

The use of corporal punishment is forbidden by law in the state of NSW and is completely outside the philosophy and practice of Saint Mary MacKillop College Albury. It must never be employed by any member of staff or other person operating in any capacity on behalf of the college.

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

The School has a set of School Rules that summarise the expectations of behaviour . They are to be displayed prominently in each classroom.

They are summarised as follows:

Card one: At Saint Mary MacKillop College Albury We... Respect ourselves, Respect Others and Respect our Environment.

Card Two: Consequences Flow Chart. 1. Warning 2. Relocate 3. Time Out within the Classroom/Yard 4. Exit From The Classroom or Yard/ Behaviour Sheet. Parents Notified
5. Principal

Card Three: Keep hands, feet and objects to ourselves

Card Four: Speak appropriately

Card Five: Follow Directions

Card Six: Take Care of All Property (yours, mine and ours)

Card Seven: Listen to the Speaker

Card Eight: Move safely

When things go wrong or someone has been hurt the school will utilise the Restorative Practices technique to assist in discipline. (See Procedures below)

Resources: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/methodrestorative.aspx>

Section B – Disciplinary Points: CONDUCT

Saint Mary MacKillop College Albury recognises that self-discipline is intrinsic to the Christian life, and that the true order willed for us by God can only be achieved when our lives are ruled by reason enlightened by Faith. To this end, we guide and assist our students to understand the meaning of true freedom and goodness and to strive for it individually and collectively.

This guidance and assistance involves:

- Placing before the students the ideals given us by Christ – love for and fidelity to the Will of God, the spirit of the Beatitudes and courage in carrying the daily Cross in imitation of Him.
- Helping them to see opportunities for living out these ideals in everyday life.
- Providing them with spiritual motivations for doing good and avoiding evil.
- Helping them to rely on the grace of God in order to grow towards the perfection God's plan holds for them.

- Giving them clear guidelines and structures to facilitate their growth in reasoned self-mastery.
- Providing appropriate checks and penalties for inappropriate behaviour.

Goal 1 – Faith and Prayer

Students in a Christian school have a right to conditions that will inspire and support their faith in God and nurture them in the spiritual life. The school has the duty to provide them with clear guidelines for behaviour that will facilitate not only their own journey to God, but promote the spiritual good of others.

Students are expected:

- To be silent and reverent in Church.
- To be reverent during Mass and prayer.
- To be cooperative and responsive in Religious Class and all Religious activities.
- Never to taunt or ridicule others for their religious beliefs and practices.
- To recognise their responsibility to witness to Christ by their own prayer and virtue.

Goal 2 – Courtesy and Respect for Others

The school undertakes to teach students how to give due respect and reverence to all people with whom they come in contact. They are to learn the fundamental Christian truth that every person is a beloved child of God; and to put into practice Christ's command to love everyone as we love ourselves.

Students are expected:

- To greet people graciously, addressing teachers, priests and other adults by name and acknowledge peers in a friendly fashion.
- To stand when teachers or adults enter a classroom.
- To show consideration to adults, allowing them to go ahead through doors etc. and offering assistance to adults where it may be needed.
- If they are boys, not to touch girls or play 'rough' with them.
- To use the courtesies of "please" and "thank you".
- To give up seats to adults where necessary, - and boys to give up seats, places etc. to girls.
- To use acceptable manners when eating or drinking.
- To observe rules of courtesy in submitting work for grading – work should be neat, free from crossing-out, legible and set out according to instructions.
- To be punctual for all school activities.
- To refrain from calling out in class – instead, waiting until invited to answer questions.
- Where a group is concerned, to walk in and out of classrooms etc. in file.
- To refrain from loud noise or running in the school building.
- To refrain from shouting, moving around or disruptive behaviour in public places, - on school buses or public transport.
- To apologise where they have broken school rules or offended or hurt others.
- Not to taunt or belittle others, but rather to encourage and applaud their genuine efforts.
- Not to applaud negative or disruptive behaviour in others.
- To respect the property of others.

Goal 3 – Personal Discipline

Our students are to learn the value of personal self-discipline according to St. Thomas' definition of peace as "the tranquillity of order". They are to understand that true human growth and achievement come from self-discipline and ascetical effort stimulated and aided by God's grace.

Students are expected:

- To observe the School's uniform dress code. (Teachers' dress-code to be at least as stringent and geared to formality as students').
- To store personal belongings and study items neatly and safely.
- To refrain from bringing in magazines, books, CD's etc. or electronic equipment to school unless permitted or invited to do so by a teacher.
- To observe silence in places and times when it is mandated for the purposes of study or prayer.
- To present exercise books and files neatly.
- To keep their pencil cases and other receptacles for work-materials free from extraneous matter.
- To eat and drink only at permitted times and places.
- To avoid the use of mobile phones in the school, unless for a particular reason and by special request of a student's parents.

Goal 4 – College Spirit and Responsibility

We aim to instil into our students a loyalty to the school based on the unity of faith and grace by which its members are bound. We see it as important that each student recognises his/her responsibility for the building up of the Christian spirit of the school and therefore, for the happiness and welfare of the whole school community.

We expect the students:

- To wear the uniform correctly, seeing it as the symbol of the school's unity and solidarity in Christ.
- To represent the college in public with pride and dignity, following the instruction of teachers as to what is appropriate and needed in any given situation.
- To take initiatives for the building of college spirit.
- To show courtesy to staff and fellow students.
- To honour all commitments to the best of their ability.
- To respect the authority of the teachers.
- To use respectful and appropriate language.
- To welcome new students and visitors to the school and to include fellow students in college activities.
- To take care of all school property and encourage others to do the same.
- To report any dangerous or serious situation of which they become aware, to a responsible person or persons.
- To challenge and/or report offensive behaviour and language by fellow students.
- To dispose of waste in safe and appropriate ways.
- To take responsibility for school equipment and facilities – turning off taps and equipment which have been left running by mistake and reporting malfunctioning equipment.

Discipline and Links with Pastoral Care

The pastoral life of the college is based on the active and sensitive involvement of all staff and seeks to build a vital Christian community in which all individuals feel involved, appreciated and supported. To this end discipline practices are firmly linked with pastoral care in the members of staff who seek to promote respectful, secure and healthy environments in which students can

prosper. Thus pastoral care at Saint Mary MacKillop College Albury ensures that disciplinary measures and sanctions are not used merely as punitive actions but also as opportunities to foster responsibility for actions, to both modify and change destructive behaviours and breaches of order.

In the case of a serious breach of discipline, such as theft or drug use/possession, the matter should be referred to the Principal. A formal interview will be required. Two members of staff, one of whom will take notes, should be present at any such interview, which must be based on principles of procedural fairness (see Appendix 1).

Where a student's misbehaviour is judged to be of a very serious nature, suspension and/or expulsion may be used as sanctions. The Principal will always be involved in such cases and such decision is at his/her discretion. In particular, where consideration is being given to the expulsion of a student from the school, the gravity of the circumstances requires that particular emphasis be given to all aspect of procedural fairness.

Suspension/Expulsion – step by step

Suspension is not intended as a punishment. It is only a strategy for managing inappropriate behaviour within the framework of other policies associated with student welfare and discipline. It is most effective as it highlights the parents role to work in partnership with the school. It allows the school personnel to prepare appropriate support and assist with re-entry of a student. Suspension also allows for the student to reflect on their own behaviour. It may be done immediately for violent, disrespectful or aggressive behaviour especially if it impacts on the safety of other students or staff members. For serious matters that may involve issues related to child protection or criminal activity the Office of the Children's Guardian <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/> or the police should be consulted. The School Child Protection The AIS Child Protection unit are another advisory avenue for independent schools. The AIS may also provide an independent investigator if requested.

Suspensions

Step 1. For minor misdemeanours a warning or short detention may be issued- examples include minor disobedience, class disruptions, unkindness or thoughtlessness, rudeness, not complying with school rules.

Step 2. For repeated or more serious misdemeanours similar to those mentioned above a student may be given a behaviour sheet that needs to be filled out daily and signed by the parents. Parents would be contacted. Generally this will be given for a week at a time.

Step 3. Highly concerning behaviour such as aggression/violence or no intention to address serious behaviour- parents will be interviewed and a suspension may be considered as a possibility. Parents will be contacted. Additional support for the student for learning needs or pastoral care would be sought and considered as a remedy prior to suspension. External professional help should be recommended also if appropriate.

Step 4. Decision made to suspend student. Suspensions may be whole days, or part days to allow the student to gradually ease back into normal classroom routine. Generally suspensions would be

for up to four days and would require a formal letter outlining inappropriate behaviours as well as clear expectations for the student in the future. Parents will be contacted and a face to face or phone meeting organised.

Step 5. Serious matters. A serious matter would be: violence/aggression affecting the safety and well being of others in the school community; possession of illegal drugs; possession of a weapon; other criminal/illegal activity. **This may result in an immediate suspension** for up to four days. Parents would be contacted immediately and a meeting organised.

In determining whether a student's misbehaviour is serious enough to warrant suspension, the Principal will consider the safety, care and welfare of the student, staff and other students.

Suspensions give the school time to develop in conjunction with the learning support and other personnel eg. pastoral care and chaplain an individual plan that addresses both the learning needs of the student and also a plan to address any ongoing behaviour concerns.

A short suspension would be for up to four days for less serious behaviours and a long suspension of up to 20 days may be considered if the behaviour was serious enough. A long suspension is only to be done in exceptional circumstances and for the safety of the students and or staff.

A long suspension would only be considered in the instances of: physical violence; possession of a weapon; supply of illegal substances; serious criminal behaviour related to the school; or persistent serious misbehaviour. A parent meeting would be required prior to the student returning to school.

Expulsion For Misbehaviour

This may happen in the instance of a serious act of misbehaviour such as violence, possession of illegal substances or criminal activity within the school.

This would only be done in very rare instances when all other options had been exhausted. Generally a student would be put on a suspension until the expulsion has been finalised. Allow seven school days to finalise the process. The principal would conduct a formal disciplinary meeting with the student. This would be followed up with written advice to the parents setting out clearly the reasons for the expulsion from the school are being considered. The parents would then be given seven days to respond and the parents should be invited to a face to face or telephone meeting. If the expulsion proceeds the parents and students will be advised in writing.

If a student is asked to leave the school, the Principal will assist with the student's entry to another school, in order that he/she has the chance to make a fresh start.

Discipline Procedures

This section is not meant to detail every possible circumstance that could arise when a student chooses to act in a manner contrary to the code of expected behaviours, but rather to provide general guidelines for staff in dealing with such situations and the chain of referral that should be followed.

Disciplinary issues need to be dealt with as quickly as possible, usually the same day wherever possible.

When a student fails to follow the code of expected behaviours or any other clearly stated college rule, **teachers** may give a warning and/or impose the appropriate sanction as they see fit. Sanctions could include a litter duty, which would be carried out during lunchtime, a Student Notice, in the case of uniform infringements, or a detention during school and only in exceptional circumstances.

For breaches of the “School Rules’ as posted visibly throughout the school the teacher in charge at the time should be the person to act. If the student is not co-operative or the offence is deemed to be more serious then the support of the **Principal** should be sought.

If the incident occurs during yard time the teacher on duty will note the misbehaviour and action on the behaviour sheet that is provided to staff for this purpose. Any actions taken will also be recorded on this sheet. Any serious incidents need to be dealt with as per the Serious incident Policy.

If the **Principal** is involved then he/she will keep a record in their day book and a brief report of the incident including actions taken and any supporting documentation will be retained in the office and a note made on the student’s file.

In the case of disciplinary issues the restorative Practices Questions are used either to be shared orally with the staff member involved or to be written out. (outlined below):

Restorative Questions I- When Things Go Wrong

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

Who has been affected by what you have done?

In what way?

What do you think you can do to make things right?

Restorative Questions II- When Someone Has been Hurt

What did you do when you realised what had happened?

What impact has this incident had on you and others?

What has been the hardest thing for you?

What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

If there is doubt as to what the correct procedure should be the following guidelines should be used;

1. For student misbehaviour in class and/or problems with academic work and/or homework, the subject teacher is responsible for subject-related problems. In addition, the Principal should be notified of continuing academic behaviour problems and changes in student behaviour patterns.

2. For all other breaches of discipline other than minor or trivial offences the teacher should discuss the issue with the Principal. This would include issues such as classroom behaviour, uniform, attendance and lateness, co-operation with staff and playground behaviour.

The class teacher is responsible for the overall welfare and discipline of the students in his/her class and can approach any teacher at any time for help or advice concerning any of these students.

Where there are ongoing difficulties with a student in relation to classroom behaviour and completion of work the school Principal may place the student on a daily review sheet in order to assist the teacher to modify student behaviour.

APPENDIX 1

Principles of Procedural Fairness to be followed in school investigations:

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 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

Procedural fairness includes making available to students and parents or caregivers policies and procedures under which disciplinary action is taken. It also includes providing details of an allegation relating to a specific matter or incident. This will usually involve providing an outline of the allegations made in witness statements and consideration of witness protection. As part of ensuring the right to be heard, the school will establish any need for parents/care givers to be provided with interpreter services and, if required, make arrangements for such services to be available.

This means that those involved investigating a matter the school will act fairly, in good faith, without bias and exercise discerning judgement.

Each party should have the opportunity to state their case adequately, correcting or contradicting any relevant statement prejudicial to their case. If the principal is both the investigator and decision-maker he/she must be reasonable and objective. They must act justly and be seen to act justly. In some instances the high school co-coordinator or another staff member may be delegated to conduct the investigation. The AIS may provide an independent investigator is required.

In matters where a long suspension or expulsion is contemplated, the gravity of the circumstances requires particular emphasis to be given to procedural fairness. This includes the offer of having a support person/observer attend the formal interviews. The key points of the interview/discussion should be recorded in writing.

The class teacher is responsible for the overall welfare and discipline of the students in his/her class and can approach any teacher at any time for help or advice concerning any of these students.

Where there are ongoing difficulties with a student in relation to classroom behaviour and completion of work the school principal may place the student on a daily review sheet in order to assist the teacher to modify student behaviour. See “Suspension/Expulsion step by step” above.