

Discipline and Behaviour Management Policy

Policy Number	JS10
Policy Owners	Head of Junior School, Dean of Academic Care
Initial issue date	April 2015
Revision issue date	March 2024
Next revision date	March 2026

Purpose

Effective student behaviour management and discipline is necessary to ensure the welfare of all our students and staff and to provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

This document sets out the framework through which the Meriden Junior School manages student discipline and behaviour management, including a student Code of Behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies to all Meriden Junior School students.

Policy

Meriden School is committed to providing its students with a safe and supportive environment that fosters their academic, physical, social and emotional development.

Meriden seeks to foster a positive and supportive environment where each student is a valued and supported member of our community. Appropriate emphasis, support and recognition are attributed to positive and desired attitudes and behaviours from our students as we seek to operate as a Christian community.

Belonging to a community such as Meriden brings many special privileges; it also brings special responsibilities. Each student is an ambassador of the School and belonging to Meriden brings an expectation for students and their parents of acceptance and support of the standards, ethos and policies and procedures of the School.

Meriden's approach to discipline is designed to foster self-discipline and upright citizenship in the girls. The School operates a discipline system that is firm, reasoned and nurturing, and high standards of conduct are expected from all students in order to provide a safe and supportive environment.

Meriden prohibits the use of corporal punishment of any kind in disciplining students attending the School.

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

All matters of concern relating to interactions with staff, student relationships (including allegations of bullying), conflicts and discipline must be referred to the School for investigation and appropriate action. Under no circumstances should parents or other adults directly approach our students (other people's children) with their concerns.

Bullying is not tolerated at the School. The School implements prevention and intervention strategies that are age-appropriate and assist to create a safe and support environment.

Meriden takes all incidences of bullying very seriously and considers all forms of bullying behaviour to be unacceptable. If bullying behaviour is identified, it is responded to in accordance with the procedures below.

Definitions

Suspension - a temporary (set period of time) removal of a student from all classes they would normally attend.

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

As an Independent School, Meriden does not have an exclusion policy or agreement between it and other schools that would prevent a student expelled from Meriden from being enrolled at another school.

Procedural Fairness

Whilst it is the responsibility of the School to determine incidents that may require disciplinary action and the nature of any consequences that may apply, in all our dealings with students and their families the School is committed to the promotion of justice and a process based on a right to procedural fairness.

The principles of procedural fairness include the right to:

- know the specific allegations and any other relevant information which will be taken into account in considering the matter
- know the process for considering the matter
- respond to the allegations
- know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations
- an impartial investigation and decision-making process
- an unbiased decision-maker.

To afford procedural fairness, particularly in the application of more formal sanctions, the School ensures that:

- behavioural expectations and disciplinary procedures are communicated clearly to our students and parents including an outline in the annual Junior School Planner and the full text of this document being available to parents on the School's intranet (eVe).
- a student in breach of expectations is:
 - made aware of the issues and allegations involved and related matters that may be considered in determining consequences
 - provided with details of any allegation against them relating to a specific matter or incident
 - given an opportunity to respond to a situation or allegation
- wherever possible, decisions regarding consequences are made by objective staff members, and not those directly involved with an incident
- witnesses (if available) will be consulted independently. Their identity may, as appropriate, be kept confidential
- parents will be fully informed of any on-going disciplinary matters and asked to attend an interview, usually with the Dean of Academic Care or Year Coordinator. Students may be present for part of such interviews.
- records of incidents and processes (including interviews and meetings) are recorded appropriately

- parents and/or students have the right to seek a review of the decisions made, with member/s of the Junior School Executive, followed by the Principal. Additional material may be presented for consideration.
- in serious matters where the Principal is considering a long suspension or expulsion the School will:
 - offer to have a support person or observer at formal interviews
 - record the key points of interviews and discussions in writing.
- in all matters of discipline, every effort will be made to ensure communication is effective, including the provision of an interpreter for parents or guardians who need one.

This document is supplemented with procedures for the implementation of this Policy. The following areas are covered:

- Meriden Context
- Meriden Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management
- Uniform Code
- Sport Code of Conduct.

This document should be read in the context of the School's suite of student welfare policies, for example:

- Student Welfare Policy and Procedures
- Learning Enhancement Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- Counselling Policy and Procedures
- Student Leadership Policy and Procedures
- Guidelines for Using Information Communication Technology

Anti-Bullying

Allegations of bullying behaviour should always be reported to teachers immediately. Students and parents should notify teachers of any difficulties students are experiencing, as soon as possible, rather than to leave matters unattended until they reach a crisis point.

Students are encouraged to make use of the student letterbox located in the Junior School Library, to write to the Dean of Academic Care, teacher or Year Coordinator, to alert them to any issues or suggestions they may have. Students may also approach any member of our teaching staff or our School Counsellor with any matters of concern to them.

Allegations of bullying behaviour are responded to in accordance with the Behaviour/Student Management procedures.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Junior School to decide if, and when, to contact the police about any school related matter involving the behaviour of a student.

Definition to assist identifying bullying

Understanding the definition of bullying is the first step to identifying and responding to it.

Bullying is intentional, ongoing and repeated behaviour that causes fear, distress or harm and involves the misuse of a power imbalance by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Bullying can happen anywhere: for example at school, travelling to and from school or at school sport.

Bullying behaviour can take many forms including:

- verbal e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats — either face to face or through any other medium
- physical e.g. hitting, pushing, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- social e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- psychological e.g. spreading rumours, hiding, stealing or damaging personal possessions, malicious SMS, email and online messages, inappropriate use of phone camera.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying behaviour is also not:

- children not getting along well
- a situation of mutual conflict
- single episodes of rudeness, nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

Anti-Bullying program

During the course of each year, Junior School students are involved in anti-bullying education and an annual friendship survey is conducted.

Communication of policy and procedures to students, staff, parent(s)/carer(s)

This policy and procedures are communicated to students, staff, parent(s)/carer(s) by:

- a copy of the full text of this document being accessible to all staff and parents(s)/carer(s) on the School's intranet (staff)/eVe (parents)
- making the discipline policy and anti-bullying policy publicly available
- staff induction and training
- extracts being published in the Junior School Planner
- correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s) (as required)
- School Newsletters (as required)

Related Documents

Counselling Policy and Procedures (JS08)

Learning Enhancement Policy and Procedures (JS13)

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures (AS08)
Guidelines for Using Information Communication Technology
Student Leadership Policy and Procedures (JS11)
Student Welfare Policy and Procedures (JS12)
Terms of Enrolment