

# Discipline Policy and Procedures

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| <b>Policy Owner</b>        | Head of Student Wellbeing |
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## Purpose

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

This policy sets out the framework through which the Senior School manages student discipline.

## Scope

This policy and procedures applies to all Meriden Senior School students.

## Policy

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

The Senior School seeks to develop a culture of positive discipline by setting clear expectations of students and encouraging positive behaviour and an environment where each student is a valued and supported member of our community. Appropriate emphasis, support and recognition are attributed to positive and desired attributes and behaviours from our students as we seek to operate as a Christian community. 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.

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 procedures of the School. Students are encouraged to model their behaviour on the teachings of Christ to love and serve one another.

The students of Meriden are expected to uphold the traditions and expectations of the School. The Student Code of Behaviour is designed to promote a high standard of conduct in each girl and to ensure the safety of all and the efficient running of the School.

**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.**

Parents, guardians and students are provided with details of the procedures involved in the disciplinary processes within the School in the Student Planner. The measures outlined are part of a framework where there is an emphasis on positive encouragement for correct behaviour as a matter of choice rather than for fear of the negative

consequences for wrong behaviour. However, on infrequent occasions there is a need for formal disciplinary procedures of a serious nature. The consequences should at all times be in keeping with considerations such as the nature of the behaviour, the age of the child and the circumstances that may have led to the behaviour.

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.

Very occasionally children may exhibit uncontrollable, violent, dangerous or strongly anti-social behaviour, usually unexpected. If such serious behaviour is deemed to place at risk the welfare of the student concerned, other students or staff members, parents will be called immediately to the School to take the child home, in order to diffuse the situation. Subsequently the parents will be asked to attend an interview with member of the School Executive to determine a way forward. Usually a behaviour contract and plan will be developed for the child and she may attend sessions with the School Counsellor and/or other health professionals. We must provide a safe and secure environment for all members of our School community, and as such, violence or incidents of assault cannot be tolerated within our School.

### **Procedural fairness**

Whilst it is the responsibility of the School to determine incidents that may require disciplinary action and the nature of any penalties that may apply, in all dealings with students and their families, Meriden School is committed to the promotion of justice and a process undergirded by procedural fairness.

The principles of procedural fairness include the right 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
- an impartial investigation and decision-making process and
- an unbiased decision-maker.

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

- behavioural expectations, disciplinary processes and procedures are communicated clearly to students, parents and the School community including an outline in the Senior 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 issue involved and related matters that may be considered in determining consequences
  - provided with details of any allegations against them relating to a specific matter or incident
  - given the opportunity to respond to a situation or allegation.
  - witnesses (if available) will be consulted independently. Their identity may, as appropriate, be kept confidential

- records of incidents and processes (including interviews and meetings) are recorded in writing.
- parents will be fully informed of any serious on-going disciplinary matters and asked to attend an interview, usually with the Head of Student Wellbeing and/or the Year Coordinator.
- wherever possible, decisions regarding consequences are made by objective staff members, and not those directly involved with an incident.
- parents and/or students have the right to seek a review of the decision made, with other senior members of staff and ultimately with the Principal and additional information 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 parent or guardians who need should these be warranted.

### **Definitions**

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

**Expulsion** is 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 for Meriden from being enrolled at another school.

### **BEING A MERIDEN STUDENT – CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

(This Code of Behaviour appears in the Student Planner each year)

**"Do to others as you would have them do to you."** Luke 6:31 (NIV)

Luke 6:31 is our "golden rule". It is a quotation from the words of Jesus, found in the Bible. We believe this is the way to live and work happily and peacefully with others and, this is certainly what we expect of all our students.

As a student at Meriden you are expected to uphold the traditions and comply with the rules. The Code of Behaviour is designed to promote a high standard of conduct in each girl. The purpose of the rules is to ensure the safety of all and the efficient running of the School.

#### **Code of Behaviour**

Our expectations are based on the following principles. Girls should:

- Learn in a safe and secure environment,
- Treat personal possessions and school property with care and respect,
- Take pride in Meriden and uphold its values in the wider community,
- Uphold School values as shown in the Fidelis Model,
- Uphold the School's Christian ethos.

To enable all students to learn in a safe and secure environment, girls should note the following:

- Harassment or bullying in any form are unacceptable and should be reported to the Year Coordinator, Dean of Pastoral Care or Head of Student Wellbeing,
- Personal safety and the safety of others are paramount. Students should respect the physical personal boundaries of others,
- Consideration of others should be shown when waiting in queues, crowded corridors, crossing the road, and on public transport,
- Good manners and courteous language are to be used at all times,
- Possession or use of vapes, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, alcohol or non-prescribed drugs is prohibited whilst at school, travelling to or from school, or on any school-related occasion,
- Use of medicines must comply with the School's Health and Medication procedures,
- Treat personal possessions and school property with respect.

This includes:

- Caring for the environment; not littering or engaging in graffiti or other forms of vandalism,
- Eating in the playground, except in special circumstances,
- Ensuring personal possessions are clearly labelled and secured in lockers when not in use,
- Demonstrating a commitment to Meriden's physical environment by maintaining classrooms and grounds in a tidy and orderly state,
- Not borrowing personal or School property without permission,
- Not filming or posting photos and videos online in school uniform/on campus without school permission,
- Not distributing unauthorised materials/goods/publicity at School.

Take pride in Meriden and upholds the School's values in the wider community.

As a Meriden student you are expected to:

- Be well groomed and wear your uniform correctly at all times,
- Be aware that you represent your School whenever you are in uniform,
- Show consideration of others within the School and in public,
- Be respectful, courteous and well-mannered at all times,
- Take pride in, and responsibility for Meriden's appearance and image.

To uphold Meriden's Christian ethos you are expected to:

- Be respectful of the views of others,
- Be aware that people are different individuals and should be treated respectfully regardless of religion, culture, disability, gender or physical appearance,
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in dealing with others,

- Make a positive contribution to the wider community.

The School expects the cooperation of parents and girls in accepting certain regulations. These are fundamental to the wellbeing of all girls in the School. They are based on courtesy and consideration for others, as well as instilling a sense of responsibility in the girls. Please remember that everyone has the right to feel safe at all times.

**Parents are reminded that implicit in the acceptance of a student's enrolment is appropriate support of and compliance by both students and parents with School expectations, Parent Charter, Code of Behaviour and Student Behaviour Management Plan.**

Sanctions will follow if students fail to meet required expectations. Parents will be notified in writing if continued breaches of the code of conduct occur, or if conduct is of significant concern.

If parents have concerns or queries regarding other students, these must be reported to the School. Parents should not raise such concerns with other parents and **under no circumstances should parents approach someone else's child.**

## STUDENT BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Extracts from this section appear in the Student Planner each year)

Appropriate behaviour is expected at Meriden to ensure a safe and secure community and as a way to teach self-discipline to students as they develop into upright citizens in their community.

### Staff Roles:

1. **Tutors** will monitor Student Planners. Tutors will inform Year Coordinators of repeated patterns of behaviour (e.g. lateness, incomplete schoolwork). Parents are expected to sign the Student Planners weekly.
2. **Heads of Department** will deal with learning and class issues and measures will be taken to manage the situation. Department detentions may be organised by the Head of Department for students who are unable to complete their homework punctually or continue to disrupt the class. Students may also be issued a Friday afternoon detention from the Head of Department.

Behaviours that will be addressed by the Head of Department are:

- Rudeness/dishonesty in class
- Repeated disruption of the class
- Repeated lateness to class
- Regularly unprepared for class
- Repeated incomplete homework.

Failure to complete assessment tasks will incur a penalty under the appropriate assessment policy.

3. **Year Coordinators** will be kept informed of the measures taken to resolve any student behaviour problems across the school. If the behaviour is in more than one subject, or outside the classroom, the Year Coordinator will take over management of the problem and liaise with senior staff as required.
4. **School Adjutant** plays a key role in monitoring and enforcing the uniform expectations of students. The school adjutant will refer students who have repeated uniform infringements to the Year Coordinator.

### Infringement Responses:

1. **Demerits** Students will be issued a demerit by any teacher for the following:

- repeated uniform infringements
  - disruptive behaviour
  - sleeping in Assembly and Chapel
  - failure to use Student Planner appropriately
  - mobile phone use
  - chewing gum.
2. **Friday Detentions** may be given by the Year Coordinator, Head of Department and other members of senior staff. These will be issued for:
- repeated demerits
  - repeated lateness to school
  - classroom infringements, such as repeated comments in the Planner
  - rudeness/swearing, including dishonesty
  - inappropriate behaviour
  - failure to modify behaviour after warning

Parents are notified by email in advance and requested to acknowledge receipt of the detention notice. Detentions will be held on Friday afternoons. Students may be issued a one or two hour detention, depending on the severity of the infringement. Students who fail to attend a detention without reason will be issued a two hour detention, or a Saturday detention.

3. **Saturday Detentions (3 hours):** are issued for serious breaches such as:
- significant rudeness
  - dishonesty
  - public misbehaviour outside school and/or on excursions
  - fighting/inappropriate physical contact
  - truancy
  - defacing school property
  - repeated detentions for the same infringements
  - bullying behaviour, including cyber-bullying.

These detentions will be conducted by the Adjutant or a senior member of staff on a Saturday morning. Parents will be notified by letter or email of the details.

4. **Suspensions/Expulsions:** will be at the discretion of the Principal and are a result of very serious breaches of the School's expectations and Code of Behaviour.

Suspensions may be issued in the form of an internal suspension at school, or a suspension at home at the discretion of senior staff.

Actions which might result in suspension could include:

- significant truancy
- serious classroom misbehaviour
- smoking, vaping
- fighting
- extreme rudeness to staff, including serious deceit
- forgery
- serious misbehaviour in public
- vandalism
- repeated bullying behaviour, including cyber-bullying.

Actions which might result in expulsion include:

- possession of non-prescribed drugs, in or out of school
- possession or use of alcohol or illicit substances, in or out of school
- repeated suspensions
- sustained bullying, including cyber-bullying
- bringing weapons or firearms to school
- theft.

### **Implementation, communication and accessibility of this policy**

This policy and procedures and other related responsibilities are implemented and communicated to students, staff and parent(s)/guardian(s) by a combination of:

- publication of extracts to students in the annual Senior School Planner
- publication to parents on eVe
- publication of the policy on the School's website
- the Head of Student Wellbeing or other staff at weekly student assemblies (as required)
- pastoral care staff
- publication of extracts to staff in the annual Senior School Staff Handbook and Planner
- the Head of Student Wellbeing at weekly staff briefings (as required)
- publication to staff on the School's intranet
- the Principal or Head of Student Wellbeing at parent information evenings
- emails and/or letters to parents(s)/guardian(s)

- notices in Newsletters
- monitoring of the effectiveness of the policy and
- reviewing and evaluating the policy.

## **Related Documents**

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures (SS10)

Assessment Policy and Procedures (SS28)

Camp Code of Conduct

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures (AS08)

Enrolment Policy (AS03)

Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Technology

Homework Policy (SS16)

Parents' Charter

Senior School Planner (including Uniform Requirements and the Award System for the Cocurricular Program)

Student Behaviour Management Plan (SS02)

Student Code of Behaviour Policy (SS03)

Terms of Enrolment

Terms of Enrolment – Addendum for International Students