

Discipline Policy

Policy Number	SS01
Policy Owner	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.

This document is supplemented by the procedures for implementation of this policy including in the Student Behaviour Management Plan and Student Code of Behaviour Policy.

Implementation, communication and accessibility of this policy

This policy 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