

Behaviour Support Policy

Rationale:

Positive and responsible student behaviour is essential to the smooth running of St Paul's school, to the achievement of optimal learning opportunities, and to the development of a supportive and cooperative school environment.

Aims:

- To build a school environment based on positive behaviour, mutual respect and cooperation.
- To manage poor behaviour in a positive and professional manner.
- To establish well understood and logical consequences for student behaviour.

Implementation:

- Positive student behavioural achievement will appropriately be recognised.
- All staff will undertake professional development on student behaviour and restorative practices.
- Students experiencing difficulty achieving positive behavioural outcomes will undertake individualised behaviour management programs focussing upon agreed goals.
- Parents will be kept informed, and actively encouraged to assist in the development of their children's behavioural performance.
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) promotes resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies eg: 'A Positive Approach to Managing Student Behaviour' and 'Restorative Practices'. These are to be used in conjunction with our Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Student individual academic reports will include details regarding student behavioural achievement.
- Corporal punishment is not permitted at St Paul's school.
- For issues of serious misconduct, the discipline of students is based on the principles of procedural fairness. The school utilises the advice in both the Catholic Schools Operational Guide and the CEM Policy 2.26 - Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools to inform decisions made in relation to the suspension, expulsion and exclusions of students (see attached appendix). A register of suspension and expulsions of students will be established. The Student Wellbeing Leader will ensure the register is maintained by ensuring any students who are suspended are added to the register.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

APPENDIX TO BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

SUSPENSION, EXPULSION AND EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS

If behaviours are considered to be of a serious nature then the following may apply:

IN SCHOOL WITHDRAWAL

If judged necessary as a behaviour management procedure, withdrawal from class, the playground and/or other school activities will be done in school rather than out of school, as this maintains a student's connectedness and engagement with the school. The processes for the withdrawal of the student will be structured positively to assist in the student's return to acceptable behaviours.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

If out of school suspension is judged appropriate by the school, it will be for the shortest time necessary. At least one day prior to the day on which the suspension is to commence, the school will notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), if possible by verbal communication initially and by confirmation in writing. The communication will include the reason for the suspension, the purpose of the suspension, and the date(s) on which the suspension will occur.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be offered the opportunity to participate in a meeting to consider these and other related matters, including:

- the legal and pastoral responsibilities of the parent(s)/ guardian(s) during the time of suspension;
- the school's responsibility for providing learning material during the time of suspension;
- the process of settling back into the school environment, and how this is to be facilitated; and
- arrangements for monitoring the student's progress following his/her return to school.

It is an expectation of the school and Catholic Education Melbourne that a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than nine school days in any one school year.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT WRONGFUL BEHAVIOUR OF A SERIOUS NATURE

St Paul's School defines student wrongful behaviour of a serious nature to be an activity or behaviour of a student that:

- consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any lawful order of the Principal or a teacher; and/or
- is offensive or dangerous to the physical or emotional health of any student or staff member; and/ or
- consistently and deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities of other students.

Some wrongful behaviours of a serious nature are by definition criminal offences. These may include criminal damage of property, possession of a weapon, theft, assault, assault with weapons, use, possession or distribution of drugs and sexual assault. This list is indicative only and not all inclusive.

When the Principal determines that a serious offence of a criminal nature has occurred, the welfare needs of the offending student(s) is paramount. The incident will be reported to the police at the earliest opportunity and to the Leadership Team.

When it is judged by the school that a student has engaged in wrongful behaviour of a serious nature within the school community, a Behaviour Management Support Group will be established to:

- consider the behaviour of the student and the implications for the student and the school community;
- consider the personal and social needs of the student, and how they may best be responded to;
- determine what behaviour management action within the school's stated processes is most appropriate;
- identify strategies to assist the student, following positive behaviour management, to re-establish his/her place satisfactorily in the school community;
- ensure that decisions of the Behaviour Management Support Group are implemented; and
- access any relevant agencies to provide support.

In arriving at decisions, the Behaviour Management Support Group aims for consensus. Where this is not achievable, the Principal (or Principal's nominee) makes the decision, in accordance with school policies and directives. The decision of the Behaviour Management Support Group is recorded in writing and filed in the school records. Confidentiality will be honoured at all times.

A Behaviour Management Support Group will comprise:

- the Principal and Deputy Principal or his/her nominee as convenor and chairperson; and
- the student; and
- the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, who may be accompanied by a support person (not acting for fee or reward) nominated by the parent(s)/guardian(s).

In some instances, where the behaviour of a student is deemed to threaten immediate or ongoing harm, distress or danger to others, it may be necessary to withdraw or suspend the student temporarily from the student community, pending a meeting of the Behaviour Management Support Group. Responsibility for such a decision rests with the Principal or the Principal's nominee.

NEGOTIATED TRANSFER

Negotiated transfer involves a change of school by a student to another Catholic school, a school within another sector, or an alternative educational setting.

Negotiated transfer is an option in circumstances in which it is judged that the school is not the right environment for the student, and that another setting would more suitably meet the student's current and future needs and be the most appropriate means of providing for the student's wellbeing. It may also be that, due to serious behavioural issues, a student's negotiated transfer is an appropriate means of providing for the wellbeing of the school community.

When negotiated transfer is being offered, the Principal (or Principal's nominee) will provide comprehensive advice to the student and the student's parents about the benefits this option would provide, and seek their agreement for a negotiated transfer.

Responsibility for negotiating a transfer is with the Principal (or Principal's nominee) of the school from which the student is to transfer. The following matters need to be considered:

- the environment which would best provide for the student's emotional, social and spiritual needs;
- the school which would provide an educational program suitable to the student's needs, abilities and aspirations;
- the process by which the transfer is to be negotiated; and
- the support required by the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in making the transition.

These and other relevant matters will be included in the formal record of Negotiated Transfer. If a negotiated transfer is desired but cannot be arranged, the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne will be informed in writing, and assistance requested. If a negotiated transfer is still unable to be achieved, the student will remain enrolled at St Paul's School, unless the circumstances are such as to require expulsion.

EXPULSION

Expulsion of a student will not occur except in the most serious of circumstances, and when the following conditions all apply:

- the student has engaged in wrongful behaviour of a serious nature (see definition above);
- the school's other processes for addressing such behaviours have been applied and not been successful;
- the welfare and safety of others in the school community, or the need to maintain order and protect the rights of others, make it necessary that the student no longer be present in that school community.

Only the Principal has the authority to expel a student. Prior to confirming an expulsion, the Principal will:

- explain clearly to the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) the reason for the intended expulsion, and provide them with an opportunity to speak on behalf of the student;
- provide to the Parish Priest formal written notification of the intended expulsion and the reason for it and seek endorsement; and
- provide to the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne formal written notification of the intended expulsion, and the reason for it, and request that the Executive Director endorse the Principal's decision.

Should the decision to expel the student be confirmed, the Principal will ensure that the expulsion is formally recorded in the school's files, and provide to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the expelled student a formal Notice of Expulsion. When possible, this notice will be issued before or on the day the expulsion is to commence, and if that is not possible then as soon after that as is possible. This notice will include:

- the reason(s) for the expulsion;
- the commencement date of the expulsion; and
- details of the Review and/or Appeal processes available.

PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF AN EXPULSION DECISION

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student expelled from the school may, within five school days (in exceptional circumstances, ten school days) of receipt of the notice of expulsion, formally request of the Principal, that the decision be reviewed. The request must be in writing unless that is not possible, and must state the grounds on which the Review is being sought, whether the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) wish to be heard in person, and if they wish to be accompanied at the Review by another person (such a person to be named, and not acting for fee or reward).

An Expulsion Panel, convened by the Principal, will hold the review, within five school days if possible.

Membership of the panel will be the Principal as nonvoting chair and three persons nominated by the Principal, who were not involved in the original decision and who have school leadership responsibility. The panel will consider the details of the case and, after giving the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the opportunity to be heard on the grounds of review, determine by majority vote a recommendation to the Principal as to whether the expulsion should remain or be repealed.

Having considered the recommendation, the Principal will make a decision, and within three school days will formally notify this decision to the person(s) who requested the review and to the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne.

PROCESS FOR APPEAL AGAINST AN EXPULSION REVIEW DECISION

After the Review Process has been concluded, if the expulsion decision is still in place the parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal against that decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) may, within five school days (in exceptional circumstances, ten school days) of receipt of the Review decision, lodge a formal Appeal.

Valid grounds for requesting an Appeal are that:

- proper procedures were not followed in the Review process; and/or
- the decision to continue the expulsion was unjust.

The Appeal must be in writing to the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne. Upon receipt of an Appeal Notice, this authority will appoint an officer to investigate the Appeal. When the investigation has been completed, the Officer will deliver their findings to the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne, who will formally notify the Principal and the person(s) who made the Appeal. If the grounds on which the Appeal was made are found to be true, the expulsion must be repealed. Otherwise, the expulsion will remain. Following receipt of these findings, the Principal will formally notify all parties to the Appeal as to whether the expulsion decision remains or is repealed, and the reason(s) for the decision. This decision will be final, and is not subject to further Review or Appeal within the Catholic Education Melbourne system.

PROFORMA DOCUMENTATION

The following sample templates are available via the Catholic Education Victoria Network website:

- Behaviour Management Plan
- Letter regarding suspension
- Behaviour Management Support Group report
- Record of Negotiated Transfer (for the school file)
- Notification of Expulsion to the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne (prior to confirming expulsion)
- Record of Expulsion (for the school file)
- Letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding Notification of Expulsion
- Letter from a Principal regarding the Expulsion Review outcome
- Letter from a Principal regarding the Expulsion Appeal outcome