

## POLICY 02.12.00-E Behaviour Management

### Rationale

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition, as part of its evangelising mission, is the development of community and creation of a climate and culture permeated by Gospel values, which respects the dignity of all human persons as articulated in the EREA Touchstones. The creation of such an environment provides opportunities for school communities to build a sense of acceptance, inclusion and connectedness for all students. It is recognized that a strength of EREA schools is the ability to maintain student wellbeing and deal with disciplinary matters quickly and effectively to ensure that a positive and productive learning environment is maintained for all students.

Various Church documents on the Catholic school, name the school's goals as supporting parents in the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in their students. Catholic schools, therefore, share in the responsibility with parents for teaching students to, "overcome their individualism and discover, in the light of faith, their specific vocation to live responsibly in a community with others". (The Catholic School n45). The educative process is intended to assist students to make a "conscious choice of living a responsible and coherent way of life." (The Catholic School n49).

In the Catholic school environment students are therefore, guided and encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline, and regulate their conduct in accordance with Christian principles. Through this development students come to:

- respect the welfare and needs of themselves and others;
- be aware that their actions influence the creation and maintenance of the Catholic environment of which they are part;
- enhance the development of positive self-images;
- gain a sense of belonging within the school and wider community;
- develop an understanding of the consequences of their behaviour; and
- develop an awareness of processes, which assist in resolving problems as they arise.

Despite the focus on these positive outcomes, the continued behaviour of a minority of students may require the Principal to consider their In-School Withdrawal or Out of School Withdrawal (suspension) and, on the decision by the Director and Chief Executive Officer EREA Flexible Schools, their expulsion from the school or their exclusion from the system of EREA schools.

The NSW Government has accepted the recommendations of Part 1 of the Review of Non-Government Schools (Grimshaw Review) which includes requiring schools to develop policies relation to Behaviour Management that include suspension, expulsion and alternatives to corporal punishment (which must be precluded).

### Positive Behaviour Approaches

Positive behaviour systems of support are evidence-based strategies for building an inclusive and collaborative school culture that optimizes teaching and learning opportunities and the overall success of the student. It is supported by the School Wide Positive Behaviour Plan that is designed to promote and maintain a safe, caring and positive learning environment for all students and staff.

## **Restrictive Practices**

Staff at St Edmund's College (the School) have a duty of care and responsibility to all students and any action should reflect maximum respect for the student's autonomy and individual rights. In this light, it is the responsibility of staff to consider positive behaviour approaches that are aligned to evidence-based training and frameworks that reduce the need for restrictive practices. Additionally, a Restrictive Practices Committee is engaged to provide ongoing support and review of restrictive practices that may be outlined in a student's Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

## **Responses to Serious Breaches of Student Behaviour**

When a student has engaged in behaviour of a serious nature and the safety of the student and other staff/students is a major concern, the processes of expulsion, followed by exclusion may occur. The Principal, in consultation with the Director and Chief Executive Officer of Flexible Schools, and the College Executive, is responsible for the expulsion and exclusion of students, based on procedural fairness.

## **General Policies**

In the Catholic school environment students are therefore, guided and encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline, and regulate their conduct in accordance with Christian principles. Students are required to abide by the School's Rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the School.

Where a student disregards rules, disobeys instructions or otherwise engages in conduct that causes or may cause harm, inconvenience or embarrassment to the School, staff members or other students, the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the School vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence. Where the allegation, if proved, may result in suspension or expulsion, the student and parents will be informed of the allegations and procedural steps to be followed in dealing with the matter. In relation to all matters to be investigated, students will be informed of the nature of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

The consequences imposed vary according to the behaviour and the prior record of the student. At the lower end of the scale, in school withdrawal or other consequences may be appropriate. At the upper end of the scale, the behaviour could result in suspension or expulsion.

The School prohibits the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students attending the School. The School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the School.

## **Major behaviour issues affecting placement at St Edmund's College**

1. School enrolment / placement may be affected only after due process in the event of serious breaches of school student management / discipline policy. Such a process is not to be confused with routine management strategies such as 'time-out' from class.
2. A serious breach is understood generally as activities or behaviours of a student who:
  - Consistently and deliberately fails to comply with the reasonable directions of the Principal or teacher; or
  - Is offensive or dangerous to the physical or emotional health of any student or staff member (e.g., illicit possession and use of drugs, illicit use of prohibited weapons); or
  - Consistently and deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities and endeavours of other students.

3. The policy operates within a context of justice, compassion, reconciliation and forgiveness. It is intended to promote the dignity and responsibility of each person while ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff.
4. Thorough investigation must always precede any action. Parents must always be actively involved in the process unless the circumstances require urgent intervention. Counselling may be a suggested outcome to be discussed in collaboration with parents.
5. The safety, protection and pastoral care of all students requires that the school clearly explains serious breaches of student conduct and reinforces student awareness of them on a regular basis.
6. The Principal, in consultation with the School Leadership Team is responsible for the management / discipline of students, including but not limited to the suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students, based on procedural fairness.
7. Before major sanctions are implemented the School usually adopts a graduated process of other management measures and has had ongoing discussions with the student and parent/carer and other professionals.
8. The following major sanctions may be applied taking into account individual circumstances:
  - *Suspension – home and/or in-school* – the temporary withdrawal of a student's rights to attendance at the School
  - *Suspension pending negotiated transfer*
  - *Negotiated transfer* – a change of school either to another Catholic school or to a school in another sector in the best interests of the student concerned
  - *Expulsion* – total withdrawal of a student's right of attendance at the School; it involves the termination of the contract entered into by the School and by the parents/carers at enrolment.
9. The responsibility for the implementation of the policy and the determination of formal major sanctions rests with the Principal in consultation with EREA.
10. In every instance of serious breach, the Principal is primarily responsible for due process and appropriate support of student and family members before consideration of suspension, negotiated transfer or expulsion. The Principal shall confer with the School Executive Team as the nature of the case demands and before implementation of particular major sanctions.

## **Appeal process**

Students and parents to be informed of the procedural steps to be followed during major disciplinary sanctions. Students and parents may make an application for a review to the Principal submitting any information to be considered in the appeal process. The appeal process will be carried out by the Principal in a timely manner, reviewing all material and maintaining communication with the student. An outside independent adjudicator may be consulted in case of an unsatisfactory resolution.

## **Child Protection**

In matters involving child protection issues, the Principal should refer to Child Protection Policies and be guided by advice provided by the Flexible Schools EREA Child Safeguarding staff, Department of Communities and Justice, and the NSW Police.

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	College Principal
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	March 2026
<b>Related Policies, Procedures and Guides</b>	02.12.01-E – Behaviour Management Procedure 02.12.04-E – School Wide Positive Behaviour Plan 02.13.00-E – Anti-Bullying Policy 02.14.00-E – School Attendance / Non-Attendance Policy