



## Student Discipline Policy

### Source of Obligation

The Victorian Registration Standards ([s 4.3.1\(6\)](#)) require that our policies relating to the discipline of students must be based on principles of procedural fairness and must not permit corporal punishment.

### Preamble

At Holy Trinity Lutheran School the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships and all activities. The behaviour management policy of the Holy Trinity Lutheran School recognises that each person has the real needs of worth, acceptance, value, dignity, adequacy, personal security and respect. As such, God's love and forgiveness demonstrated in Jesus is the cornerstone for any behaviour management principles.

We recognise that we live in a fallen world and will need rules to manage behaviour, but these rules are never the power to fulfil human needs or willingly drive loving behaviour towards others. When situations do require students to be disciplined, the discipline is always for the purpose of understanding the consequences of broken fellowship and therefore for encouraging the person(s) to seek forgiveness and restoration between God and others. In this endeavour, the school community will be a caring and supportive environment striving to reflect, however imperfectly humans are able to, the unconditional love of Christ with which we have been blessed (1 John 4:19).

A Christ-centred community is by no means perfect. Individuals reflect this imperfection. Holy Trinity Lutheran School is committed to modelling integrity through genuine, authentic, open and honest dealings with others. It includes treating all people in an equally transparent, fair and equitable manner. When corrective action is required, this is to be done in a loving and caring environment that promotes faith, hope, justice and reconciliation.

Expectations of behaviour are to be clearly communicated to all members of the school community. Our aim is to motivate each member to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and make decisions based on consideration and respect for others.

Effective management of student behaviour occurs in partnership between the school and the families of the students. Behaviour management within our school stems from our care and concern for each member's well being. We disapprove of the inappropriate behaviours, but not of the individual. Staff communicate and negotiate with others in order to build support and develop ownership and shared acceptance for ideas, action and decision. Students are led to recognise that choices regarding their behaviour can have either positive or negative consequences. Consequences for inappropriate behaviour are to be fairly administered and follow due process.

Through an emphasis on positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships, Holy Trinity Lutheran School aims to promote the Christian growth and development of each student as an individual within the community:

- to provide a positive, safe learning environment in which God's word is readily spoken and his love permeates, in which an individual's needs, rights and social responsibilities are met and reflected, and students feel safe, valued and cared for;
- to support children in the making of responsible choices, so that they are enabled to manage themselves and their behaviours, that they may anticipate, experience and accept the consequences for both appropriate and inappropriate choices regarding their words and actions.

## **Expected Outcomes**

The expected outcomes of this policy are:

- the contribution to a whole school climate of respect for mutual rights and responsibilities, with an emphasis on the value, uniqueness and dignity of all people rather than on punishment or reward;
- the participation of all staff members in the creation of a safe, secure, Gospel-oriented learning environment where students develop age-appropriate control of their own behaviour;
- for students examine their own behaviour in discussion with staff in a way which reflects their involvement in the decision making process;
- the special needs of students are identified and are supported through appropriate programmes. Teachers examine motivation and respond appropriately to unacceptable behaviour;
- teachers understand and demonstrate how to conduct effective behavioural change and understand student behaviour management models and practice.

## **Prohibition of Corporal Punishment**

It is our policy that corporal punishment is not permitted.

The use of any corporal punishment by a staff member is strictly prohibited. Any staff member who breaches this rule will be subject to disciplinary proceedings which may include dismissal.

## **Guidelines**

Holy Trinity Lutheran School seeks to develop a culture of positive discipline by setting clear expectations of students and encouraging positive behaviour. Strategies for developing this culture include:

- teachers and students are to communicate respectfully and maintain Christian values;
- students strive to solve conflicts independently and respectfully. They will refer to a member of staff if needed;
- students are to be considerate of others and their safety when playing;
- students use own, others' and school equipment responsibly;
- students move in a manner which is orderly, appropriate to the area and ensures the safety of themselves and others;
- students are responsible for and respectful of our natural and school environments. God has made us the carers of His creation;
- students need to follow the behavioural expectations of the classroom;
- students are only allowed in the classroom with the teacher's permission;
- students are to take responsibility for their physical and verbal actions and reactions.

## **Procedural Fairness**

Students have a right to procedural fairness in dealings that involve their interests. This includes disciplinary decisions.

The principles of procedural fairness include the right to:

- know what the rules are, and what behaviour is expected of students;
- have decisions determined by a reasonable and unbiased person;
- know the allegations that have been made, and to respond to them;
- be heard before a decision is made; and
- to have a decision reviewed (but not so as to delay an immediate punishment).

Holy Trinity Lutheran School is committed to ensuring procedural fairness when disciplining a student.

## **The Rules and the Expected Standard of Behaviour**

Students are expected to abide by the rules of the school, and the directions of teachers and staff. Expectations are specified in the following policies:

- Student Behaviour
- Bullying Prevention & Intervention
- Cyber Safety
- Information & Communication Technology
- Truancy
- School Rules
- Uniform

## **Implementation**

Students are adequately educated about the behavioural expectations of Holy Trinity Lutheran School in both a classroom setting and the yard.

Teachers engage in preventative action to prevent or minimize unnecessary disruption. They:

- establish positive relationships with students, parents and other staff members;
- know the expectations of school behaviour;
- should be consistent in enforcing school rules;
- have an aesthetically pleasing and functional room;
- prepare and utilize appropriate materials;
- arrive at class on time;
- plan interesting lessons (as much as possible);
- cater and plan for mixed abilities;
- plan appropriate seating arrangements;
- plan for the language of discipline;
- make the routines clear.

Guidelines for applying Rewards and Consequences:

- rewards and consequences must be applied fairly and consistently;
- teachers are encouraged to use positive reinforcement and rewards to encourage desirable behaviour;
- rewards and consequences should be in proportion to the behaviour and the application of consequences from the least intrusive to the most intrusive;
- consequences should not be applied to whole groups of students unless deemed necessary;
- suggested rewards and consequences will be discussed between staff and students throughout the year;
- ensure that the student involved has sufficient time to eat and use the toilet if necessary;
- corporal punishment, belittling, humiliation and any form of abuse (physical, verbal or emotional) is expressly forbidden.

A decision to suspend or expel a student may only be made by the Head of School or Principal.

## **Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour**

### **Serious Incidents**

Each teacher shall act in a respectful and cooperative way towards each student and each student shall act in a respectful and cooperative way towards each teacher and all fellow students. It is expected that each teacher will develop an appropriate range of responses and techniques for dealing with a wide variety of student actions. Listed below are some of the procedures which it is expected will be used on an ongoing basis.

Serious Incidents are to be referred to the Head of School or Principal in the first instance. Serious incidents include:

- degrading or humiliating another student or teacher;
- possession of illicit substance/weapon;
- property damage;
- verbal abuse directed towards another student and/or staff member;
- physical altercation with other student(s) and/or staff;
- consistently behaving in a manner which interferes with student learning
- endangering other student(s) or staff member;
- theft of property;
- cyber bullying;
- serious breach of iPad User Agreement;
- any other incident deemed by staff member to be of a serious nature

These incidents are to be managed by the school if they occur while travelling to or from school, on the school grounds or organised school activities, such as excursions or camps.

### **First Instance Response**

First instances of unacceptable behaviour are managed by teaching staff. Specialist Teachers and teachers on Yard Duty will notify the Classroom (Junior School) or Homeroom (Middle School) teacher of any interventions. The teacher will:

- remind students of rules or identify inappropriate behaviour;
- make consequences clear;
- give simple choices.

### **Continued Unacceptable Behaviour**

Should unacceptable behaviour continue teachers are to apply natural and proportionate consequences. These strategies are to be applied with consideration of the context of the incident and individual student needs. At all times respect for the students and the desire to maintain positive relationships should be evident. Possible consequences include:

- relocation (closer to teacher, to another play area, shade area, another desk or classroom);
- meetings with the Principal or Head of School, where behavioural expectations are agreed verbally;
- removal of privileges (play time, specialist lessons);
- written behaviour reflection or letter of apology;
- contacting parents;
- in School Detention during recess or lunchtimes (Middle School – to be supervised by the Head of Middle School). Detentions should not involve the entire recess or lunch period and work completed during detention is to be related to the problem or incident.

### **Serious Incidents or Ongoing Unacceptable Behaviour**

Serious incidents or ongoing unacceptable behaviour are to be reported by the staff member who witnessed the behaviour. This information is reported to the Head of School via the HTLS Behaviour Incident Report located on staff intranet under staff forms, who then refers it onto the Principal or Head of School for further action. Whenever possible, the staff member who is first aware of the incident will notify the Principal or Head of School immediately.

When concerns arise about a student's behaviour, when a student is displaying chronic patterns of unacceptable behaviour, or a Serious Incident has occurred, a more targeted response will be required which may include both supportive measures and disciplinary measures. Staff involved in this process may include: The Principal, Head of School, School Counsellor, Learning Support Coordinator or Classroom (Junior School) or Homeroom (Middle School) Teacher.

Successful interventions are underpinned by strong staff-student relationships, as they require an understanding of

the underlying factors influencing behaviour and the immediate triggers for its occurrence.

Where students repeatedly demonstrate challenging behaviour, the school will implement a more structured intervention strategy as part of a staged response to address the behaviour. Intervention strategies that should be implemented include:

- Behaviour Incident Report is to be completed by the staff member who responded to the incident, and submitted to the Head of School;
- parents will be contacted;
- an assessment of the behaviour will be made, focusing on its influence, triggers and motivation;
- a Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan may be developed. This may include environmental changes to the learning environment or explicit teaching of replacement behaviours;
- appropriate support services may be engaged, such as counselling, assessments or welfare agencies.

In the event of continuing persistent and serious misconduct, the above procedure is followed by a period of in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion.

### **Procedures for Suspension, Expulsion and Exclusion**

Holy Trinity Lutheran School has developed specific procedures that must be followed when considering the suspension or expulsion of a student. Refer to the Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

### **Individual Behaviour Management Plan**

Individual Behaviour Management Plans or Student Behaviour Contracts may be made in certain circumstances.

Behaviour Management Plans and Student Behaviour Contracts will be negotiated between school staff, students and parents/guardians, and will consider the student's:

- age;
- developmental needs; and
- behavioural context.

Desired behaviour/goals of the student will be clearly described. The plan will outline changes required to the learning environment to support the student to modify their behaviour.

The school will refer the student to other support available and review, assess, change and modify the plan as needed.

### **Parent Contact**

Teachers are encouraged to maintain regular and positive communication with parents throughout the year. Parents may be contacted in the event that teachers become concerned with a student's behaviour. Records of student inappropriate behaviour are to be kept and senior administration informed of such communication.

Parents will be formally contacted in the following circumstances:

- serious or persisting breaches of the behaviour management guidelines;
- in the event that an injury to themselves or others has occurred as a result of their actions.

### **Implementation**

This policy is implemented by:

- staff training and professional development opportunities in behaviour management;
- communicating this policy to the school community;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the policy; and

- reviewing and evaluating the policy annually.

These policies and procedures are communicated to staff, students, guardians, parents and the school community through:

- the Holy Trinity Lutheran School website;
- Staff Handbook;
- Student Handbook; and
- announcements in the weekly newsletter.

#### **Related Policies**

- [Suspension and Expulsion Procedures](#)
- [School Rules](#)
- [Bullying Prevention & Intervention](#)
- [Uniform Policy](#)