



**CEN
HUB**

NSW & ACT



Discipline Policy

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| Prepared by | CEN Hub Compliance Officer |
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| 1.1 | October 2019 | New Illawarra Christian School updated policy |

Version History

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| 1.0 | October 2019 | New Illawarra Christian School policy created from CEN Hub policy |
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Illawarra Christian School: Mission In Christ's service to partner with parents in providing a quality Christian Education founded on the Word of God.

Table of Contents

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| 2 | CHRISTIAN RATIONALE | 4 |
| 3 | PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT | 4 |
| 4 | TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES | 5 |
| 5 | DEFINITIONS | 6 |
| 6 | POLICY | 7 |
| 7 | PROCEDURES | 8 |
| | 7.1 Communication | 8 |
| | 7.2 Student Code of Conduct | 8 |
| | 7.3 Encouragement of Positive Student Behaviour | 9 |
| | 7.4 Grounds for Suspension | 9 |
| | 7.5 Grounds for Expulsion | 11 |
| | 7.6 Return to School | 11 |
| | 7.7 Investigation of a Significant Incident or Allegation | 11 |
| 8 | THE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROCESS | 12 |
| | 8.1 Further Support | 13 |
| | 8.2 Right to Appeal | 14 |
| 9 | ADVICE TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS | 14 |

Important related documents:

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Child Protection Policy | Privacy Policy |
| Enrolment Policy | Staff Code of Code |
| Attendance Policy | Student Code of Conduct |
| Student Anti-bullying Policy | Code of Conduct for Parents and Visitors |
| Complaints Framework | Volunteer Code of Conduct |

Relevant Legislation:

Education Act 1990
NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1997
Weapons Prohibition Act 1998

References:

Registered and Accredited Independent Non-Government Schools (RANGS) Manual, March 2017
– latest version on website
DEC Suspension & Expulsion of School Students, Procedures 2011 (updated April 2015)
Disability Standards for Education 2005

1 INTRODUCTION

The school's main task is the education and socialisation of children, so that each student can achieve his or her potential. An effective learning environment is crucial for this; and every member of the school community has the responsibility to respect the rights of others to learn and work to the best of their ability.

The welfare of children at the school is foundational to their training in Christian attitudes and behaviour. (See Welfare Policy) It therefore includes nurturing, building, encouraging and supporting; but also training, direction and correction.

The Illawarra Christian School Discipline Policy describes the philosophy and processes followed by the school in restoring a student to responsible behaviour, both personally and within the community; and to train and guide them in appropriate self-discipline.

2 CHRISTIAN RATIONALE

The purpose of the Illawarra Christian School is to honour and glorify God by giving each child a Christ-centred education, as a complete person created by God in His image, and of infinite worth in His sight. The school's vision, Mission In Christ's service to partner with parents in providing a quality Christian Education founded on the Word of God, is a goal of parents who select Illawarra Christian School to provide education for their sons and daughters. In partnership with parents, the school seeks to equip young people who will contribute to society, and be responsible in their workplace, family and in their own lives.

While children possess great potential because they are made in God's image, they also have an inbuilt tendency to do what is wrong (sin). Children need to be nurtured to attain their potential while learning to recognise and reject sin. The system of discipline at Illawarra Christian School is therefore considered to be integral to the welfare of the child, as it trains and encourages students to make better choices about their behaviour.

Discipline is part of their complete training; rather than a system of punishment. It provides consistent direction, controlled consequences of poor choices, and the application of restorative processes to right any wrongs done to another, or to property. It is an outworking of the school's responsibility to the student and their family.

'Train a child how to live the right way then even when he is old, he will still live that way.'
(Proverbs 22:6)

3 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document explains the processes that the school will follow to maintain a well-ordered and responsible learning environment; and which will be put into practice when a student breaches the Student Code of Conduct and School Rules.

4 TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

| Responsibilities | Evidence of Compliance |
|--|--|
| Principal | |
| Maintain policies and procedures related to discipline of students that are based on procedural fairness | This document |
| Ensure staff training in Discipline Policy and procedures | CPL calendar; staff meetings |
| Assist teachers to adopt a uniform, consistent caring approach to class management and discipline | Vision, Mission & Aims; Staff Handbook |
| Suspend students when necessary and make recommendations to the Board regarding withdrawal of enrolment | (database) records; Board reports; Confidential notes on secure server |
| Report monthly to Board (as required) | Board reports |
| Board | |
| Review monthly reports from Deputy Principal | Board reports |
| Support Principal's recommendation of expulsion of student | Board reports |
| Deputy Principal | |
| Oversee implementation of discipline system | This document |
| Support staff in the implementation of disciplinary procedures; Staff training | Database; staff meetings; CPL calendar |
| Investigation of incidents and allegations of student misbehaviour | Database; Secure server files |
| Contact with parents | File notes (in database & physical file) |
| Report weekly to Principal | Weekly meeting |
| Pastoral Care Coordinators | |
| Support staff in classroom management and discipline issues | Section meetings; Staff appraisal |
| Oversee the welfare of students within their section of the school | LMS database; Behaviour Modification Cards |
| Liaise with the Deputy Principal about issues of concern and the implementation of behaviour modification programs | LMS database; Confidential notes on secure server files |
| Contact with parents | LMS database; Confidential notes on secure server files |
| Teachers | |
| Classroom management in accordance with school policy and procedures | Staff Appraisal; Staff Handbook |

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| Monitoring of general behaviour; and supervision of students | Student Monitoring Cards; LMS database |
| Consultation with parents/ Pastoral Care Coordinators/ Deputy Principal | LMS database |
| School Counsellor | |
| Follow up pastoral care, if required; Report significant issues to Executive | LMS database; secure server files |
| Students | |
| Comply with expectations set out in Student Code of Conduct | Signed Student Code of Conduct (annually) |
| Comply with requirements of School Rules | LMS database behaviour notes |
| Cooperate with disciplinary measures determined by the school | LMS database; student Behaviour Modification Plan |
| Parents | |
| Affirm and encourage their children in behaviour that complies with the Student Code of Conduct and School Rules | Enrolment Agreement; Student Code of Conduct |
| Support school discipline policy/ procedures; engage in discipline process; assist child to comply with any restorative measures | Enrolment Agreement; (in database); student Behaviour Modification Plan |
| Pursue external assessment in regard to their child's well-being if indicated | Student health records (in database) |
| Inform school of circumstances which may affect the welfare of their child | Notes; (in database) |

5 DEFINITIONS

Procedural Fairness: the principles of procedural fairness guide fair and reasonable decision-making procedures when a decision may adversely affect the rights, interests or legitimate expectations of an individual.

There are two basic common law rules:

- the 'hearing rule' - the right to be heard, which includes the right to:
 - Know the case against them, including specific allegations and any other information which will be taken in to account
 - Know the way in which the issues will be determined
 - Respond to the allegations
 - Know how to seek a review of the decision in response to the allegations
- the 'bias rule' - the right to an impartial decision, which includes the right to:
 - Impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases
 - An absence of bias in the decision maker

Suspension: removal of a student from a school for a period of time determined by the Deputy Principal/ Principal. Suspension is imposed in cases of unacceptable behaviour in the interest of the student and / or the school community. Parents are responsible for the supervision, care and well-being of students while they are suspended.

Expulsion: the permanent removal of a student from the school. This is an extreme action taken only after significant consultation with the student, parents and the school. It may be the result of a most serious incident; or after all previous discipline and restorative options for continuing poor behaviour were exhausted.

6 POLICY

In the pursuit of helping students to grow in godly character, maturity and self-discipline, Illawarra Christian School:

- (a) Promotes a proactive and strategic stance on issues of student welfare and discipline.
- (b) Seeks the building up and training of students through all aspects of school life.
- (c) Maintains procedures of pastoral care, and behaviour modification, for students.
- (d) Maintains centralised record keeping (database) as an ongoing profile of a student's welfare, behaviour and any interventions exercised by the school.
- (e) Regularly addresses the school's Discipline Policy and procedures with staff to ensure comprehension and compliance.
- (f) Expressly prohibits corporal punishment from the school's discipline procedures.
- (g) Does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.
- (h) Partners with parents, the school community and external specialists to support student development and address issues of concern.
- (i) Promotes opportunities and learning experiences in school for students to develop self-awareness and to develop their skills and maturity.
- (j) Fosters a relationship with the School Liaison Police Officer (SLP) to encourage students to build a positive relationship with the Police.

7 PROCEDURES

7.1 Communication

(a) Parents

Discipline policies and procedures are made available to parents and students upon enrolment; are available on the school website; and are reviewed in newsletters, parent information nights, and parent-teacher meetings.

(b) Student

The Student Code of Conduct and School Rules are made available to students upon enrolment; and are reviewed at the beginning of each year in class. Further reminders are made as needs arise.

(c) Staff

New staff are made aware of welfare and discipline policy and procedures at induction. Staff training takes place within sectional and whole school staff meetings; and particular issues or concerns are raised as required.

(d) School Counsellor

The School Counsellor is available for follow up pastoral support; but not engaged in discipline meetings.

(e) Records

Are maintained on (database). Confidential records are kept in a secure file on the school server.

7.2 Student Code of Conduct

The welfare of students is paramount in every aspect of school discipline; so that young people are trained in self-discipline and respect for others: attitudes which are important for all their lives.

The Student Code of Conduct, with the School Rules, sets out the responsibilities and rights of every student. Attention to these guidelines for student behaviour will ensure optimal learning conditions in classes, and mature social development throughout the student's schooling. These documents (Appendix) outline the expectations of the school regarding student attitudes and behaviour for the awareness of teachers, students and parents.

(a) Students, and their parents, are expected to sign the Student Code of Conduct and School Rules upon enrolment, and at the beginning of each year, to indicate that they have read, understood and agreed with the school's requirements.

(b) Maintaining appropriate behaviour is a condition for continuing enrolment at Illawarra Christian School.

(See sample Student Code of Conduct/ School Rules in Support Documents)

7.3 Encouragement of Positive Student Behaviour

To promote students' understanding and development of godly character and responsible behaviour, the school:

- (a) Commits time daily for Biblical Studies and Devotions, in partnership with family and church activities, for the development of Christ-like character and attitudes.
- (b) Sets out in the Student Code of Conduct a positive set of expectations that allow students to confidently know how to behave in the school setting.
- (c) Provides a set of School Rules, and regularly reinforces students' understanding of their responsibilities as positive contributors to school life.
- (d) Develops an individual Behaviour Modification Plan for a student demonstrating a consistent pattern of disruptive behaviour which breaches the Student Code of Conduct, that provides direction and both positive and negative consequences for behaviour choices at school.
- (e) Provides an on-site School Counsellor for student and staff support.
- (f) Allows leadership opportunities to develop personal skills in the school context.
- (g) Encourages the development of an outward focus through involvement in charities, mission work, overseas experiences and other events designed to help others in our local or wider community.
- (h) Provides: opportunities and experiences to develop relationships; and challenges that build resilience.
- (i) Offers a range of extra-curricular activities for students to: try new things; mix with students in other year groups; and to learn from invited guests who can build positively into the lives of students.
- (j) Maintains processes to resolve issues that adversely affect children's social development and learning within the school.
- (k) Involves parents early in the process of handling a student's behavioural infractions, and maintains regular communication.
- (l) Partners with external providers in planned programs for additional support for students within the school, as required.

7.4 Grounds for Suspension

See also Student Code of Conduct, and School Rules

The aim of imposing a period of suspension from school upon a student is to intervene in negative or destructive behaviour, with the goal of successfully restoring that student to the school community as soon as possible.

In doing so, the school seeks to:

- partner with parents in taking an active role in modifying the inappropriate behaviour of their child;

- give the student time to reflect on his or her behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for that behaviour, and to make a response to change the behaviour; and
- create time for the school to plan appropriate support and strategies for the student's successful return.

(a) **Suspension**

A decision to suspend a student can be made by the Principal or Deputy Principal, according to the seriousness of the offence, the possible consequences of the action/s and the age, individual needs and developmental level of the student.

In consideration of the above, a student may be suspended if, whilst attending school, travelling directly to or from school, or engaged in any off-campus school activity, the student:

- Behaves in such a way as to constitute a danger to the health of any staff member, student or any other person assisting in the conduct of school activities
- Commits an act of significant violence; or causes significant damage or destruction to property; or is knowingly involved in the theft of property
- Possesses, uses, or deliberately assists others to use illegal drugs or substances prohibited by law
- Possesses or uses alcohol
- Exhibits a consistent attitude, or performs a significant act, of deliberate defiance which could endanger the student or others
- Consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the educational opportunities of any other student or students
- Behaves in a way which significantly interferes with any of the school's programs or facilities
- Engages in unacceptable discriminatory behaviour (including harassment) towards another person based on sex, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), marital status, the status or condition of being a parent, the status or condition of being childless, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or physical or mental disability or impairment
- Deliberately and consistently fails to take advantage of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- Is in possession of a firearm, prohibited weapon or knife
- Is involved in serious criminal behaviour related to the school
- Displays aggressive or hostile behaviour, including via electronic media

(b) **Informing Parents**

- Notification of suspension shall be made to parents prior to the suspension being effected.
- In the event of immediate suspension, the school shall ensure parents or a nominated adult is available to take charge of the student.

7.5 Grounds for Expulsion

(a) **Expulsion**

The Principal will make a recommendation to the school Board to expel a student from the school if, whilst attending school, or directly travelling to or from school, or engaged in any school activity away from the school, the student:

- Does anything mentioned under Grounds for Suspension; AND
- Exhibits behaviour of such magnitude that, having regard to the need of the student to receive an education, compared to the welfare and safety of other students at the school, and the need to maintain order and discipline within the school, a suspension is inadequate to deal with that behaviour.

(b) **Informing Parents**

Parents shall be asked to attend an interview concerning their child's likely expulsion. The decision shall also be confirmed in writing.

7.6 Return to School

The student and his or her parents shall attend a resolution meeting with the Deputy Principal and the Section Coordinator, to discuss the way forward for the student, and any restorative actions required. A signed agreement must be completed before the student may return to school.

A Risk Assessment may be indicated if the student's behaviour included violence, potential harm to children, damage to property, or posed any risk to the welfare of others.

7.7 Investigation of a Significant Incident or Allegation

In all our dealings with parents and students in our community we aim to cover our moral, spiritual and legal responsibilities. The investigation of disciplinary issues will be conducted along principles of procedural fairness. (NSW Education Act 1990)

- (a) Students shall be informed of the process by which the matter will be considered.
- (b) Students and their parents shall be informed of the allegation against the student, whilst protecting the identity of witnesses providing evidence, as far as possible.
- (c) Students and their parents shall be informed of the likely consequences of the student's misconduct; or of continuing, or escalating, behaviour.

- (d) Students and parents shall be given the opportunity to provide an explanation.
- (e) Interpreter services will be provided if required.
- (f) All relevant evidence will be considered, with a view to making a finding on the balance of probabilities, as to what happened.
- (g) As far as possible, the investigation shall be impartial and without bias.
- (h) Where an interview concerns a serious matter, a long suspension or possible expulsion, a support person may attend formal interviews.
- (i) A brief summary is made in writing and kept in the student's files. (SEQTA database)
- (j) The school ensures the right of review or appeal in respect of suspension and expulsions.

See also: Complaints Framework: Investigation Procedure

8 THE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROCESS

- a. The Principal is responsible for the oversight of disciplinary measures used within the school, though each teacher is regarded as having responsibility within his/her classroom. The responsibility of each teacher extends beyond his/her classroom, such that it is expected that all teachers will exercise disciplinary relationships over all students within the school.
- b. A wide range of disciplinary measures will be used within the school as is most appropriate for the student concerned and the particular circumstances. These may include encouragement, counsel, correction, reprimand, deprivation, detention, isolation, family conference, acts of service and suspension.
- c. In accordance with the requirements of the Education Reform Amendment (School Discipline) ACT 1995, corporal discipline is not permitted at Illawarra Christian Education.
- d. Illawarra Christian Education does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.
- e. A record of repeated and serious offences shall be kept by each teacher, detailing the date, nature of the offence and action taken by the teacher.

- f. All serious matters will be reported to the Deputy Principal, then if necessary to the Principal who will consider any further steps necessary.

- g. Any formal detention shall not be for more than half of the break and the teacher responsible will ensure that the student is supervised during that time. Shorter breaks shall not be a period of detention. After school detentions are only appropriate for serious or recurrent offences, in which case parents are notified of the intention to detain their child two or more days before the actual detention.

- h. Formal parent – teacher interviews over continuing and serious disciplinary problems may be arranged from time to time. Such interviews will be arranged only after consultation with the Principal or their delegate.

- i. If parents, following discussion with the teacher concerned, wish to take issue with a disciplinary action which has been taken, they must do so by following the steps outlined in the Resolution of Issues Policy.

- j. Suspension will only be used for serious offences or when, in the opinion of the Principal, the student is refusing to comply with the accepted standards of school behaviour. The Board shall be notified of action taken as soon as possible.

- k. Procedural fairness:-

In all areas of discipline students shall have appropriate access to those implementing the discipline procedure. To ensure that:

- a student's concerns are heard
- the student is aware of the process by which the matter will be considered, the student is aware of the process by which they may appeal. Students will be encouraged to speak with the class teacher, relevant coordinator, pastoral care coordinator/counsellor and/or, when appropriate, the Deputy Principal or Principal.

8.1 Further Support

The school endeavours to provide the support and encouragement necessary to assist students to meet behavioural requirements of the school. The school's staff, including the School Counsellor, are available to talk with students and parents upon request. (Welfare Policy)

On occasion, the school may suggest further investigation or additional services to provide more specialised support for the student. These can be of great value in identifying special circumstances influencing student behaviour, e.g. food intolerances; other medical issues.

Parents are encouraged to consult their own health practitioners for further advice about their child's health and wellbeing, e.g. vision/ hearing tests, dietary intolerance testing.

8.2 Right to Appeal

Parents may appeal the decisions of the school if they believe unfair decisions have been made, or the correct procedures have not been followed, through the process set out in the Complaints Framework. (see school website)

9 ADVICE TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The goal of the Behaviour Modification Program is to restore a student to full participation in the life of the school which will maximise his/ her learning, and allow the development of satisfying relationships. The partnership of the school and family is essential for the well-being and educational success of each student.

Home Support: Should your child require the assistance of a Behaviour Modification program, family support will ensure he/ she gets the most benefit from this intervention. Consider actions or sanctions at home that may uphold the school's requirements.

Suggestions: The school may suggest Homework Help or Homework Detention. Parents may also request this supervision for their child. Parents may assist at home by monitoring that homework has been completed, and assignments handed in on time.

Other possibilities include:

- Support from the school counsellor, or your local church/minister

- External educational assessment or testing; additional tutoring

- Health and well-being examination: e.g. general health, diet, emotional/ mental health

- Assess home practices to ensure student's maximum focus and energy for school: e.g. bedtime, time management, exercise, hobbies, social events, family/ relational issues

Personal Behaviour Evaluation: Depending on the age of the student, assist your child to comply with school behavioural expectations by seeking feedback/ advice from teachers and others; encouraging a positive support network.

Encourage the investigation of cause and effect, such as by keeping a diary

Communication: Maintaining contact with the school is very important. Please let the school know of any significant issues or changes that may affect your child e.g. welfare or social issues outside school; or any changes in the child's behaviour at home, either positive or negative. You are welcome to make an appointment to talk to your child's teacher/s or with another member of the school staff at any time.

The education and welfare of students is our prime concern through building a strong supportive partnership between parents, students and the school.