



CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

# *Pastoral Care Policy.*

**Rationale:**

We believe Pastoral Care is an expression of Gods' love and we acknowledge we are all in need of care. This is central to the mission of Emmaus Catholic Primary School.

Pastoral Care at Emmaus:

- Is the commitment to partnership and shared responsibility amongst children, parents/guardians, staff, parish and the community.
- Is concerned with nurturing harmony within ourselves, and between others, earth and God
- Fosters a positive self image developed through self discipline and the exercising of moral judgement.
- Is inclusive and involves choices leading to personal growth and the realizing of the potential of each individual.
- Explicitly forbids the use of corporal punishment.

**Values:**

Our Policy is undertaken in an environment of:

Welcome, Trust, Compassion, Justice, Reconciliation, Forgiveness, Tolerance, Respect, Dignity, Self Responsibility

**Scriptural Context:**

*“Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. That is let these things occupy your mind.”*

*Philippians 4:8-9.*

**Reflective Material:**

- CECV 2005 Draft Policy: Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools
- Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide, Dept. of Education and Training (Victoria) 2002
- Legal Issues in Schools, CECV, Revised Edition, 2003

- Compilation of resources from/including:  
CECV / CEO Policies, Michael Grose - Online resources

**Policy:**

Pastoral Care at Emmaus permeates all that we do and all who share in the energies, and Vision and Mission of our school.

It includes statements, guidelines, procedures and protocols on:

- Behaviour management including:
  - Bullying
  - School Rules
  - Children's Rights and Responsibilities
  - Code of Behaviour
- Student leadership
- Staff Leadership
- School Welfare
- Code of Practice - Staff

Parents/Community.

- Serious Offenses
  - Suspension, negotiated transfer, expulsion
  - Critical Incidents
  - Staff Induction
  - Discrimination & Harassment
  - Grievance Procedure

## ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Pastoral Care

#### ***"SERIOUS OFFENCES"***

#### **Responding to serious offences**

A school's response to a serious offense represents a critical test of its pastoral identity. A serious offense by a student challenges the school to be responsive to the rights, welfare and special needs of the perpetrator of an offense, and at the same time demonstrate a commitment to the welfare, rights and well-being of all of its members. In such a context, a school is subject to a myriad of pressures and conflicts.

#### **Definition of a serious offence**

Conforming to the *Education Act 1958* (Education Regulations 1988), the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria proposes that a serious offense should be defined as activities or behaviour of a student which:

- seriously undermines the ethos of the Catholic school; or
- consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any lawful order of a principal or teacher; or
- is offensive, or dangerous, to the physical or emotional health of any staff member or any student; or
- consistently and deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities of other students.

#### **Dealing with serious offences**

##### **A suggested process.**

The process suggested for dealing with serious offenses in Victorian Catholic schools, is the use of a **"Wrap Around Team."**

This process, informed by the values of the school system, has a structure which is supportive of the student, parents and school. When a student commits a serious offense, the consequences of such action necessitate decisions be made. Our Wrap Around Team provides a forum for collaborative decision-making, in the light of civil, diocesan, school and, most importantly, pastoral accountability.

The process acknowledges that in some instances, where the behaviour of a student is deemed to cause immediate or ongoing harm, distress or danger to others, it may be necessary to withdraw or suspend him/her from the student community, pending the deliberations of the Wrap Around Team.

Suggested role and responsibility of the **Wrap Around Team.**

It is the responsibility of the Team to address the following objectives:

- convene the meeting of the team as soon as possible, following the decision that a student has committed a serious offense;
- consider all issues relevant to the behaviour of the student and the implications for others in the community;
- identify the educational and social needs of the student;
- identify strategies which will enable the student to re-establish his/her place in the life of the school, parish and local community;
- determine the appropriate steps required to meet these objectives;
- consider the support and resources which may be available, from both within the school and outside, to assist in implementing the action;
- ensure that accurate records of decisions are kept and that decisions are implemented; and
- maintain confidentiality at all times.

The composition of the Wrap Around Team might include:

- parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student;
- if requested, a parent support person nominated by the parent/guardian;
- the principal or, in exceptional circumstances, his/her nominee as the chairperson;
- the class teacher
- the student; and
- specialist personnel who may assist, for example, school welfare co-ordinator, experienced and qualified staff

In the case of parish primary schools, one of our School Governors may attend meetings in an ex-officio capacity, mindful of the fact that the Wrap Around Team will be making recommendations for final decision.

Assistance for dealing with the process is readily available from diocesan Catholic Education Office personnel.

### **Possible outcomes of Wrap Around Team**

In considering the student and the case at hand, the team has a number of options available to it, including contractual arrangements, suspension and negotiated transfer. All are outlined following.

In final decisions, the team should aim for consensus. Where this is not achievable, the principal takes responsibility for a final decision, in accordance with school policies and directives which have been ratified by the appropriate school authority.

### **Contractual arrangements**

Contractual arrangements can be defined as an agreement that is reached between the school, the student and parent(s)/guardian regarding the student's continued enrolment in the school.

If the Wrap Around Team considers a contract to be the most appropriate action, the

following matters need to be considered and written into the contract:

- expectations regarding the student's behaviour;
  - class and timetable arrangements including any specific scheduling of sessions;
  - duration of contract;
  - means by which the student will be monitored during this arrangement;
- and
- consequences should the student fail to comply with the conditions outlined in the contract.

### **Suspension**

If the Wrap Around Team considers suspension to be the most appropriate action, the following matters need to be discussed:

- the legal and pastoral responsibilities of the parent(s) during the time of the proposed suspension;
- the school's responsibility for providing learning material;
- on the return of the student to school, arrangements for monitoring his/her subsequent progress;
- the process of settling back into the school environment, and how this is to be facilitated; and
- the school's responsibility for reviewing and evaluating its own policies and procedures in the light of the experience.

Suspension is to be avoided where possible. Behaviour management processes that ensure that the student remains engaged and connected with school activities and the school community are to be preferred to those that disengage the student.

Suspension should not be applied unless school processes for the withdrawal of the student from some aspect(s) of school engagement are structured positively to assist in the student's return to acceptable behaviours. An example is the provision of space, time and an appropriate setting for the student to reflect upon their behaviours and attitudes, the impact of these on themselves and others, reasons for preferring acceptable behaviours, and ways to find encouragement and assistance to achieve this goal. Suspension ought not be used solely as a punitive consequence of student wrongful behaviour.

### **In-school Suspension**

Withdrawal from class and/or other school activities, if judged necessary, is best done in-school, with appropriate supervision and allocated tasks. (Consideration to be given to separate recess and lunch times)

### **Out-of-school Suspension**

Out-of-school suspension, if judged necessary, should only be applied for the shortest time necessary. A student shall not be suspended for a total of more than nine school days in any one school year.

If out-of-school suspension is decided upon, the school must provide the Student's

parent(s)/guardian(s) with a written notice to this effect, if possible prior to the day on which the suspension is to commence. The notice will state the reason for the suspension, the purpose of the suspension, the date(s) on which the suspension will occur, and will also offer the parent(s)/guardian(s) the opportunity to participate in a meeting to consider these and other related matters.

If contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) is not possible, it may be necessary to send the student home with the written notice as the first notification to them. This decision rests with the school authority, taking into account the age of the student, legal requirements, duty of care, and other relevant circumstances.

### **Negotiated Transfer**

Should a school's procedures for addressing serious wrongful behaviour have been exhausted without achieving success, and the student continues to offend seriously, it may be judged that a change of school would be the most appropriate means of providing assistance to the student and/or protection to the school community. It may be judged that the student's present school is not the right environment for the student and that another setting would more suitably meet the student's current and future needs. In such a circumstance, the Principal must 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.

Negotiated Transfer involves a negotiated change of school by a student either between Catholic schools or to a school within another sector.

Responsibility for negotiating a transfer is with the Principal (or Principal's delegate with appropriate school authority support and approval) 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 interests, abilities and aspirations
- the process by which the transfer is to be negotiated
- the support required by the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in making the transition
- the role of the school in maintaining support to the student once the transition has taken place
- the means by which the process is to be evaluated and the decision made reviewed.

These and other relevant matters ought to be included in the formal Record of Negotiated Transfer.

If a Negotiated Transfer cannot be arranged, the Director of the Catholic Education Office is to be informed in writing, and assistance requested. If a negotiated transfer is

still unable to be achieved, the student is to remain enrolled at their current school, unless the circumstances are such as to require Expulsion.

### **Expulsion**

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

- wrongful behaviour of a serious nature has occurred, and
- the school's other processes for addressing such behaviours have been applied and not been successful, and
- 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 (with the support and approval of the Catholic Education Office of Sale) has the authority to expel a student. Prior to the expulsion being confirmed, the Principal must:

- explain clearly to the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) the reason(s) for the intended expulsion, and provide them with an opportunity to speak on behalf of the student
- provide to the Director of the Diocesan Catholic Education Office,
- formal written notification of the intended expulsion and the reasons for it, and thereby seek the Director's prior approval

Should the decision to expel the student be confirmed, the Principal must ensure that the expulsion is formally recorded in the school's files, and must provide to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the expelled student a formal notice of expulsion, preferably before or on the day on which the expulsion is to commence, and no later than by the end of the next working day. This notice is to include:

- The reason(s) for the expulsion
- The commencement date of the expulsion
- Details of the Review and Appeal processes available'

Natural justice must apply, and consequently there is available to the parents/guardian(s) of an expelled student an Expulsion Review Process and an Expulsion Appeal Process. The details are outlined below, and are modelled on the Review and Appeal processes available to parent(s)/guardian(s) of students expelled from Victorian Government School schools

### **Expulsion Review Process**

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student expelled from a Victorian Catholic school may, within five school days of receipt of the notice of expulsion, seek a review of the Principal's expulsion decision. In exceptional circumstances, this time limit may be extended to up to ten school days.

The request for a review must be in writing to the Principal, stating the grounds on which the review is 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 Review Panel consisting of two or three persons will be convened by the Principal. The Review Panel must hold its review within five school days of being convened (in exceptional circumstances, within five to ten school days).

The Expulsion Review Panel considers 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, forwards a recommendation to the Principal.

Within three school days of the Review, the Principal is to notify to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Diocesan Director the findings of the panel, and the Principal's subsequent decision.

- If the Review Panel endorses the expulsion decision of the Principal, the expulsion decision holds.

- If the Review Panel recommends that the student be readmitted to school and the Principal accepts this recommendation a student must return to school at a time decided by the Principal.

If the Review Panel recommends that the student be readmitted and the Principal does not accept this recommendation, the Principal must formally notify the Diocesan Director accordingly. The Principal's decision stands, but is subject to a parent(s)/guardian(s) right of Appeal.

### **Expulsion Appeal Process**

A parent/guardian can appeal against an expulsion decision that is still in place after the Review Process has been concluded. The right of appeal is vested in the parent(s)/guardian(s) alone, except when a student is living independently from their parent(s)/guardian(s), in which case the student also has the right of appeal.

An Appeal may be made on the grounds that:

- the proper process was not followed and/or that
- the Principal's decision was unjust.

The Appeal is made to the relevant Diocesan Director of Catholic Education. Upon receipt of an Appeal Notice, this person appoints an officer to investigate the Appeal and formally advise their findings to the Principal and the person(s) who made the Appeal.

Following receipt of these findings, the Principal will formally notify all parties to the Appeal Process as to whether the expulsion decision remains, is repealed, or is varied, and the reason(s) for the decision. This decision will be final, and is not subject to further Appeal or Review within the Catholic Education system.

**NOTE** Some serious offenses are by their nature **criminal offenses**, and schools are obliged to observe certain legal requirements. For further information and guidance, refer to :

1) *School Information Manual (School Operations)*, Ministry of Education and Training (Victoria), March, 1991. 2) *Legal Issues in Schools*, a statement of CECV, pars 34–39.

**Expulsion (Bishops' Statement)** We, the Archbishop of Melbourne and Bishops of Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst, consider expulsion of students in Catholic schools and colleges to be a severe form of sanction, to be used only in most serious circumstances. If, after appropriate processes, a school authority deems a student be transferred for his/her good, such a transfer should be negotiated according to the processes laid down by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.

If however, in most serious circumstances, such processes fail, the prior approval of the Director of Catholic Education of the diocese must be sought before a student is dismissed.

**Suspension (CECV Policy 1993)** The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria declares that suspension of a student from the school is a serious disciplinary measure and should only be used when other disciplinary measures have not produced a satisfactory outcome. A student shall not be suspended for a period of time greater than nine school days in any one school year.

**Corporal Punishment (CECV Policy)** The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria declares that corporal punishment is inappropriate within the Catholic school and must not be used.

**This declaration is in total accord with the *Education Act 1958* (Education Regulations 1988 section 5.5).**

References.

- 1 • CECV Policies – Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools. (1985)
- 2 • CECV Draft Policy – Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion (2005)

**St. Mary's Catholic Primary School.**

*Student Conduct Report for more serious incidents*

**Child's Name**

**Class**

**Date**

**Time**

**Dear Parents,**

**This form is to inform you know that your child has been responsible for the following misbehaviour.**

**disregard of authority**

**verbal abuse of students**

**destruction of property**

**verbal abuse of staff**

**fighting**

**Teacher Comment**

**Action Taken**

The school has dealt with this matter

Your child has **detention** on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

Your child has **in-school suspension** on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

Your child is **suspended** from school on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

**We ask that you discuss this matter with your child**

**Thank you for your co-operation.**

Teacher Signature

Principal/First Assistant

Parent Signature(s)

THIS FORM IS TO BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL PLEASE

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Pastoral Care.

**“Code of Practice”**

**Code of Practice - Staff**

Staff are employed subject to the benefits and obligations of the Victorian Catholic Schools and Catholic Education Office Award (1994) and the Victorian Catholic schools and Catholic

Education Office Agreement (1997-with amendments) and conditions outlined in 'Letters of Appointment' and a staff handbook.

All staff are expected to:

- actively model the example of Jesus and the values acclaimed in the Gospels
- be committed to Catholic Education and to the Vision & Mission of our School
- support through word, action or known lifestyle, the teaching and values of our Catholic Church
- maintain and develop action and knowledge of school policies, procedures and Programs always adhering to the schools policy that “Corporal Punishment” is forbidden at Emmaus in all circumstances.
- participate in professional development
- contribute to school based and school organised activities
- work as a member of a team to achieve the maximum benefits for the whole school
- be positive role models within the school and parish community
- be professionally and pastorally supportive of colleagues, parents and children in our care
- have an appropriate knowledge of the curriculum which is offered at all levels of the school
- assist in the resolution of issues, concerns and conflicts that may arise within the school, in a collaborative and constructive manner to achieve the best possible outcome for all involved.

**In relation to the children, and in addition to specific role statements, teachers are expected to:**

- recognise and cater for students' individual needs, differences and attributes
- be aware of current educational developments and issues
- develop a range of effective teaching and learning strategies
- implement all school policies ie. Teaching & Learning, Pastoral Care, etc
- provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment
- encourage children to develop positive attitudes and behaviours through the use of

consistent consequences and common sense

- build on children's strengths by setting achievable goals
- encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour
- develop children's self-esteem and confidence
- assess children's learning using a variety of techniques
- treat children with respect, courtesy and kindness.

**In relation to the community and in the performance of their duties, staff are expected**

**to:**

- treat all members of our school community with courtesy and sensitivity
  - be open, available and approachable to all members of our school and parish community
  - follow established referral processes that link individuals or families to specific support personnel and / or agencies ie. Centacare, education psychologists, special education consultants, health professionals, etc
  - be responsible for and ensure confidentiality of information
- encourage parents/guardians to support and contribute to their child/ren's learning
- In the performance of their duties, staff are expected to work with and in guidance from the School and System policies and procedures and the principal, setting and implementing achievable educational goals.

### **Code of Practice - Community**

Our school community embodies parents, guardians, caregivers, extended families, volunteer workers, our Parish clergy and wider Parish community members.

The Community Code of Practice supports the values and Pastoral Care detailed in our School Foundational documents including our Vision & Mission, and Pastoral Care Statements. It outlines the appropriate expectations and procedures for interaction between this community and our staff, children and the wider community.

The Community of St Mary's Catholic Primary School is expected to:

- support curriculum directions established by the school through participation on the "Community Team", and its sub-committees and through the involvement in school reviews.
- follow established protocols when raising child/ren and school/class related matters:
  - observing the need to establish mutually convenient appointments
  - respecting the need for time to consider, reflect, gather information, rethink and respond.

- inform the school promptly of any relevant information related to the children of the school;
- represent and involve the school positively in the wider community;
- support school education and Pastoral Care policies and practices at home and in the classroom;
- support decisions made through the democratic process of the School Board;
- ensure that the rights of school community members are respected and where required, confidentiality is adhered to;
- encourage participation in fundraising, social and community events;
- welcome and support new parents to our school community/Parish.
- Encourage participation in and support of our Parish community.

To facilitate the smooth operation of the school, community members are encouraged to respond to school requests as required promptly, considerately and accurately and to use the following communication channels:

- School Advisory Board
- Principal and staff-by appointment, at interviews, when necessary through mutual consent
- School newsletter, class memos ...

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Pastoral Care

### *“Serious Offenses Flow Chart of Action”*

**Serious offence** (immediate or ongoing harm)

#### Wrap Around Team

- Parent / Guardian support person (if requested).
- The Principal or nominee
- The class teacher
- Specialist personnel.
- Parish Priest/ Catholic Education Office (CEO) Personnel)

#### Action

- Convene meeting
- Consider the relevant issues
- Identification of educational and social needs of the student.
- Identification of strategies.
- Support resources required
- Document outcomes.
- Maintain confidentiality

#### Outcomes

- Contractual agreements.
- Suspension – In School
  
- Out of School
  - Counselling (Not in Procedure)

**Principal** (or delegate with the support and approval of the CEO)

**If the Serious Behaviour continues**

#### **Negotiated Transfer**

- Negotiated change of school

**Expulsion (Only for the most serious offences).**

**Review**

- Sought within 5 school days, in writing to the Principal
- Establish Expulsion review Panel- make recommendations

**Appeal**

- Notice of Appeal to Diocesan Director
- Investigating Officer appointed
- Decision Final

# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

## School Discipline Plan

The following plan is used if a teacher believes a child's behaviour is inappropriate.

**It describes actions re *Behavior, Procedure, Consequences***

Inappropriate behaviour observed by teacher.....

- careless
- non-targeted
- unintentional
- infrequent

Managed by the teacher

Options include:

- stop, listen, speak and clarify
- talk with child
- talk with others involved
- review school's code of behaviour

Options include:

- time to reflect
- verbal apology
- child to stay with teacher (in yard)
- jobs (sweeping, picking up papers etc)

**If the issue is resolved, the matter rests here**

The matter isn't resolved to either the teacher's or the child's satisfaction,

or

the behaviour is of a more serious nature:

- deliberate/defiant
- intentional physical or verbal abuse
- directed against students and/or teachers
- disrespecting authority

Managed by the teacher.

Options include:

- ensure the safety of all parties
- children write an account of what happened (What Happened Form)
- talk with child(ren)'s class teacher
- re-talk the issue
- review school's code of behaviour
- negotiate a solution
- Communication with parents of all parties.(Student Conduct Form)
- inform the principal

Options include:

- supervised timeout (class/office)
- child may be asked to write a letter to his/her parents
- child may be asked to write a letter to parents of other parties
- apology (verbal or written)
- restorative response
- restitution (property)

**If the issue is resolved, the matter rests here**

The inappropriate behaviour continues or seriously threatens the safety or the dignity of others or

The teacher and /or the child are still not comfortable with the outcome of the matter  
Managed by the principal, working with teachers.

Options include:

- discussion with principal
- consult with another staff member
- communication with parents of all parties.
- document the incident (timeout sheet)

Options include:

- supervised timeout (class/office)
- suspension of privileges
- restorative response
- in-house counselling (Welfare Team)

**If the issue is resolved, the matter rests here**

Options include:

- continued discussion with the principal/Welfare team
- continued communication with parents of all parties.
- child withdrawn
- reference made to the Diocesan School Serious Offenses policy
- involve CEO personnel
- establish a student support group
- inform/update staff and Governors.

Options include:

- supervised timeout
- take part in special program
- restorative response
- work with a mentor
- professional counselling

**If the issue is resolved, the matter rests here**

- continued negotiations with child(ren) and parents
- Catholic Education Office.

short/long term removal from class or school

*St. Mary's Catholic Primary School*

**Appendix One**

***"Student Conduct Report"***

**Child's Name:**

**Learning area:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Dear Parents,**

**This form is to inform you know that your child has been responsible for the following behaviour.**

**Disruptive behaviour**

**Destruction of Property**

**Verbal abuse**

**Failure to comply with school rules**

**Other. (explanation)**

**Teacher Comment**

**Action Taken**

The school has dealt with this matter

Your child has **detention** on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

Your child has **in-school suspension** on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

Your child is **suspended** from school on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

**We ask that you discuss this matter with your child**

**Thank you for your co-operation. Explanation of terms:**

**Time Out:** A child is isolated under supervision for 20 minutes at lunchtime.

### **In-School Suspension**

**A child is removed from his/her class to complete set work, under supervision, for a period of time. The duration of the suspension will be determined by the seriousness of the conduct.**

Alternative play and lunch times will be set if needed.

Teacher Signature:

Principal/First Assistant:

Parent Signature(s):

**THIS FORM IS TO BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL PLEASE.**