



Pastoral Care and Discipline Policies

Pastoral Care Policy

The Church teaches that the Catholic school should “guide men and women to human and Christian perfection.” Saint Mary MacKillop Colleges’ Pastoral Care Program creates structures by which students can do this.

The program is divided into three components:

- general care of students.
- care of individual students experiencing difficulties.
- care of student-groups and the student body as a whole.

General Care of Students:

The school has a code of Expectations pertaining to all students which describe in some detail the kinds of behaviours expected of students both inside and outside the classroom. These are consistent with Christian values and are based on the fundamental human virtues of Justice, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance, relating these to personal presentation and comportment, application to learning, relations with teachers and fellow students, social interaction,(including during bus travel and other such public situations) and the use of media and technologies.

Behaviour Education:

Students who experience difficulties in complying with some aspect/s of the School Expectations are assisted to overcome these by means of :

- Individual counselling by teachers or Pastoral Care Coordinators.
- The application of corrective measures which include both incentives to improve and penalties to deter from negative behaviour.
- The organisation of Group Pastoral Care sessions on a once-per-Term basis.

Pastoral Care Coordinators:

These coordinators are senior teachers allocated to a specific body of students. A male teacher is responsible for the High school boys and a female teacher for the girls.

The Role of the Pastoral Care Coordinator is to deal with any individual students or groups of students who are:

- Experiencing social or academic difficulties.
- Manifesting negative behaviour of some kind.
- Causing damage or distress to other members of the school community.

Processes Followed:

The Pastoral Care Coordinator will do one or more of the following:

- Receive complaints about student behaviour from any teacher or member of the school community.
- Interview and counsel the student if the matter is not serious.
- Issue a monitoring card if deemed necessary.
- If the misbehaviour is persistent notifying the parents of this.
- Issue a penalty such as a detention or recommend that a suspension be given, using the appropriate channels as laid down in the school’s Discipline Policy.
- Issue timely reminders to staff and students of the need to observe the school’s regulations and expectations.

Pastoral Care Sessions:

These are tutorial-type meetings of students, grouped according to age and sex. These are presided over by the relevant Pastoral Care personnel. They are held at least once per term and centre on practical moral and social topics .

Discipline Policy

The school's discipline policy exists as an arm of the Pastoral Care programme. It is designed to help students to grow in character and virtue and to safeguard the common good of the whole school community.

Definitions:**Unacceptable Behaviour**

Behaviour which is not acceptable at SMMC includes but is not limited to behaviour which:

- Constitutes refusal to participate in the education programme.
- Constitutes disobedience to instructions which regulate the conduct of students.
- Is likely to impede significantly the learning of the other students.
- Is illegal
- Causes or is likely to cause damage to persons (including moral or psychological damage) or property.
- Is likely to bring the College into disrepute.

Detention:

- This is any relatively short period when a student is detained at school or in a particular class in the student's 'non-class' time (recess, lunchtime, recreation time, after school) or excluded from normal classes or from a particular class, pending negotiated conditions for re-entry).
- The reasons for detention are occasional breaches of class or school protocols which are not of a serious nature but require a penalty. A detention is only given after a warning is issued.
- The detention is given by one or more teachers – or by the Principal.
- Productive activities or school work are provided for the student on detention by the teacher/s issuing the penalty.

Monitoring Card:

At the suggestion of the Pastoral Care Coordinator and the decision of the Principal, a student or students whose negative behaviour has become too frequent, may be asked to carry to all classes, a monitoring card on which their level of behaviour is recorded. This card may be imposed for one or more weeks at the discretion of the Pastoral Care Coordinator with the agreement of the Principal.

Suspension:

- This occurs in the case of a more serious or prolonged instance of unacceptable behaviour. It involves the withdrawal of the student/s from attendance at school for a set period of time.
- **A short suspension** is suspension from school for 1-3 days.
- **Extended suspension** is suspension for 4 or more days up to a maximum of 20 school days.
- **Internal suspension** is where the student attends school but does not attend activities, classes or shared breaks.
- A student may be excluded from a particular class for a length of time, the conditions for return to class negotiated with the class teacher and the principal.
- The decision to make the suspension internal or external is made by the Principal in consultation with relevant staff in accord with the particular needs of the student as well as those of the school.
- The Principal may approve the short periods of suspension, after consulting with the relevant staff.
- An extended suspension requires the approval of the Directors.

- Pastoral Care procedures are put in place to assist the student to reflect on their behaviour and amend it.
- Parents are to be informed in writing of any penalties issued to their children over and above detentions.
- Suitable work is set for the student to complete during detentions and suspensions.
- If a student accumulates more than 3 suspensions and/ or the student's behaviour is completely unacceptable, negotiations begin with a view to terminating the student's enrolment. These take place between the parents and the school executive. The Directors of the school make the final decision as to whether or not a further chance is to be given to the student.
- The calculation of suspensions in primary school begins again in high school

Expulsion:

This occurs when a student's attendance at school is permanently withdrawn on the authority of the Directors. It involves a permanent termination of the contracts entered into at enrolment by the parent/s.

Expulsion is deemed necessary when the student's behaviour has become completely unacceptable, when all other disciplinary measures have failed and there is no reasonable hope that the behaviour will be rectified.

Written records must be kept in the school of the details relating to penalties issued to students from Detention through to Expulsion.

Request for Review:

Where a student has been suspended or expelled, parents and where applicable, the students, may request a review of the decision. This must be done in writing, setting out the grounds for the appeal. It should be addressed to the Principal and to the Directors. The appeal will be reviewed by the executive of the school and the final decision made by the Directors.