

ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE

# St Mary's College

## *Student Discipline Policy Guidelines*

### **Source of Obligation**

Division 4 of the Education Act 1994 (Tas) (Act) sets out disciplinary procedures for government schools.

The Student Behaviour Procedure published by the Department of Education (DET Procedure) also provides guidance for government schools on student behaviour procedures.

### **Discipline Policy**

Every student has the right to a learning environment free from bullying and intimidation and to feel safe and happy at school. They also have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity.

Discipline is necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of all our students, teachers and staff and to provide a conducive learning environment.

This Student Discipline Policy sets the framework through which St Mary's College manages student discipline.

### **Adoption of Legislative and Authority Guidance**

Although St Mary's College is not a government school, it is our policy that St Mary's College follows the guidance provided in the Act and refers, in general terms where appropriate, to the DET Procedure in relation to student behaviour procedures.

### **Prohibition of Corporal Punishment**

It is our policy that corporal punishment of any type is prohibited.

The use of any form of 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.

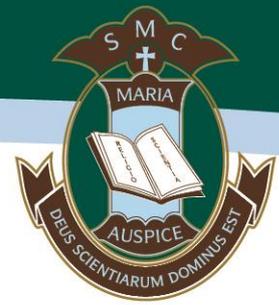
### **Behaviour Management**

St Mary's College seeks to develop a culture of positive discipline by setting clear expectations of students and encouraging positive behaviour. Strategies for developing this culture include:

Strategies for developing this culture include:

- clearly setting expectations with respect to student behaviour;
- establishing specific teaching and learning programs;
- communicating expectations with the wider college community;

*One Face Beyond...*



**ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE**

- acknowledging positive behaviours in a range of ways from informal verbal acknowledgement through to structured merit awards; and
- maintaining records with respect to student behaviour.

## **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 be provided with an opportunity 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 sanction).

St Mary's College is committed to ensuring procedural fairness when disciplining a student.

## **What is Unacceptable Behaviour?**

Section 36(2) of the Act provides a definition of unacceptable behaviour. Such behaviour includes behaviour which:

- constitutes refusal to participate in the education programme;
- constitutes disobedience of instructions which regulate the conduct of students;
- is likely to impede significantly the learning of the other students of the college;
- is likely to be detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the staff or other students of the college;
- causes or is likely to cause damage; or
- is likely to bring the college into disrepute.

Unacceptable behaviour may also constitute any other behaviour that the Principal determines.

## **Authority to Discipline**

Where any teacher or staff member decides that an act by or the behaviour of a student may warrant suspension or expulsion the teacher or staff member must refer the matter in the first instance to the Principal, or an alternative (independent and objective) member of the College Leadership Team who can make a reasonable and unbiased decision.

The Principal may delegate this authority to the Deputy Principal in the Principal's absence.

*One Face Beyond...*



**ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE**

## **Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion**

The Principal, after following the procedures set out in this policy, will make a decision about the facts of the allegations against the student. The Principal may then decide whether to suspend or expel a student based on the following considerations:

- the safety of all students, staff and visitors;
- the seriousness of the student's acts;
- the response or remorse of the student, if applicable;
- the pastoral care and welfare of the student; and
- the student's prospects for rehabilitation.

## **Detention**

The Principal or teaching staff are permitted to impose the following, as a consequence of unacceptable behaviour:

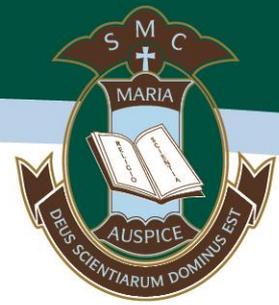
- warnings or reprimands (verbal and written);
- time outs;
- clean up duties;
- cancellation of privileges;
- withdrawal from St Mary's College activities;
- lunch time detentions;
- after school detentions; or
- Saturday or School vacation break detentions;

Detention is considered as an immediate consequence for unacceptable behaviour in the first instance. Where appropriate, detention should be used to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their behaviour.

In relation to student detention, staff are required to:

- ensure students are readily observable and supervised;
- notify parents/carers in writing if the detention is to occur before or after school hours or on a Saturday or during a vacation break; and
- take into consideration:
  - transport arrangements;
  - undue hardship on students and parents/carers;
  - the attitude of the student and the effectiveness of detention as a deterrent for unacceptable behaviour;
  - the nature of the detention space (it should be comfortable, free from distractions and not so public that it calls attention to the student);
- the appropriateness of the detention in terms of its length, timing and method;

*One Face Beyond...*



**ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE**

- the underlying purpose of the detention and whether it is consistent with the values of the college; and
- any other relevant circumstances.

## **Individual Behaviour Management Plan**

Individual Behaviour Management Plans may be made in certain circumstances.

Behaviour Management Plans will be negotiated between St Mary's College staff, students and parents/carers, 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. All Individual Behaviour Management Plans will be recorded in writing and communicated to the student and the student's parents/carers and any appropriate staff. A copy will be placed on the student's file.

Note that a failure by the student to abide by the agreed behavioural conditions of the Individual Behaviour Management Plan may result in further sanctions being imposed, including suspension or expulsion.

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

## **Implementation**

This policy is implemented by:

- staff training and professional development opportunities in behaviour management;
- communicating this policy to the college community;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the policy; and
- reviewing and evaluating the policy annually.
- These policies and procedures are communicated to staff, students, parents/carers and the St Mary's College community through:
  - the St Mary's College website;
  - Staff Handbook;
  - Student Handbook; and
  - announcements in the weekly newsletter.

St Mary's College has set up a series of compliance tasks on our Assurance System, to ensure that key obligations under this policy are managed effectively.

*One Face Beyond...*