

Student Discipline Policy

Source of obligation

The NSW Registration Manual (3.7.1 and 3.7.2) requires the College to have policies relating to discipline of students attending the College that are based on principles of procedural fairness and that do not permit corporal punishment of students.

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 Policy sets the framework through which The McDonald College manages student discipline.

Strategies to promote good discipline

The 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:

- clearly setting behaviour expectations
- establishing specific teaching and learning programs
- communicating expectations with the wider College community
- acknowledging positive behaviours in a range of ways from informal verbal acknowledgement through to structured merit awards
- maintaining records with respect to student behaviour.

Prohibition of corporal punishment

It is our Policy that:

- we prohibit corporal punishment
- we do not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the College.

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.

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 of students to:

- know what the rules are and what behaviour is expected of them
- have decisions determined by a reasonable and unbiased person
- be informed of, and have an opportunity to respond to, any allegations against them be heard before a decision is made
- have a decision reviewed (but not to delay an immediate punishment).

The McDonald College is committed to ensuring procedural fairness when disciplining a student.

In serious discipline matters that could result in a suspension (more than 3 days) or expulsion of a student, the Deputy Principal (or delegate) will conduct an investigation and provide a recommendation to the Principal for decision. Investigations will include an opportunity for a student to know the allegation against them and present their view. The Deputy Principal will make a written record of the investigation. If the Deputy Principal intends to recommend a long suspension or expulsion, the student and their family will be informed. The student/family will have an opportunity to appeal the recommendation and add any supporting information or documentation. The Deputy Principal will provide their recommendation, and any appeal from the student/family to the Principal for decision. The Principal's decision on matters of long suspension or expulsion is final. In the event that the discipline matter occurred in the boarding house, the Head of Boarding will inform the Deputy Principal (or delegate) who will conduct the investigation and make the recommendation to the Principal.

An expulsion from the boarding house is an expulsion from the College. If a boarding student is suspended for behaviour in the boarding house or the day school, the Principal will determine whether the suspension applies to both environments.

College rules and expected standards of behaviour

Students are expected to abide by the rules of the College, and the directions of teachers and staff. Examples of written rules that students are expected to follow are dealt with in:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Student Use of Illicit Drugs
- Uniform Policy and Guidelines

Consequences

There are a range of consequences that students will face if they breach College rules or are disobedient. These include:

- warnings or reprimands (verbal or written) time outs
- clean up duties
- cancellation of privileges
- withdrawal from College activities detentions
- suspension
- expulsion
- exclusion.

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

Procedures for suspension, expulsion and exclusion

Key Definitions

Suspension is a temporary removal of a student from all the classes that a student would normally attend at a school for a set period of time.

Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from one particular school. Exclusion is the act of preventing a student's admission to a number of schools. In extreme circumstances, the principal of a school may make a submission to an appropriate authority, or to other schools, recommending the permanent exclusion of a student from the registration system of which the school is a member, or from other schools.

The McDonald College has developed specific procedures that must be followed when considering the suspension or expulsion of a student. Refer to our Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

Individual behaviour management plan

Where the level of misbehaviour breaches the College's Code of Conduct, individual behaviour management plans may be made.

Plans will be negotiated between College staff, students, and parents/guardians, and will consider the student's:

- age
- developmental needs
- behavioural context.

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

Teachers' responsibilities

To support teachers in attaining and maintaining Proficient Teacher accreditation, the College encourages teachers to take responsibility for managing challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and addressing discipline issues promptly, fairly, and respectfully.

To support experienced teachers in attaining and maintaining Highly Accomplished Teacher accreditation, the College encourages experienced teachers to take responsibility for developing and sharing with their colleagues a flexible repertoire of behaviour management strategies using expert knowledge and workplace experience.

To support highly experienced teachers in attaining and maintaining Lead Teacher accreditation, the College encourages highly experienced teachers to take responsibility for leading and implementing behaviour management initiatives to assist their colleagues to broaden their range of strategies.

Implementation

This Policy is implemented through:

- staff training and professional development opportunities in behaviour management communicating this Policy to the College community
- monitoring the effectiveness of the Policy
- reviewing and evaluating the Policy annually.