INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The purpose of discipline is the growth (training) of the child, not the control of students or punishment for wrong done. The reason for discipline is for the good of the child and for the benefit to others. This philosophy is based on the belief that discipline is a Biblical principle. The authority to discipline has been given by God to parents.

Children are to obey and respect their parents and teachers because God has given that authority to them. The purpose of the authority is spelled out in Ephesians 6:4. The bringing up of children in their whole education to maturity in a way that is of God.

The limits of discipline given in the Bible is that parents and teachers should not provoke the children to anger through acting unjustly, inconsistently or out of self-interest. Discipline is not a negative concept and it does not primarily have to do with punishment. It is only possible where a teacher has a genuine love for the students and an understanding of the authority that God has given and how this is to be exercised for the good of the child. In the context of love, punishment has a purpose, i.e. to bring about growth (Proverbs 12:14 and 22:15).

*The School Board has determined that corporal discipline is not an acceptable form of school discipline in the school community. Therefore it will not be used under any circumstances. This applies at school and at home.*

The following discipline policy is developed in the context of the school’s overall vision and mission goals.

*Our vision is to foster a Christ-centred learning community where all students receive an education which enables them to know the Lord Jesus Christ, grow in Him and serve Him to their full potential.*
SCHOOL MISSION GOALS

Note: Whilst discipline is a matter for all areas of the school's mission goals; in order to make the policy document less fragmented emphasis has been placed on the areas of Growth and Education.

Education:
Our school will provide a safe, quality learning environment.

Growth:
Our students will be given the opportunity to know and grow in the Lord Jesus Christ and to develop in all areas of their lives.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO THE CENTRALITY OF CHRIST – DISCIPLINE

1. Discipline is a Godly function and thus a function of love. It is designed to lead to holiness through growth, maturity and repentance of the individual. God disciplines in love with the person’s best interests at heart and as a father disciplines his son (Deuteronomy 8:5; Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:5-12).

2. God’s standard for His people is His own character (holiness) (Exodus 20:1-17; Leviticus 19; Isaiah 6:1-7; Ephesians 5:1; Hebrews 12:10).

3. Discipline is concerned with a wide range of measures not just simply reproof, correction and punishment but also training, instruction and firm guidance (Matthew 28:20; John 21:15-17; 2 Timothy 2:14-26; Titus 2; Hebrews 13:17).

4. God delegates His authority to discipline to governments (Old Testament covenants; Romans 13:1), the church (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, Titus 3:10-11) and parents (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Ephesians 6:4).

5. The role of parents (and by delegation teachers) is to act on behalf of God in assisting children to grow in holiness and Christian maturity (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21). Being a good role model is one key strategy in this process (1 Corinthians 11:1).
6. God sets limits to discipline (Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21) and He demands that justice and compassion be kept in tension (Micah 6:8).

7. Individuals are responsible for their actions (Ezekiel 18).

8. Discipline protects the community and enables it to live in righteousness and peace (Hebrews 12:11; 14-15; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7).

9. For a Christian community to operate effectively it must be based on grace. We are saved by grace and we must seek to live a grace filled life.

10. As a Christian community and an educational institution delivering schooling on behalf of the government and parents we need to understand the innate conflict that can occur, at times, between law and grace.

11. It also seeks to deal with individual choice and community responsibilities.

12. Discipline is also about learning how to serve God, how to serve others and how to sacrifice your own will for the benefit of others.

**OUTWORKING BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLINE**

A teacher who works out these principles of discipline in the school context should:

1. Be a good role model of Christian maturity

2. Have a proper understanding of the use of authority realising that the purpose of discipline is to promote growth, changed behaviour and attitudes in the student and not to work out personal anger and frustration. It is important that authority not be confused with power.

3. Never use sarcasm or humour that embarrasses the student.

4. Never use guilt. Repentance is something that happens from within and should not be manipulated.

5. Lead a student to understand that you love them and the punishment is a consequence of their action not your anger or rejection.

6. Administer appropriate correction in a spirit of love and concern for the child, keeping in mind such issues as the child’s age, nature of the misdemeanour and personal and other circumstances at the time so as to keep justice and compassion in a correct perspective. Excessive punishment can lead to legalism and a hardening of the heart: excessive compassion (sentimentalism) can lead to anarchy, abuse of rules and bullying of other students.

7. Realise that problem behaviour in students can be influenced by such factors as physical problems, parental input, psychosocial factors, trauma, grief and loss. These factors should, however, not be used to excuse that behaviour.

8. Understand some of the reasons why students misbehave (e.g. to gain power, attention, or as a result of feelings of inadequacy, anger or revenge). Be willing to try to help students through these issues.
9. Concentrate on primary behaviours (e.g. stealing) rather than getting caught up in secondary behaviours (e.g. answering questions about the stealing incident rudely). Know when to ignore behaviour which is peripheral.

10. Remember that encouragement and a positive classroom environment lead to a safer and more positive learning experience. The more encouragement, the less punishment required.

11. Use a wide a variety of discipline strategies when appropriate.

12. Allow students to state their account of the incident before a determination is made and give them opportunity to make other appropriate responses if necessary. Listen carefully before making a determination and then explain the decision and the appropriate consequences calmly and quietly. Natural justice and procedural fairness must be applied in all disciplinary procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the evidence considered on balance).

13. Be consistent and wise in the administration of discipline.

14. Have a clearly defined code of practice for classroom behaviour and provide an environment which is safe and conducive to learning. Students respond positively to consistent standards of discipline. Make sure students understand your class rules.

15. Be organised, give clear precise instructions and know exactly what is expected of students in the situation.

16. Do not reinforce student negative behaviours by accepting or tolerating them.

17. Understand the school’s discipline policy and practices so that a consistent approach occurs.

18. Realise that in the first instance, each teacher is responsible for discipline and safety of students in their care but know when to hand over a discipline matter to a coordinator.

19. Refer serious breaches such as defiance, rudeness, safety, bullying to coordinators immediately.

20. Discipline as soon as possible after the misdemeanour has occurred.

21. Work together as a staff team in the administration of discipline. Difficult students respond better when a team approach is used.

22. Accept responsibility for supporting and enforcing school rules.


24. Always look for evidence of growth and give the student affirmation when it occurs.

25. Never give the student the impression that your discipline is personal.

26. Focus on two or three issues at a time rather than generalising your correction. Inform the student what you are seeking to achieve and why it is important. The goals need to be observable (e.g. improved attitude is not a useful goal).

27. Do not use the Bible to punish a student e.g. do not get them to quote Scriptures or write out Scripture.
STUDENT

A student needs to:

1. Recognise that the purpose of discipline is to lead to growth. It is vitally important that students take discipline seriously and understand the need to accept and respect authority.

2. Understand that self-discipline means that they should choose to behave appropriately even when no one (e.g. a teacher) is looking.

3. Know the code of conduct expected by each of their classroom teachers.

4. Learn to be responsible for their own actions, and so learn self-discipline. For this reason, discipline often contains a consequential, instructional and a corrective component.

5. Learn respect for the teacher and that we are all part of the community.

6. Learn respect for other students and assist them in their learning process.

7. Learn to understand that misbehaviour has an effect on others.

8. Be aware of school rules through the Student Handbook and other announcements made from time to time.

9. Help other students to feel part of the community and seek to help it become a better school. Never tease, hurt or harass another.

10. Be aware that if they will not accept the rules of the school, they may have to be excluded from the classroom and even the school community for a period of time until suitable growth has occurred.

11. Realise that they have a responsibility to be good role models to other members of the school community.

12. Understand that if they feel that they have been disciplined unfairly they should, in the first instance, talk to the teacher who administered the discipline. They can then raise the matter with the relevant Academic Care Person (e.g. Year Adviser or Core Teacher).

13. Always obey a teacher’s instruction, both at the time and beyond that time.

14. Never argue, refuse or show dissent when disciplined.

15. Respect the property of other students and the community.
STRATEGIES

Positive measures:
- Positive verbal encouragement
- Taking appropriate extra interest in a student
- Involving students in activities (e.g. sports training)
- Commendations certificates, stickers etc.
- Use of Parent Teacher evenings and Parent Education meetings to encourage
- Use of playground interaction, interaction during sport, excursions
- Phone call or letter to parent commending a student
- Try to engage parents in the solution

The following strategies will contribute to effective delivery of discipline within the school. Discipline in the school is based on a team approach as well as a sense of community.

STEP 1 – STUDENT DISCIPLINED BY CLASSROOM TEACHER

(NB: many of the following strategies tend to be Secondary department specific)

The Primary department have a number of specific strategies.

Discipline starts with sound classroom management strategies designed to assist the classroom teacher to handle internal classroom discipline matters themselves. Strategies will include:
- Managing classroom environment effectively
- Establishing procedures which lead to the administration of consistent discipline
- Developing classroom relationships
- Encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour through, for example, use of faculty and school commendations
- Correcting students when appropriate
- Use of in-class time-out area
- Use of supervised time-out area (e.g. another class)
- Supervised lunchtime (half) detention
- Occasionally issuing community service activities (teacher supervised)
- Secondary only: conducting after school personal detentions in consultation with the faculty coordinator (Note: teachers should never keep one student back on detention unless they are being supervised in an ‘open’ environment).
- Use of faculty/department discipline policy
- Counselling the student about improving unsatisfactory behaviour
- In case of serious matters, using the ‘red card’ (Secondary)
- Interviewing parents, by phone or in person
- Noting behaviour problem in the diary (note – this is not the consequence)
- Sending home a letter to parents (primary – blue note)
- Referring students who appear to have pastoral or relational issues to student wellbeing support person
- Liaising with coordinator regarding evaluating suitability of different strategies
- Use of monitoring sheets to focus on improving specific behaviour
- Keeping records of the nature of the misbehaviour, the action taken and the date
- Where repeated offences occur, the Coordinator may refer the student (and the issues) to the relevant Academic Adviser for consideration (Secondary)

**STEP 2 – STUDENT REFERRED TO COORDINATOR**

The Coordinator may employ one/some of the following measures:

- Implementing positive discipline strategies e.g. making sure the faculty reward scheme is effectively administered
- Discipline note to parents
- Using school detention system, either faculty or executive detentions (Secondary)
- Phoning parents/interviewing parents
- Placing students on class monitoring sheet
- Withdrawing students from the teacher’s class for short term
- Assisting classroom teachers with strategies to develop discipline strategies. This could be achieved:
  - Through the coordinator visiting classrooms
  - Staff members visiting other teachers’ classes
  - Attending relevant in-service courses
- Referring student discipline issues to Academic Adviser (Secondary)
- In Primary, referring the matter to the Head of Primary

Generally speaking, the coordinator should refrain from sending the student immediately back to class during the same lesson.

The coordinator should keep a record of student discipline (in PC School) and keep the Academic Adviser (primary – the Head of Primary) aware of overall discipline matters at least once each fortnight. Discipline administered by the coordinator should, in general, be considered of a higher order than that administered by classroom teacher.
STEP 3 – STUDENT REFERRED TO ACADEMIC ADVISER (SECONDARY)

Where there are ongoing behavioural difficulties the faculty coordinator can refer the student to the Academic Adviser. The Academic Adviser may initiate, liaise, monitor and communicate with parents. They can issue executive detentions and recommend in school suspension where appropriate.

Academic Advisers should regularly check with Coordinators regarding which students have been referred to Coordinators by teachers.

STEP 4 – STUDENT REFERRED TO ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The Assistant Principal or Head of Primary may employ one or more of the following strategies:

- Phoning parents or calling them in for an interview
- Sending discipline report home
- Withdrawing student from all classes i.e. ‘in school’ suspension (more than one day requires communication with the parents)
- Suspending student from school (Secondary) – short term suspension.
- Giving an executive detention (Secondary)
- Using ‘in school’ community service detentions during the holidays (Secondary)
- Organising teacher conferencing
- Referring student to counsellor
- Placing student on monitoring sheet
- In serious or repeat matters, referring student to the Principal

The Assistant Principal should keep a record of unsatisfactory student discipline (in PC School) and give feedback to the Academic Adviser when appropriate. Discipline administered by the Assistant Principal should, in general, be of a higher order than that administered by Academic Advisers. A copy of all letters to parents is to be kept on the student’s file. In addition, the details of any conditions or re-entry are to be placed on the student’s file.

The Assistant Principal is to keep a record of all executive detentions and to report students who are accumulating these detentions (Milestones: 3, 6, 9 and 10 – see executive detention policy for clarification and consequences).

STEP 5 – ROLE OF PRINCIPAL

The Principal will be involved in one or more of the following:

- All of the above
- Administering short-term suspensions (Primary)
- Administering external suspensions – long term suspensions.
- Making sure appropriate conditions are met prior to return to school
- Recommendations to the school board re placement of students on indefinite suspensions
In School Suspension
Student is normally supervised in the front office and is supplied with class work. If the suspension is for more than one day, parents are notified in writing and a satisfactory meeting with either the Assistant Principal/Head of Primary or Principal takes place. A record is to be placed on the student’s file including any conditions to be met upon reviewing.

Short Term Suspension
Student is sent home with a letter (usually the parent will have been called). The suspension is served at home and lasts for up to a week. The student cannot return until a satisfactory meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal and the family occurs. The letter is kept on file with any conditions to be met upon re-entry.

Long Term Suspension
In serious cases or following repeated short term suspensions, a long term suspension may be given by the Principal. It can be only for a maximum of four weeks. If it cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the family the student may be placed on indefinite suspension.

Long term suspensions require meetings with the parents, one at the beginning of the suspension and one towards the end. The letter stating the student is on long term suspension is to be kept on file as well as conditions to be met upon re-entry.

Where there is the likelihood of a long-term suspension occurring a student will be offered a support person at the interview. Normally, it would be an appropriate pastoral care staff member e.g. Year Adviser.

Normally, a student given a long term suspension would be placed on final probation and that would be communicated in writing to the parent.

Indefinite Suspension (expulsion)
Serious matters which would include the possession, distribution or use of drugs, possession and/or use of a weapon, or explosive device, potential criminal actions, serious bullying, violence or threats of violence towards either staff or students could result in an indefinite suspension. The matter can occur either in or out of school. These matters would be communicated to the Board at the next meeting. Some matters may require reporting to outside agencies (e.g. Police). For serious matters possibly leading to indefinite suspension, the student will be offered a support person at the interview e.g. Year Advisor.

Any student who is placed on indefinite suspension will have the right to appeal to the Board Chairman to provide any additional information for the Board to consider. The indefinite suspension letter will state that the parent does have a right to appeal the decision in this way.

Once a determination is made, the parent is invited in for a meeting to discuss the issue and the determination. The Principal, on behalf of the Board, will also write to the family outlining the decision.

Repeated offences such as long term suspensions and refusal to regularly attend school can also lead to indefinite suspension.

The Principal will also be responsible for implementing professional development and supervision of behaviour programs, and where appropriate, to assist staff to develop classroom management skills.
Indefinite suspension does allow the student to be considered for re-entry into the school at a later date when there is clear evidence of changed behaviour that is acceptable to the school. Usually a minimum of one year needs to elapse.

**SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF ROSA**

Where a student fails to satisfactorily complete the course requirements of mandatory subjects, the student will not be permitted to continue at the school.

Normally this would involve a student receiving an ‘N’ Determination Letter, thereby causing BoSTES to determine that the student is not eligible for the award of the ROSA.

Primarily this will occur at the end of Year 10.

In the case of the Preliminary course (Year 11) the student may be allowed to continue in certain circumstances, on probation, using a Pathways course of studies (i.e. more than two years to complete HSC).

This policy does not overrule the right of a student to appeal the decision firstly to the school and finally to the Board of Studies.
APPENDIX 1

Actions which may require substantial disciplinary action including suspension or in serious cases indefinite suspension of a student:

At school:
- Preventing another student from learning to their full potential
- Causing class disruption, especially repeated offences
- Not treating teachers with respect, including disobeying instructions
- Wilful damage to school property or other student property
- Causing themselves or other members of the school community to be in danger
- Harassment, bullying or aggressive behaviour (includes humiliating or belittling another student)
- Inappropriate personal contact
- Sexually explicit language, actions, pictures, videos etc.
- Inappropriate language or writing
- Not complying with Conditions of Enrolment
- Not respecting the privacy of neighbours
- Wearing uniform inappropriately
- Other actions which impact negatively on the school’s reputation
- Failure to have and to use the school diary appropriately (Secondary)
- Regularly not having equipment for lessons
- Persistent lateness
- Truancy, partial truancy or absence from school without acceptable reason
- Forging parent signature and letters
- Stealing
- Fighting
- Harassing, intimidating or bullying
- Graffiti
- Any sexually explicit, crude, offensive or threatening communication to another student, family or teacher
- Direct disobedience or arguing with a teacher

Outside of school:
- Causing members of the public to be in danger
- Not respecting the needs of members of the public
- Behaving in a loud or rude manner
- Unduly drawing attention to oneself
• Disobeying school rules
• Not obeying transport regulations
• Inappropriate use of social networking sites
• Bullying of other students including cyber-bullying or intimidation
• Breaking the law or council regulations
• Organising other people to threaten and/or assault our student/s

Other actions:
• Repeated non completion of homework tasks
• Unacceptable standard of completion of schoolwork
• Non completion of previously given discipline
• Excessive number of detentions
• Non-compliance with the uniform code
• Not returning parent notes
• Plagiarism