



Rationale

Maintaining high standards of student behaviour is paramount to creating a harmonious learning environment for pupil, staff, and community members. With this in mind, St. Therese's School believes that discipline is a cooperative effort between all members of our community striving to create a supportive and cooperative school environment.

Goals

The Discipline Policy is under the Pastoral Care umbrella and, as such, is governed by the goals of this policy (see below). For these goals to be achieved clearly defined discipline strategies and practices must be in place. These are outlined in the following sections. In relation to consequences, corporal punishment is not permitted.

- To support and provide a context for the provision of a comprehensive and socially responsible curriculum
- To provide a framework that encourages supportive, sensitive and open school relationships
- To recognise that freedoms and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities
- To provide flexible structures that are responsive to the needs and well being of the school community
- To establish and coordinate networks of care as a priority
- To identify the life needs of students and to provide them with every opportunity to value themselves and experience well being
- To create an environment in which people interact with each other in a manner that recognises each person's self worth and promotes a sense of belonging and well being
- To foster high quality interpersonal relationships amongst teachers, parents, students and ancillary staff. Each member of this partnership is encouraged to recognise his/her potential for building acceptance, trust, esteem and friendship within the school community.

Rights

At St Therese's School, we believe there are basic rights, common to all. It is important that these are protected and respected. It is the aim of this policy to establish processes and practices that will endeavour to do this. We also believe that with rights come responsibilities. These need to be recognised and valued. Rights and responsibilities will be articulated in the classroom rules/expectations.

The four rights that form the basis of our policy are:

- The right to feel safe and be safe.
- The right to learn.
- The right to be in a pleasant and stimulating environment.
- The right to be treated with respect.

Preferred Practices

The following is a list of practices that we believe are crucial to the achievement of the goals of this Policy. They assist us in leading and supporting behaviour that is responsible. By ensuring these practices are in place, we believe that we are being

proactive in preventing inappropriate behaviour and are equipping students with essential life skills.

Listening to Students

It is our duty as carers to practise 'active' listening. This means that the listener helps the student reflect on the situation and understand his/her feelings. It is the role of the 'listener' to help the student work towards reaching his/her own solution rather than having one imposed on them.

Classroom Meetings

Classroom meetings are valuable tools that provide opportunities to discuss relevant issues and practise/demonstrate problem-solving, conflict management and other essential social skills. They can be a time where concerns are aired, special occasions celebrated, achievements recognised and action plans devised.

The format should be designed with the students and should be age/class appropriate. They should be held on a regular basis and be loosely timetabled. It is recommended that these meetings be held at least once a fortnight. Classroom meetings can be vehicles for generating discussion and issues for the SRC.

Independence and Co-operation

It is our duty as educators to nurture independence and co-operation in behaviour and learning skills. We recognise that we are role models. We provide consistent feedback and encourage co-operation and respect for others.

It is important to guide the students towards thinking for themselves and taking responsibility for their own actions.

On-going Behavioural Support

Our school recognises that some students may need individualised support to assist them to be positive members of the class. This support may need to be on-going and be designed to meet agreed goals. It could be in the form of individual behaviour management or learning plans. These plans would need to be evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis. Part of this support would be the regular revisiting of class rules, routines and expectations.

Teachers may require support to cope with difficult behaviour. This could be in the form of structured meetings such as Program Support Group (PSG).

Personal Skills

It is our duty as teachers to educate the students in the development of personal skills which contribute to co-operation, self-discipline and positive self-esteem. Such skills include anger management, understanding and handling feelings, independence and goal setting. Each is important and needs to be modelled to the students. Opportunities need to be created where the students can analyse, discuss and practice the skills.

- Anger Management - We accept that anger is a normal reaction, in given circumstances, but realise that it has to be managed in an appropriate way. Strategies can be devised with the students and discussed.
- Understanding and Handling Feelings - We need to recognise and deal with our own emotions and those of others. This can be assisted by 'self talk' which is an important skill that can be calming, reassuring and helpful.
- Independence - We need to help students develop a positive self esteem. Students need to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Goal Setting - It is important to recognise strengths and limitations in order to set personal goals. Persistence and resilience are essential skills that will equip students for the future.

Teaching Empathy

Empathy means understanding how someone is thinking and feeling. Teaching students to empathise with others helps with behaviour management as they become less judgemental and more compassionate towards and accepting of each other. It is a necessary part of managing conflict, making it less likely that students take part in, or tolerate, bullying. Empathy develops self-esteem as students gain a better understanding of each other. This can encourage friendship and support for one another.

Positive Relationships

Within our school, we need to promote and demonstrate an acceptance of all and an acknowledgement of individual differences. A positive relationship can be developed through affirmation, expressing a genuine interest in the individual and the promotion of good manners and mutual respect.

Classroom Environment

Classrooms need to be welcoming places where all can feel safe. They should be organised to allow for a wide range of learning opportunities and styles. The teacher and the children have a shared responsibility to ensure that the classroom environment reflects a welcoming community that mirrors a pride in the achievements of all its members.

Rewarding Appropriate Behaviour

A definitive list of rewardable behaviours/achievements is not easily made. Rewards need to be individualised. We appreciate that rewards are important and necessary. Children will respond differently to rewards. These can be varied to include tangible and intangible. All children should experience affirmation and/or rewards, though not through a contrived system. They need to be genuine. At this school, we have a culture of rewarding a wide range of appropriate behaviours with a wide range of rewards. Teachers will adopt a reward system that suits their style, best meets its purpose and that takes into account the needs and interests of the students. Rewards, both intangible and tangible, should be part of the whole school organisation and not limited to the children.

Positive Models – Classroom Organisation

The way children act, speak and think is often modelled on people around them. It is important that we recognise this and use this information to maximise their learning. Teachers can be positive role models by demonstrating correct speech, sound thinking strategies, problem-solving techniques, conflict resolution tactics and general social behaviours. Other children can be utilised as positive role models for both academic and social purposes. It is important that our classroom organisation allows this to happen whilst still being sensitive to the needs of all children.

Restorative Practices

The implementation of the Restorative Practices Approach in our school supports students to build awareness of the importance of rebuilding relationships when there has been harm, and to develop strategies to restore a sense of wellbeing and connection with their peers. The use of Affective Questions when there has been harm or conflict assists our students to develop this awareness and rebuild relationships.

Social Skills

We understand the importance of effective social skills. They can empower and help to dissipate awkward/emotional situations. It is vital that children are exposed to positive models and are taught how and when to use certain skills. This is often achieved through co-operative learning situations.

Classroom Management Plan

- Rules or expectations are developed in consultation with the students
- Rules are based on the rights which form the basis of the Behaviour Management Policy
- Consequences have been explained and are known to the students
- Reward system has been established
- Rules are displayed in the classroom
- Rules, consequences and reward system are revisited regularly
- Corporal punishment is not permitted
- Consistency and fairness are important
- Responding to good behaviour is seen as extremely important
- Misbehaviour is related to the rule that was broken
- Consequences match the behaviour (where possible).

Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of a cyclical process in accordance with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Document Control

| Version | Author | Purpose/Change | Date |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 0.1 | Various STS L'ship Members | Initial policy drafting | Pre 2018 |
| 1.0 | STS Leadership Team | Various updates throughout policy | Mid 2019 |