



# Student Behaviour Policy

**Policy Category:** Student Duty of Care

**Status:** Board Approved

At Sunshine Christian School, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our School.

The School is committed to providing equitable access and opportunity for all. The School considers that awareness of, recognition of, and responsiveness to the needs and rights of all individuals are essential to human dignity. Inclusive practices embrace and celebrate diversity, invite belonging and provide opportunities for participation and achievement of appropriate learning outcomes.

Foundational to our work with students, families, and the School community is the building of genuine, authentic relationships. The development and promotion of high-quality relationships are responsibilities shared by all members of the School community. All staff students, families and the wider community contribute to fostering life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity of each person.

At the School we strive to provide an inclusive education which values equity and diversity and celebrates difference. Equity and diversity are enacted through a pedagogy of inclusion and a commitment to uphold the rights of all to be welcomed, valued, acknowledged and actively engaged in education. Our learning community is committed to processes that support all students to make optimal progress and respect the rights of all students to learn in a positive and supportive environment. We seek to provide successful participation and to intervene as early as possible when students are not actively engaged in learning. Student behaviour is linked to the quality of the learning experiences. Purposeful, authentic, and relevant learning experiences that are of a sufficiently challenging yet achievable standard maximise positive behaviour.

## Values / Mission

The School is committed to providing educational opportunities that actively welcome, engage, inspire and challenge all students to learn in a safe and enlivening environment. Our vision is to nurture students who inquire, learn and shine God's light by living like Christ. Our mission is to provide a Christ-centred, inclusive community where, quality education inspires and equips lifelong learners to serve in God's world.

## Aims

Our School community recognises that everyone has the right to be respected, to feel safe and be safe and, in turn, our School community acknowledges each person's own obligation to behave responsibly. This Policy is intended to guide our School's actions. It has been developed in consultation with the School community and seeks to prioritise respectful relationships and safety in response to the rights and needs of all members of the School community. A safe and supportive environment respects the rights of all students to learn, the rights of all teachers to teach and the rights of all members of the School community to be safe.

Every person at the School has a right to feel safe, to be happy and to learn. Therefore, our School aims:

- To promote the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others.
- To acknowledge the worth of all members of the community and their right to work and learn in a positive environment.
- To maintain good order and harmony.
- To affirm cooperation as well as responsible independence in learning.
- To foster self-discipline and to develop responsibility for one's own behaviour.

## **1. Policy Objective**

### **1.1. Scope**

The School Student Behaviour Policy reflects the School community's shared expectations in relation to student engagement, attendance and behaviour. This Policy sets out the clear processes to be followed in order to support students' behavioural, educational and emotional engagement.

This Policy provides an overview of how the School will:

- Promote positive behaviour in the school community.
- Seek to prevent behavioural issues.
- Respond to challenging student behaviour occurring at school, at a school activity away from the school grounds or while travelling to or from school or a school activity.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with all School policies and any School behaviour guidance.

## **2. Policy Principles**

### **2.1. Policy Principles**

The School strives to build a safe and positive School environment that is guided by the values and honours the dignity of the individual, the family and the School.

The development and promotion of high-quality relationships are responsibilities shared by all members of the School community. Staff, students, families and the wider community contribute to and share in the responsibility to foster life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity and safety of each person. All members of the School community are expected to contribute to the mission and vision of the School and to understand their rights and acknowledge their obligation to behave responsibly.

It is vitally important that the School is made fully aware of each child's individual circumstances insofar as these may impact upon their physical, functional, emotional or educational needs, particularly where the School is required to provide additional support to the child.

We must create a culture and inclusive environment that meet the needs of all Aboriginal children and students and their families.

Racism must be identified, confronted and not tolerated and any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.

### **2.2. Policy Definitions**

**Behaviour** – is defined as the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others. In general terms, it can be considered to be anything we say or do.

**Appropriate Behaviour** – is behaving in a manner that is suitable for a public gathering, respecting the other members of the forum (class, meeting, assembly, gathering) and treating others as you would wish to be treated. Individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to show mutual respect, maturity, and common sense. In general, appropriate behaviour is any behaviour that contributes to the positive learning environment and aligns with our School rules, codes of conduct and behavioural expectations.

**Inappropriate Behaviour or Unacceptable Behaviour** – (including bullying, harassment and victimisation), may involve actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be perceived to be the cause of another person's distress or discomfort. Unacceptable behaviour does not have to be face-to-face, and may take many forms such as gestures, written, telephone or communications through e-mail, social media or any other similar format.

**Discriminatory Conduct** – is conduct whereby an individual is treated less favourably on the basis of a relevant attribute, including their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, physical appearance, belief or gender reassignment. Such action may constitute discriminatory conduct that is contrary to Commonwealth and Victorian anti-discrimination legislation.

**Bullying** – is a broad concept which may generally be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power (whether real or perceived) through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying generally involves a series or pattern of events in which one individual has demonstrated unacceptable behaviour towards another individual. Please refer to the School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Procedures [[scs.policyconnect](#)] for further details.

**Challenging Behaviour** – is behaviour that significantly challenges the day-to-day functioning of the School. The behaviour impacts on learning and interrupts students' and staff capacity to feel safe or function in a safe and orderly environment.

**At Risk Behaviour** – is any behaviour that has the potential to cause harm or injury to self or others. This includes physical, emotional or psychological harm.

**Criminal Offences** – refers to forms of unacceptable behaviour that may be serious enough to constitute a criminal offence. If the School becomes aware that an offence has been or may have been committed, these concerns will be reported to the police or other authorities, as appropriate.

### **2.3. Legislative Context**

The Education Training and Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic) (sch 4 cl 12) outlines the School's obligations to ensure the care, safety and welfare of all students attending the School. In discharging its duty of care responsibilities, the School and teaching staff must exercise professional judgment to achieve a balance between ensuring that students do not face an unreasonable risk of harm and encouraging students' independence and maximising learning opportunities. Non-teaching staff, volunteers and external providers must exercise judgment appropriate in the circumstances. The School must also comply with legislation related to Occupational Health and Safety for staff.

This document is informed by relevant Australian and Victorian legislation including:

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

This document is also informed by the following resources which can be referred to for further guidance in its implementation:

- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Policy Requirements
- National Safe Schools Framework: <http://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0>
- Health Promoting Schools Framework: [www.ahpsa.org.au](http://www.ahpsa.org.au)

## **2.4. Shared Behaviour Expectations**

The School recognises the importance of providing clear guidance and expectations which are applicable to all members of the School community.

Below we set out the School's expectations for its students, parents/guardians/carers (referred to as parents/guardians) and staff.

### **Students Are Expected To:**

- Take responsibility for their learning and have high expectations in themselves that they can learn.
- Model the School's core values of Compassion, Service, Courage and Forgiveness.
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour and the impact of their behaviour on others.
- Comply with this Policy and work with staff and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes to:
  - Obey all reasonable requests of staff.
  - Respect the rights of others to be safe and learn.
  - Respect the property of others.

### **Parents/Guardians Are Expected To:**

- Have high expectations of their child's behaviour, understand and support the implementation of the School's behavioural expectations.
- Openly communicate with the School in regard to their child's circumstances.
- Cooperate with the School by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs.
- Provide complete, accurate and up to date information when completing an enrolment form and supply the School, prior to and during the course of enrolment, with any additional relevant information (especially if requested), including copies of documents such as medical/specialist reports (where relevant to the child's schooling), reports from previous Schools, court orders or parenting agreements.
- Comply with the School's behaviour aims and the School's Code of Conduct and to support the School in upholding prescribed standards of dress, appearance and behaviour, in accordance with the terms of the child's enrolment at the School.
- Acknowledge and understand that unacceptable behaviour by a child, or repeated behaviour by a parent/guardian that, in the School's view, is unacceptable and damaging to the partnership between parent/guardian/carer and School, may result in suspension or termination of the child's enrolment.

**Principals/Teachers and Staff will:**

- Promote positive reinforcement and enhance student self-esteem by having a planned approach for recognising and responding to appropriate behaviour.
- Deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the well-being of every child focusing on pro-social behaviours.
- Employ whole School and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues.
- Consistently apply this Policy through a shared understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances.
- Plan for the professional development needs of all staff to enable them to develop and maintain positive relationships with their students, to understand the diverse circumstances of students and provide support to those who are vulnerable or who have special needs.
- Recognise that for some students (including vulnerable students or students with disabilities) additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and ensure staff are committed to working with families to reintegrate students in an educational setting after exclusion.

**2.5. Attendance Expectations**

Ensuring that students attend School each day is a legal requirement. It is also a shared expectation of all students, parents and the wider School community, focusing on positive and pro-social behaviours together with prevention and early intervention.

The School recognises the importance of providing clear guidance on student attendance that is applicable to all members of the School community.

Full details on attendance, expectations to promote attendance, and attendance/absence procedures are set out in the School's Attendance Policy.

**2.6. School Actions and Consequences**

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole School practices, as well as targeted and individualised support when required. Effective student behaviour changes and student behaviour support is enhanced through internally based School support structures, and externally based family, education, community and interagency partnerships. The School will apply a range of supports and measures to address inappropriate student behaviour. Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our School community, the School will institute a staged response, in accordance with the Guidelines. Where applicable, an incident report will be completed and provided to the Principal or relevant staff member.

**2.7.1. Positive Reinforcement of Appropriate Behaviour**

The School will implement culturally inclusive strategies to reinforce appropriate behaviour which may include verbal recognition, individual or class rewards, communication with parents/wider School community, as appropriate.

**2.7.2. School-Wide Supports**

The School implements culturally inclusive, School wide preventative and early intervention strategies and practices for all its students to support positive behaviours, including:

- Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and School environments.

- Providing physical environments that are conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning.
- Ensuring student participation in the development and implementation of whole School expectations.
- Empowering students by creating opportunities to take responsibility and be involved in decision making.
- Monitoring attendance and academic progress of students with the view to recognising students at risk and intervening early.
- Developing Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) in consultation with the parents/guardians and teaching staff where appropriate for individual students.

### **2.7.3. Targeted Supports**

In addition to School wide supports, some students may require targeted support or interventions to meet behavioural standards, including regular attendance. These students will be supported through a culturally appropriate staged response, including:

- Understanding the student's background and needs.
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers.
- Providing consistent School and classroom environments.
- Scaffolding the student's learning program.
- Data collection and documentation of incidents relating to the management of student behaviours to inform decision making.
- Revision of the Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) and creation of a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) or Attendance Maximisation Plan (AMP) as appropriate.
- Parent consultation via phone, videoconference or interview.
- The design and implementation of support strategies that assist the student to self-calm such a quiet space or designated alternative area that they can go to if they are feeling overwhelmed.
- Providing a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children including capturing the strategies and actions into cultural support plan, engaging with the Aboriginal leaders and community and families to inform the strategies and reviews and undertaking training for our staff to implement.
- Providing referrals to specialist providers (this may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or EAL/New Arrival/Refugee Learning Consultants where culturally appropriate).

### **2.7.4. Intensive Intervention**

When support systems are in place, the foundation for implementing supports is established. Complex behaviours are targeted to remediate and prevent further escalations. Support provided to students at the School will be aligned directly with the goals and targets set out in the students' Personalised Learning Plan (PLP), Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and Student Safety Plan. Systems provide School personnel with accurate, timely and practical information for making decisions about the fidelity and impact of individualised interventions that:

- Value the student and support positive interaction.
- Have a clear data-informed strategy focused on preventing the occurrence of an identified behaviour by avoiding or adapting the circumstances that usually trigger this behaviour.
- Focus on building skills and developing alternative preferred behaviours.
- Consider the motivation for or functions of behaviours.

- Use the student's strengths and interests to increase success.

The School will implement more intensive intervention strategies for students presenting with complex and ongoing difficulties or extended School refusal. Development of plans will require support from parents/guardians and will often require consent to access specialised services.

The School will support students with complex behaviours of concern through a culturally appropriate staged response which will generally include:

- Ongoing implementation of universal support strategies.
- Use of data to inform and monitor the implementation of evidence-based interventions.
- Regular Program Support Group meetings to review PLP, BSP, safety plans and/or Attendance Maximisation Plans.
- Consultation with mutually agreed specialised support services.
- Implementation of explicit, data informed strategies designed to support the student to display safe behaviours. The design of the individualised support will be informed by the identified function of the behaviour and the explicit teaching of skills and desired behaviours.

#### **2.7.5. Consequences for Student Misbehaviour**

The School adopts a staged response to challenging behaviour and appropriate reinforcement of appropriate behaviour noting that an effective Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is developed to support the student in learning skills required for positive social interaction, along with the ability to become a more effective and successful learner. Consequences for misbehaviour are also implemented which may take the form of:

- Non-verbal warning: e.g. eye contact/hand movement/shake of head/teacher positioning to stand near misbehaving student/s.
- Verbal warning which identifies the misbehaviour and gives student the opportunity to change their behaviour.
- Moving student in the room to a less disrupting situation.
- Separating student from the class for a short period of time to provide an opportunity for the student to settle.
- Readmission to class activity based on student being de-escalated.
- Student required to stay in after class for set period of time.
- Student required to complete work during recess/lunchtime.
- Student engaged in restorative actions supervised by classroom teacher.
- Student re-entry meeting.

When concerns arise about a student's on-going behaviour or when a student is displaying chronic patterns of problem behaviour, the School will implement a targeted response to identify and address the presenting issues and reinforce replacement behaviours. This may involve the following support strategies:

- Convening a Program Support Group (PSG) meeting involving parents/guardians/Special Education coordinator/Wellbeing coordinator and the student where appropriate.
- Developing/revising a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) or attendance plan.
- Developing/revising a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and/or Safety Plan where appropriate for individual students.

- Referring student to external Health or Allied Health providers.
- Consultation with external professionals, paediatrician, psychologist specialist practitioner.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour. Measures should always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour and are best used with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour and implementation of strategies to limit reoccurrence of inappropriate behaviour. Supportive actions and any disciplinary measures may include:

- Review of Behaviour Support and Safety Plans with specialised support.
- Restorative practice.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/guardians will be informed of such withdrawals.
- Detention.
- Withdrawal from class if the student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class. In situations where the student is not able to comply with the instruction to relocate, the class (all other students) will be relocated/evacuated. The student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities to provide an opportunity to de-escalate or for a specified period of time. Parents/guardians will be informed of such withdrawals.
- In circumstances where the student is unable to calm, remains in a heightened state of anxiety or is a danger to self or others, the parents/guardians will be asked to take the student home for the remainder of the school day.
- Contracts for conduct/attendance/bullying.
- Suspension (in-school and out of school).
- Negotiated transfer.
- Expulsion.
- Referral to police, DHHS, emergency service or appropriate agency.

A student may be excluded from School in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success, or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour which may put the health, safety and well-being of other students, staff or themselves at significant risk or where actions require reporting to police or appropriate agencies.

If other strategies are unsuccessful in modifying student behaviour, the School will follow our Policies regarding suspension, negotiated transfer and expulsion.

#### **2.7.6. Corporal Punishment**

The use of corporal punishment is expressly prohibited at the School and under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic).

#### **2.7.7. Consultation**

As every child's educational needs can change over time, it will often be necessary for the School to review any additional assistance that is being provided to a student, in consultation

with parents/guardians and the child's treating medical/allied health professionals, in order to assess:

- Whether the additional assistance remains necessary and/or appropriate to the child's needs.
- Whether the additional assistance is having the anticipated positive effect on the child's individual physical, functional, emotional or educational goals.
- Whether additional specialised assistance is required.
- Whether it remains within the school's ability to continue to provide the additional assistance, given any limitations that may exist.

#### **2.7.8. Restraint and Seclusion**

The School will undertake actions to prevent the need for the use of restraint or seclusion. While the School acknowledges that that prevention is the best strategy, there are limited circumstances in which restraint or seclusion may be deemed appropriate. In making a decision to implement any form of restraint or seclusion, School staff are aware that their actions may directly increase the risk of injury and trauma, both for the student and for the staff member themselves. Such decisions are usually required to be made in times of high stress. Actions that may be considered reasonable will be made by staff present and will depend on the individual circumstances of each case as a matter of professional judgment.

Detailed definitions of restraint and seclusion to guide in the implementation of this policy.

**Physical Restraint** is defined as the use of force to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of their body where the student is not free to move away. Restraint does not include protective physical interventions, which involve physical contact to block, deflect or redirect a student's actions, or disengage from a student's grip.

**Seclusion** is the solitary confinement of a person in a room or area from which their exit is prevented by a barrier or another person. Seclusion includes situations where a person is left alone in a room or area and reasonably believes they cannot leave that room or area even if they may physically be able to (e.g. the door is not locked). In extreme circumstances, e.g. in response to behaviours that cause harm to self or others, teachers will respond by exiting other students from the learning space to ensure their safety. Where the student continues to display threatening and dangerous behaviour (e.g. wielding a bat), staff will seek to limit harm to others by isolating the student for the minimum amount of time required for the student to calm. Seclusion does not include the use of a safe place, time out or chill out rooms, being conditions that are set up to support the student and often included in Behaviour Support Plans.

If a student is placed in a separate room as a means of seclusion, staff will maintain appropriate supervision of the student.

The use of restraint or seclusion does not form part of any School's Behaviour Support Plans or Student Safety Plans. Restraint and seclusion will only be used in limited emergency situations, as outlined below:

1. The student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm or danger.
2. The action is reasonable in the circumstances.
3. There is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

In the event that restraint or seclusion is used, the least restrictive form of restraint/seclusion will be used for the minimum time possible. The restraint/seclusion will cease as soon as the immediate danger for the student or others is averted.

The clear priority when managing such an incident will be the safety of all concerned. The School staff involved in an incident of restraint or seclusion will immediately provide for care of all impacted students, when reasonably practicable notify the Principal and provide for the immediate and ongoing care and safety for those concerned. The student's parents/guardians will be contacted. A post-incident evaluation and report using the incident reporting template.

Staff should refer to the School Restrictive Intervention Policy for further directions, policy and support relevant to restraint and interventions.

## **2.8. Identifying, Assessing and Mitigating Risk**

To assist the School to discharge its safety responsibilities, the School will adhere to an Occupational Health & Safety Program through which potential safety hazards are identified and analysed in terms of the likelihood of an event occurring, and the potential consequences if the event was to occur. A similar risk-based approach is taken with respect to Student Duty of Care, with the definitions of likelihood and consequences. The School will assess student safety risks and determine how best to minimise those risks and support the needs of the students, staff and broader community.

It is important that all staff consistently enforce School rules and safety policies, and actively engage in ensuring and promoting the physical and emotional wellbeing of students.

## **2.9. General Information Relating to Disciplinary Measures**

**Withdrawing Privileges** – The School can withdraw student privileges as a consequence of breaching classroom or School behavioural standards. The School notes that the specific privileges withdrawn may vary between students based on the individual student's support plan. However, they may include things such as representing the School at inter-school sports or attendance at a School event. This must be time-limited and the risk to the student's engagement should be taken into account. The student must be told why privileges are withdrawn, and how they should behave for privileges to be reinstated.

**Withdrawal from Class** – If a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class or where there is possibility of harm to others, that student may be temporarily removed from regular classroom activities. In more serious cases the student may be required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time. Schools have a duty of care to ensure that students are supervised at all times, including when they are removed from a class. Where appropriate, parents/guardians will be informed of such withdrawals. Withdrawal from class does not constitute formal School exclusion such as suspension (including in-School suspension) or expulsion.

**Suspension, Negotiated Transfer or Expulsion** – In some instances it may be appropriate to suspend or expel a student who consistently compromises the safety and order of the School in order to protect the learning environment for remaining students and continue with effective teaching. Suspension and expulsion are serious disciplinary measures and are for when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response, or where there is a threat to another person and immediate action is required.

**Suspension** – Occurs when a student’s attendance at the School has been temporarily withdrawn on the authority of the Principal, for a set period of time. Suspension allows the parties involved to reflect on and enter into dialogue about the behaviour and circumstances that have led to the suspension, and to plan and/or review learning and behaviour supports to assist a student to engage positively with school and learning.

**Negotiated Transfer** – Means when a mutually agreed move to another school is arranged and documented. Negotiated transfer occurs when all other pastoral and discipline measures, including suspension, have failed to resolve an issue of serious inappropriate student behaviour. A negotiated transfer ends the enrolment agreement with the School and requires an enrolment in another school.

**Expulsion** – Expulsion involves the termination of the contract entered into at the time of the enrolment by the parents/guardians. The School’s enrolment agreement explicitly records at the time of acceptance of the enrolment of a student that unacceptable behaviour by a child, or parent/guardian/carer/relevant person may result in suspension or termination of the child’s enrolment.

The School will ensure that policies and processes associated with negotiated transfer, suspension and expulsion align with all other Students Policy.

### 3. Policy Compliance

#### 3.1. Policy Breach

All breaches, near misses and risks related to this policy should be reported the principal: [principal@scs.vic.edu.au](mailto:principal@scs.vic.edu.au).

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Principal and Assistant Principal and this may include independent audits and reviews.

#### 3.2. Further Information

For further information about the way the School manages its policy management framework, the first point of contact is with the Principal.

#### Policy Control & Approval Information

| Policy Category      | Policy Risk Rating | Approver | Date Approved | Next Review |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------|---------------|-------------|
| Student Duty of Care | High               | Board    | 25/06/2025    | 06/2027     |