

Student Personal
Responsibility Policy (R-12)
For students at St Columba College



St Columba
College

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Policy Title	Student Personal Responsibility Policy
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1. Preamble

At St Columba College students and staff work together to create the best possible learning environment for all. The Student Personal Responsibility Policy aims to educate students about their personal choices, along with the College values that promote wellbeing.

Our expectations and values are founded in our Christian belief of living the Gospel message to *“Love your neighbour as yourself”* [Mark 12:31]. Therefore, we seek to establish authentic relationships based on respect and affirming interactions. Positive relationships and cooperation are a fundamental aspect of effective teaching and learning at St Columba College.

St Columba College aims to provide an environment where each student is recognised as a unique individual with rights and responsibilities towards themselves and others. The College upholds the belief that when making decisions in relation to student personal choices, a balance is maintained between caring for the individual along with the overall good of the College community.

The National Safe Schools Framework informs our policy and procedures and underpins our approach to the development of personal responsibility and positive relationships.

2. Rationale

As an Anglican and Catholic school, we support parents in the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in their children. However, *“parents have a particularly important part to play in the educating community, since it is to them that primary and natural responsibility for their children’s education belongs”* (The Catholic School of the Threshold of the Third Millennium n20).

We share in the responsibility with parents for teaching students to, *“overcome their individualism and discover, in the light of faith, their specific vocation to live responsibly in a community with others”*. (The Catholic School n45). The educative process is intended to assist students to make a *“conscious choice of living a responsible and coherent way of life.”* (The Catholic School n49).

In the school environment, students are guided and encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline, to live responsibly and regulate their conduct in accordance with Christian principles. Through this development students come to:

- respect the welfare and needs of themselves and others
- be aware that their actions influence the creation and maintenance of the Anglican and Catholic environment of which they are part
- enhance the development of positive self-images
- gain a sense of belonging within the College and wider community
- develop an understanding of the consequences of their behaviour
- develop an awareness of processes, which assist in resolving problems as they arise

Despite the focus on these positive outcomes, the continued behaviour of a minority of students may require the Principal to consider their suspension from the College or the cancellation of their enrolment.

3. Aims

- Promote the Christian ethos of the College, encouraging students to live out the Gospel with Jesus as their role model
- Provide a safe environment for every student, where positive behaviour choices are valued, recognized and celebrated and where inappropriate behaviour choices are responded to effectively and efficiently using restorative justice practices approach
- Develop in students moral and ethical decision making
- Develop in students the skills and attributes necessary for making responsible behaviour choices
- Recognise that reconciliation is an integral part of resolving conflict, hurt or harm

4. Value of Respect

Our Anglican and Catholic ethos is centred on the belief that God has created all people in His image and in turn, we must treat each other with dignity. All members of our community are encouraged to make conscious choices and decisions that reflect personal responsibility and accountability.

Respect for Self

Respect for Self is shown through attitudes towards our own wellbeing, self-compassion and moving beyond self-interest. Respect for Self is fundamental in creating the curiosity and creativity needed for growth mindset and positive social interaction.

Respect for Others

Respect for Others is demonstrated in our attitude of love, care and concern for the wellbeing of those around us. Respect for Others is reflected in the ability to show empathy and compassion for others.

Respect for Learning

Respect for Learning is demonstrated through attitudes towards personal learning and that of others. Respect for Learning encompasses explicit teaching, goal setting and developing growth mindset for all learners. It is fundamental in creating a positive learning environment that all teachers have the right to teach, and all students have the right to learn.

Respect for Environment

Respect for Environment is demonstrated through the care for resources within the community. This includes care for the natural environment and contributing to building a positive sense of community at St Columba College. Respect for Environment is shown through the positive use and treatment of the resources, classrooms, specialist areas, grounds and buildings of the College.

5. College Rules

The rules of the College aim to promote a safe and supportive learning environment. They are underpinned by our shared values and Christian ethos. The rules of the College are:

- Be prepared and on time
- Allow yourself and others to learn
- Care for personal and school property
- Act in a safe and caring manner
- Wear the uniform correctly

College rules are visually displayed in all learning spaces, yard and meeting rooms for students to use as a guide to making positive personal choices. Teachers actively engage students in understanding the College rules and demonstrate to students how they can create a positive, productive and safe environment for all.

6. Wellbeing Program

The wellbeing program is the practical application of positive psychology and is based on the PERMA model and the Flourishing Theory. The five domains (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment) along with a focus on mindfulness, physical and mental health, gratitude and character strengths are taught.

We support students in learning how to recognise and manage emotions, develop positive relationships, care for self and others, make moral and ethical decisions and behave responsibly. In partnership with parents/caregivers developing social and emotional skills encourages students to learn and flourish. We achieve this by:

- Fostering positive relationships between all members of the community
- Explicitly teaching pro social skills through the Wellbeing Program (R-5) and the Kinship Program (6-12)
- Intensively focusing on understanding emotions, values, character strengths and capabilities via Religious Education, Australian Curriculum and SACE
- Working as a community to embed our values
- Implementing the Wellbeing Framework across R-12 to support the community in actively engaging in a flourishing life via PERMA (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment)

7. Restorative Practice

As a faith community we aspire for each person to be respected and to experience God in all aspects of their life. This is lived out in the context of our Anglican and Catholic traditions where love, hope, peace, forgiveness and reconciliation are at the heart of who we are.

The principles of working restoratively are embedded in our practice and beliefs. Underpinning the processes for assisting students in their development of personal responsibility is the core belief that individuals are responsible for their behaviour and choices.

Restorative Practice provides the opportunity for students to reflect, listen, accept responsibility for their choices, then repair the harm or hurt caused and rebuild the fractured relationships.

A restorative intervention encourages the student to make a commitment to change and take personal accountability for their actions.

Restorative Practice Process

Restorative Practice involves a process known as conferencing. The conference is a formal structured conversation either individually or between those who have been in conflict or where there has been hurt or harm caused. A staff member guides the participants through a structured conversation that allows each person to share how they have been affected.

The guiding questions are:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by this behaviour?
- Which College rule has been affected/broken?
- What will you do to make things right? What will fix things?
- How should I respond to this happening again?

By the conclusion of the conference those involved establish an agreement on how to move forward positively and if required, a fair and logical consequence is implemented.

Contact is made with the parent/caregiver either by phone or interview depending on the nature and occurrence of the behaviour choices.

8. Non-Negotiable Behaviour

To meet our duty of care obligations and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community the following behaviours will not be tolerated.

- Verbal abuse
- Physical violence
- Unsafe behaviour
- Continual noncompliance
- Bullying and harassment
- Unsafe online behaviour

These behaviours will result in an external suspension, followed by a re-entry meeting with the student and their parents/caregivers. If required, a restorative practice process will be facilitated to restore relationships with all who were harmed.

9. Responsibilities

Role of Students

- Actively work towards upholding the College values and rules
- Take responsibility for behaviour choices
- Participate in restorative practice process with an authentic attempt to restore relationships with those involved
- Accept that choices are learning experiences and opportunity for growth and development

Role of Parents/Caregivers

- Support the Student Personal Responsibility Policy and the restorative practice approach to restoring relationships
- Work in partnership and support the consequences put in place by the College when their child has not adhered to the College policies and procedures
- Support their child to develop and uphold the College values and rules
- Use appropriate channels of communication in resolving issues of behaviour choices/inappropriate conduct
- Seek to resolve issues of behaviour choices/inappropriate conduct by speaking with the teacher involved. If the issue is not resolved at this level then seek out the Head of School. If it remains unresolved, then make contact with the Deputy Principal or Principal of the College.
- Work in partnership with the College to ensure the best educational and wellbeing outcomes for their child

Role of Teachers

- Establish positive relationships which model mutual respect
- Explicitly teach expectations in relation to College values and rules
- Work with students, staff and parents/caregivers to support students to meet the College expectations
- Acknowledge and affirm responsible behaviour choices of students in their classes
- Work restoratively with students about their personal behaviour choices
- Support College policy and procedures for responding to student behaviour choices
- Communicate with parent/caregivers regarding concerns about behaviour incidents/expectations

Role of the Assistant Heads of School and House Leaders

- Assist in the facilitation of restorative sessions between students, staff and families
- Keep detailed records of behaviour incidents, consequences, support plans and restorative sessions
- Communicate with parents/caregivers to ensure that excellent communication is a feature of supporting students when dealing with behaviour choices.
- Recognise and celebrate the responsible behaviour choices of students
- Assistant Heads of School will be responsible for assisting the Head of School in overseeing the follow up and support systems for behaviour choices
- House leaders will be responsible for overseeing the follow up and support systems for behaviour choices of students within their House

Role of Director of Wellbeing

- Lead and support students, staff, parent/caregivers in using restorative approach to resolving conflict
- Actively work with staff about creating changes that better support good student choices
- Lead and support the community in their understanding of wellbeing

Role of the Heads of School

- Develop and implement a safe, supportive and respectful learning environment
- Ensure that the Student Personal Responsibility Policy is implemented fairly and justly within their School
- Recognise and celebrate the responsible behaviour choices of students in their School
- Promote and assist staff in the facilitation of restorative practices conversations
- Work with Assistant Head of Junior School/House Leaders and teachers to ensure that students uphold the College values
- Keep detailed records of all behaviour incidents, consequences, support plans and restorative sessions
- Communicate with parents/caregivers to ensure that excellent communication is a feature of supporting students when dealing with behaviour choices.

Role of the Deputy Principal

- Support Heads of School to develop and implement a safe, supportive and respectful learning environment
- Support Heads of School in ensuring that the Student Personal Responsibility Policy is implemented fairly and justly within their School
- Promote and assist staff in the facilitation of restorative practices
- Work with Assistant Heads and/or House Leaders and teachers to ensure that students engage in the College values
- Keep detailed records of all behaviour incidents, consequences, support plans and restorative sessions

Role of the Principal

- Implement the Student Personal Responsibility Policy and related procedures
- Develop a whole school approach to student safety and wellbeing
- Ensure that appropriate school structures support the aims of the policy
- Seek advice and take responsibility in relation to final decision making on the outcomes of inappropriate behaviour.
- Regularly review the procedures and guidelines that support the Student Personal Responsibility Policy
- Provide parents/families with clear information at enrolment interviews and annually, in regard to the Student Personal Responsibility Policy and Procedures
- Provide support for Heads of Schools and other key leaders across R-12