



SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Discipline Policy

Policy Objective

The nurture and discipline of children at Southern Highlands Christian School is founded on Biblical principles of love, respect, accountability and justice. In the context of a loving relationship, God disciplines so as to restore order and bring about growth and maturity in His people. Discipline in a Christian school should reflect a loving care and concern for the wellbeing and development of each student.

Nurturing and training children requires the establishment of appropriate guidelines and boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Clearly communicated, such structure provides a safe and supportive environment for the child. Behaviour Management, or Discipline seeks to manage student behaviour in the school environment with a clear emphasis on the training and development of self-discipline in the learner. The implementation of disciplinary policy and practice is based on principles of procedural fairness which include voice, neutrality, respectful treatment, and engendering trust in authorities (ref Appendix A).

Biblical Basis

God has entrusted to parents the privilege of raising children, (*Ephesians 6:4*). That raising involves teaching the child the ways of God (*Deuteronomy 6:4-7*) and disciplining him when he disobeys (*Proverbs 13:24, 19:18, 22:15*), all in the context of love (*Titus 2:4*). As a creature of God the child also has a responsibility to love and obey his God (*Deuteronomy 6:5, 30:16-20*), his parents (*Exodus 20:12*) and those set over him (*Romans 13:7*). The sinful heart of both parents and children will rebel against these responsibilities (*Romans 3:9-20*). The function of the school is to work with parents in their task of raising children. While there may be circumstantial differences, its nurture and discipline should not depart in principle from what God expects of the home. Whilst children in their sinfulness may reject the teaching of parents and school, that does not absolve responsible adults of their responsibility in love to call the child to repentance and to welcome him back upon repentance. (*Luke 15*)

General Principles

1. Discipline should be appropriate given the age and maturity of the child.
2. Discipline should remain in the context of Home and School working together.
3. Discipline should always consider the individual and the particular situation.
4. Discipline should be appropriate to the incident and be accompanied by discussion with parents.

Policy Statement

1. The Principal is responsible for the oversight of disciplinary measures used within the school.
2. Each teacher is responsible for discipline both in their classroom and when supervising



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students in the wider activities of the school.

3. A wide range of disciplinary measures will be used within the school as appropriate for the student concerned and the particular circumstances. These may include encouragement, counsel, correction, reprimand, deprivation of privileges, detention, isolation, family conference, suspension, exclusion and expulsion.
4. Those involved in a disciplinary action, are responsible for determining the actual facts of the matter, rather than relying upon hear-say and speculation. Clear and accurate communication is encouraged to prevent misunderstanding.
5. Incidents resulting in a disciplinary action should be reported to the parents of the students directly involved as soon as practical.
6. Southern Highlands Christian School expressly prohibits corporal punishment from the school's discipline procedures.
7. The school does not seek to explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.
8. All students must be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness. In all areas of discipline students and parents shall have appropriate access to those implementing the discipline procedure. To ensure that:
 - a student's concerns are heard
 - the student is aware of the process by which the matter will be considered,
 - the student is aware of the process by which they may appeal
9. Parents have the right to appeal any decision made by the Principal if they believe they have new information or considerations which were not provided or were not available at a previous point in the disciplinary process. This appeal should be made to the School Board in writing.

Definitions

Exclusion: When a student is removed from a task, lesson or part of event.

Suspension: When a student is removed from all lessons and activities for a period of time usually

exceeding half a day. Suspension can be carried out within the school (in-school) or away from the school (external) depending on the severity of the misdemeanor.

Expulsion: When a student is asked to leave the school permanently.

Reference

Code of Conduct - Student

Appendix A – Procedural Fairness

Procedural Fairness involves:

- the right to respond (the hearing rule)
- the right to an unbiased hearing (the bias rule)

In all situations, no matter how minor the above two elements must be followed. This means that those investigating a matter within a school will act fairly, in good faith, without bias, and exercise discerning judgement. Each party should have an opportunity to state their case



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adequately; correcting or contradicting any relevant statement prejudicial to their case.

Procedural Fairness does not involve:

- hearing just one side of a case or
- being a judge in one's own cause.

Procedural Fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements:

1. The right to be heard which includes
 - a. knowing why the action is happening (*)
 - b. knowing the way in which the issues will be determined
 - c. knowing the allegations in the matter and any other information that will be taken into account
 - d. a time to respond to allegations and
 - e. to an appeal
2. The right to an impartial decision which includes:
 - a. impartiality in the investigation and the decision making phases.
 - b. the absence of bias in the decision maker.

(*) This does not necessarily imply a right to access personal information about complainants and witnesses. In some circumstances it may be necessary to maintain the anonymity of complainants and witnesses