Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy

At St Luke’s school, Revesby we model ourselves upon the person and teachings of Jesus and strive to act according to gospel values. Our school motto is Peace. We believe that relationships of trust, cooperation and partnership between school personnel and families are of fundamental importance to pastoral care. This policy is developed within and reflective of the guidelines established for the archdiocese of Sydney by the Catholic Education Office ([www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au/Parents/Curriculum/Documents/guide-pastoralcare.pdf](http://www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au/Parents/Curriculum/Documents/guide-pastoralcare.pdf)) High-quality pastoral care flows from our vision of Catholic education (Sydney Catholic Schools Towards 2005) and is expressed in our own mission statement.

St Luke’s Mission Statement

As a Catholic school we commit ourselves to:

CELEBRATING BEING CATHOLIC through

- actively participating in the liturgy of the Catholic church
- creating a welcoming community centred on Jesus Christ
- teaching children Catholic beliefs, practices and traditions
- practising gospel values

ENSURING QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING through

- providing a stimulating and challenging curriculum
- recognising and appreciating each child’s individuality and uniqueness
- promoting an active partnership between home and school
- encouraging the continuing professional development of teachers

FOSTERING PEACE, JUSTICE AND LOVE through

- recognising the dignity, self-esteem and Integrity of each individual
- inspiring hope and a positive vision for the future
- developing each child’s ability to function responsibly in society
- treating other people with integrity, honesty and respect
At St Luke’s we work together to create a culture and environment characterised by safety, trust, mutual respect and life-giving relationships. Pastoral care cannot be thought of in separate terms from the teaching and learning within the school; it is a key determinant of successful learning.

Effective pastoral care is evident when all members of the school community:

- Feel valued in a happy and safe learning environment
- Develop positive attitudes to living, working, communicating and cooperating
- Have high expectations of their own performance
- Foster the growth and recognition of the potential of each individual.

**Dimensions and Features of Pastoral Care**

**Quality of Relationships**

In the school’s daily life, the ways in which people interact with each other significantly affect each person’s sense of self-worth, belonging and well-being. The fostering of high-quality interpersonal relationships among teachers, students, parents/carers and ancillary staff is a responsibility shared by everyone.

Teachers in particular set the tone and priority of pastoral care by their witness and example. Teachers need to be known as caring, compassionate adults who take a real interest in the lives of their students and who set appropriate boundaries within those teacher-student relationships.

Teachers must always remember that when relating to students, the use of any kind of physical coercion or humiliation is entirely inappropriate. Those working in child-related occupations must always be aware that their interactions with students are based on a special trusting relationship, and that those relationships are open to intense scrutiny. Similarly, students need to recognise their own potential for building acceptance, trust, esteem and friendship among their peers, and to clearly understand the role of their teachers.
Pastoral Programs

Pastoral programs represent a specific and planned means of helping students to value themselves and to experience well-being. At St Luke’s these programs include:

- Social and moral development through our Religious Education curriculum
- Sexuality, health and personal safety through the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus
- Peer support program
- Kindergarten/Year 5 Buddy Program
- Social skills program
- Seasons for Growth program
- STAR (Students at Risk) program
- HELP (Healing, Education, Learning, Progress) program
- Family welfare services provided by Centacare and Community Health Centres
- Community gatherings which include school prayer, school song and supportive school family relationships

For the majority of students, the family unit and the school are among the most formative influences in their lives. It is therefore essential that relationships of trust, co-operation and partnership be developed between the school and family members, and that school personnel always respect, and are sensitive to, diverse cultural values and family structures.

While pastoral care initiatives must respect the privacy of students’ lives, many students and their families actively seek the school’s support in times of crisis and instability. Within the limits of its resources and expertise, St Luke’s school is committed to the total well-being of its students and will endeavour to provide this intensified support.
Formation in Self-discipline and Responsibility

Pastoral care at St Luke’s is vitally concerned with the fostering of students’ self-discipline. It aims to develop people who are responsible and inner-directed, and capable of choosing freely in accordance with their conscience (The Catholic School, n31). Pastoral care should also help students to recognise that their fundamental freedoms and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities.

Our discipline policies, school rules and sanctions are intended to promote the good order of the community, and as such are positive concepts. They should be aids to the fostering of self-discipline and responsibility, so that students progressively grow in their capacity to exercise moral judgement, democratic values and a concern for the common good.

**Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in all Catholic schools and the use of corporal punishment by non-school persons is never sanctioned at the school.**

Discipline Policy

St Luke’s discipline policy and practice are closely linked with the pastoral care policy.

Our discipline policy reflects:

- gospel values and a Christian vision of pastoral care
- a commitment to justice
- an expectation of forgiveness
- opportunity to learn from mistakes
- anti-bullying strategies.

We work together to create a learning environment where every student and school community member is safe, supported, respected, valued – and free from bullying, violence, harassment and discrimination.
Harassment

In our community there is no place for harassment in any form. Harassment is both unlawful and unacceptable in schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

However, harassment may occur from time to time. On these occasions, our response will be based on the vision and mission of Catholic schools and follow the pastoral care practices of our school. The desired outcome of the process will be the resolution of the complaint while maintaining the dignity and self worth of the individuals involved.

Defining Harassment

Harassment is any behaviour which is not invited and not welcome and which may occur because of a person’s sex, race, religion, age, marital status, disability or sexuality. Harassment is not always intended – acts or behaviour which some see as amusing or trivial may hurt or offend another. It is sufficient to have felt offended, humiliated or intimidated by the behaviour.

Harassment can include:
- personally offensive verbal comments
- unwelcome notes, drawings or emails
- derogatory comments about a person’s appearance
- breaking the ‘hands off’ rule
- the malicious spreading of rumours
- a pattern of deliberately ignoring or excluding a person
- racist or homophobic comments

Bullying

St. Luke’s school has adopted a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of bullying. Bullying and cyberbullying behaviours are about an imbalance of power where there is deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. Bullying behaviours impact on the person being bullied, those doing the bullying and those looking on. Peer Support Foundation (2006)
Defining Bullying

The definition of bullying includes three important components:

1. Bullying is aggressive behaviour that involves unwanted, negative actions;
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behaviour repeated over time;
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

Defining Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can include, but is not limited to, the items listed below. This list outlines the types of cyber behaviour that is not consistent with the Schools’ ICT acceptable usage agreement form.

- The use of any electronic form, e.g. email, text message, chat room and or website to use obscene language, mock, tease or harass another person directly or anonymously.
- The use of another person’s email address to use obscene language, mock, tease or harass another person directly or anonymously.
- To impersonate another person in order to use obscene language, mock, tease or harass another person directly or anonymously.
- To publish anything true or untrue about another person directly or anonymously on the world wide web.

Anti-Bullying Strategies

Our aim in counteracting bullying is conflict resolution rather than just conflict management. St Luke’s code of conduct states that bullying is never permitted. Children are taught three strategies to counteract bullying:

1. Remember bullying is never allowed.
2. Try to be assertive - tell the bully, “Leave me alone”.
3. Tell a grown up. You don’t have to handle the problem alone.
   (Tell the teacher on duty and your classroom teacher.)
Strategies will be displayed in classrooms next to code of conduct and published each term in the newsletter. The Principal or Assistant Principal are notified in all reported cases of bullying behaviour and consequences are imposed as appropriate. In extreme cases, or in the event of repeated offences, a meeting with parents is requested.

Anti Bullying Services

- NSW School Liaison Police Youth Officer Ph: 9783 2261
- Kids Helpline – Ph: 1800 551 800
  www.kidshelp.com.au

St Luke’s Code of Conduct

Everyone has the right to feel and be safe therefore I will:

- be polite and friendly to students, adults and visitors
- obey the teacher
- remember ‘hands off” rule
- know and obey playground rules
- never use bad language, bully or tease
- never share food without teacher permission or buy food for others
- stop straight away when the bell rings and walk quietly and sensibly to line
- care for the school environment and put my rubbish in the bin
- apologise for inappropriate behaviour
- remember no school hat no play
- never be in the classroom without a teacher
- know and obey ICT acceptable usage agreement

Everyone has the right to learn therefore I will:

- be respectful, thoughtful and tolerant
- listen carefully to the teacher and other students
- always try my hardest to do my best work
- help keep my classroom tidy by putting things away properly
- respect school and personal property
Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour and Serious Offences

Teachers are to ensure that students know and understand the code of conduct and understand the consequences for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. During the annual review of the pastoral care and discipline policy, staff will discuss the code of conduct and develop playground rules and positive and negative consequences to help children keep the code of conduct. At the beginning of each year grade teachers and students will agree upon classroom rules based on the code of conduct and positive and negative consequences for classroom behaviour.

Constant disregard for classroom rules should always be brought to the attention of the Principal or Assistant Principal so that appropriate action can be taken. The teacher should also arrange to meet with the parent/carer and work with them to affect change. If the inappropriate behaviour continues a further meeting would be scheduled with the Principal/Assistant Principal present. A behavioural plan would be developed followed by ongoing communication between teacher and parent/carer. In some cases professional counselling may be recommended as a suitable option.

Behaviour Management in the Playground

All members of the school community are made aware of the specific rules which apply to behaviour on the playground. These are:

- bullying
- physical abuse
- verbal abuse
- defiance/rudeness
- damage to property
- playing in out-of-bounds area (including toilets)

When on playground duty, each teacher will carry a folder. Inappropriate behaviour will be noted in the folder and these students disciplined accordingly.
In line with our commitment to promote positive behaviour, at the end of each 5 weeks, all those students whose names have not appeared on the list for inappropriate behaviour will be rewarded with an afternoon’s reward activity of their choosing. If a child’s name is recorded in the folder on one or two occasions in that 5 week period, that child will have a delayed departure to attend the reward afternoon. If a child’s name appears in the folder on 3 occasions, they will be exempted from attending the reward afternoon. In this case, a letter will be sent home to parents making them aware of the problem and that the matter has been dealt with at school.

Where a child’s playground behaviour becomes a serious, continuing problem, parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Principal where any difficulties can be discussed.

**Detention**

A child is only placed on detention after the Principal, or Assistant Principal, has spoken to all students concerned and after giving careful consideration decided that detention is the appropriate consequence. Detention is normally reserved as a consequence for serious misbehaviour, e.g. bullying, aggression, serious disobedience, serious disruption.

If detention is required the following will occur:

- the child, or children, will be interviewed by the Principal or Assistant Principal
- the detention will take place during the following lunch break.

Detention consists of removal from the playground under the Principal or Assistant Principal’s supervision for one lunchtime. Parents will be notified of repeated infringements requiring lunchtime detention.
**Suspension (External) – Student Misbehaviour**

In determining whether a student’s misbehaviour is serious enough to warrant suspension (i.e. exclusion from attending school), the Principal will consider the factors including the safety and welfare of the student, staff and other students in the class or school. The full range of school student welfare and discipline strategies will have been implemented, in most cases, before a suspension is imposed. Consultation would also have taken place with the Catholic Education Office. In all cases of serious misbehaviour the school will inform the parent/carer of action to be taken. Suspension from school would take place according to guidelines and protocols set by the Catholic Education Office, Sydney. These guidelines are explicitly stated in the CEO’s *Pastoral Care Guidelines for Catholic schools*. Reasons for suspension may be violence, persistent disobedience or persistent disruption. Initial suspension from school is for a period of no more than five (5) days.

**Expulsion**

In extreme circumstances, the principal may, in consultation with CEO personnel transfer a student from the school to another Catholic school (transfer), or may make a submission to the Executive Director of Schools, recommending the expulsion of a student from the archdiocesan school system (expulsion).

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