

# DISCIPLINE AND COMMENDATION POLICY



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## Version History

Version	Date	Notes
1.0	May 2007	Initial draft for 2008 monitoring and registration
2.0	Nov 2011	Updated following feedback
2.1	26/03/13	Final edits
2.2	24/03/15	Review

## Whole School Discipline and Commendation Procedures

### General Principles:

Each student at Hunter Christian School should have the freedom to develop spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally. Each student needs to know that He or she is safe, and to be treated with respect and dignity and to learn without interference from other students.

The discipline strategies and structures outlined in this Policy are designed to encourage student ownership of self-disciplined, responsible and mature behaviour so as to prevent students from interfering with their own and other students' education.

It is recognised that, although behaviour itself is not necessarily an indicator of the 'heart' of the student, it is believed that these discipline strategies and structures will help our teachers provide just and fair discipline while also allowing provision for God's mercy and grace.

Hunter Christian School seeks to work in partnership with our parents in their God-given responsibility of nurturing and disciplining their children. Communication with parents is a vital ingredient of this Discipline Procedure and it is in the co-operation between school and home that our students can be better guided towards godly behaviour.

These principles can be summarised as working together to disciple (train and nurture) students who need attention to their response to authority and respect in relationships, for the building up of the Christian community.

### Whole School Compliance Statement

**Hunter Christian School complies with the Education Reform Amendment (Corporal Punishment) Act 1995. As a result corporal discipline is not a part of our discipline policy.**

**Further, the school does not encourage nor endorse any recommendation for parents or other non-staff persons to carry out corporal discipline at or outside the school on behalf of the school.**

### Classroom Management (whole school) and the Classroom Teacher

As with commendation, the best ongoing discipline is in the hands of the classroom teacher. The regular contact the teacher has with students provides the most consistent environment for preventative and corrective discipline measures to be utilised and relationships restored. It should be the most supportive environment for students to learn that any misbehaviour has a consequence.

The intention isn't to SHAME students, with the behaviour the focus of concern, not the value or worth of the student.

## Management and discipline strategies that the classroom teacher should use include:

- Their promptness to class
- Orderly and neat entry and exit
- Modelling respect for each student
- Seating arrangements
- Moving a student to a specific seat
- Using the whiteboard, digital projector as a focus for student attention
- Moving around the classroom during student activities
- Verbal comment/warning to: whole class, then group, finally individual(s) 'cool off' time outside the classroom – short time only, and under active supervision only
- 'Wait for me after class' – brief one-on-one follow up
- Teacher-run 'informal' detention
- Written imposition (not lines but something useful!)
- Comment in diary for parent signature
- Telephone contact with parent (confirm with stage leader)
- Judicious use of sanctions - Detention

## Discipline Procedures –

### 1. Punishment

- should be relevant to the offence
- is not something, which is done to the child, but for the child with a view to changing his/her behaviour
- should be administered in private – not belittling or embarrassing. We are not to SHAME!
- should be fair across both genders
- should be given in an atmosphere of corrective love – never as an expression of hostility

While the certainty of punishment is a deterrent, it is wrong to rely exclusively on the fear of punishment. Equally students shouldn't be held to account for our poor organisation, preparation and attitude. We are the trained professionals who are to model appropriate behaviour, not just expect it from others.

### 2. Positive Reinforcement

Immediate positive reinforcement is one of the most useful techniques in teaching responsibility to children. Individual teachers should have a range of strategies that can be used for this purpose. Children should be given many opportunities to succeed and the teacher should at all times be seeking ways to verbally encourage the students in their behaviour. Other strategies include:

*a. Class points systems*

*b. Special privileges in the classroom*

*c. Merit awards (Primary)*

These awards focus on a specific achievement or behaviour and are presented to students at assembly. It is suggested that each student receive two merit awards each year (four presented from each class at each assembly).

*d. Student of the Week (Primary)*

Each classroom teacher presents this award to one student each week (two students at each assembly). A badge is presented to the students.

*e. Commendation Award (Secondary)*

These awards occur each term under the direction of teachers who are wanting to celebrate student's achievements and effort in a range of endeavours within their KLA. It would be awarded at a Commendation Assembly with invited guests also sharing in a morning teas following the assembly.

*f. Principal's Award (Primary)*

The school also seeks to acknowledge those students who demonstrate Godly attitudes, outstanding behaviour and diligent effort or excellent achievement by the awarding of the Principal's Award each term. The students receive a certificate at a formal school Assembly and attend a morning tea with the Principal.

It should be noted however, that positive reinforcement is most effective when the student and teacher have developed a good rapport and the student feels accepted and valued by the teacher(s).

### **3. Clipboard/Detention**

*Primary*

Children who are doing the wrong thing in the playground will be given a warning, which is recorded on the clipboard. Clipboards will be checked weekly and those students whose names appear on the clipboard twice in one week will be placed on detention. Detention may also be given by a teacher for disruptive behaviour in the classroom, deliberate disobedience, serious misdemeanours in the playground, during sport or in bus lines and blatant disregard for the behavioural standards of the school. If a child is placed on detention for 20 minutes or receives two detentions in a week, parents are to sign the detention slip, which is then returned to school. This will then be followed up by an interview or phone call with the parent. Care should be taken to ensure that detention is not used too often and, in the case of continuing offenders, that they are placed on a behaviour card.

Detention will be held in a classroom during the lunch hour and will be supervised by a teacher. The students are to sit quietly for a period of 10 or 20 mins from 12:25-12:45. The duty teacher will document the detention on the Detention Tracking Sheet. If a child is required to serve a 20 minute detention or two 10 minute detentions in a week, his/her parents will be notified through a return slip. Failure to return the slip will result in a phone call to the parent.

### **4. Behaviour Card**

Primary students are placed on a behaviour card when they have been on detention three times in a week or they have been involved in a serious misdemeanour (e.g. fighting, threatening behaviour, verbal abuse). It is important that parents of students are notified when they are placed on a

behaviour card so that home and school can work together to resolve the problem. Students will be on the Behaviour Card for five school days and will be required to have it filled out each session by the class and duty teachers. At the beginning of each day the student will report to their Head of Department and/or the class teacher with their card signed by their parent or carer to review the previous day's behaviour and to set goals for the coming day.

Secondary students have three colour cards reflecting an increasing degree of concern/intervention about a student's behaviour reflected in the degrees of limitations and intentional observations placed on the student's actions, movements and the teacher supervision required. A secondary student on any level card is required to report to the Secondary Head of Department with their card signed by their parent or carer to review the previous day's behaviour and to set goals for the coming day.

Escalation between the card levels will normally be done with consideration of the Stage Leader, Secondary Head and the parents or carers.

Green means the student engages in all normal school activities with the supervising teacher commenting on identified behaviours listed on the card at the end of each lesson.

Yellow includes Green elements, but also requires the student's behaviour during breaks, to be commented on.

Red also includes Green's elements but requires the student to report to the office for all breaks for supervision and the student isn't allowed to leave the school grounds for any activity, including excursions or sporting events.

## **5. Suspension, Exclusion, Expulsion**

For offences that fall outside the normal parameters of classroom discipline or when agreed strategies e.g. behaviour card, including formal meeting with parents or carers have failed to resolve a child's misbehaviour or for serious breaches of the schools rules, the secondary faculty head, primary coordinator, teachers or stage leaders can initiate informal in-school suspension (time out). The school will endeavour to contact the parent or caregivers, as well as meet with the student, before the Principal or Head of Department formalise any in-school suspension.

The use of "out of school suspension" would normally only be sanctioned by the Principal in extreme cases or pending an interview with the student and parents or carers. For a range of reasons the school believes there is limited benefit in the use of this option and would not propose that it be seen as the next step after "in school" suspension or the final step before expulsion.

Where the school believes the enrolment of a student is significantly prejudicing the learning, safety or well-being of other students or staff, for continual breaches of school rules or for the most serious breach of the school rules, including unlawful acts, the Principal will meet with the parents or carers and student before expelling the student. The Principal will also advise the School Board of this decision.

Any formal disputes raised by students, staff or parents/carers with any element of these processes can be pursued through the school's grievance policy.

#### **6. Parent Interviews**

It is often helpful to consult the parents to determine if there are any underlying circumstances, which may be adversely affecting the child's behaviour. This should be done sooner, rather than later, by phone or in person. The Principal must be notified of the problem and that the interview has occurred and what action is to be taken as a result.

#### **7. Cases for the Head of Department or Principal**

The Head of Department may be called upon to deal with misbehaviour which involves extremely bad language, blatant disobedience and disrespect, theft, causing bodily harm and the wanton destruction of property. The teacher will need to communicate the problem carefully and accurately so that the Head of Department is able to act justly and wisely in the best interests of the student and the school.

#### **8. Self-Discipline**

Self-discipline requires a clearly defined acceptable set of rules and a desire to become self-directed. A student develops self-discipline when he/she is secure in the knowledge that help is available and he/she has a clear understanding of the teacher's standards and expectations.

#### **In encouraging students to be self-disciplined, the teacher should:**

- be consistent and fair to all
- establish routines and standards early
- prepare lessons thoroughly
- aim for a high standard in all that is taught
- be positive - praise the students where possible
- not ignore misbehaviour, although he/she may choose to overlook it
- encourage the children to accept varying degrees of responsibility
- be confident - remember he/she is part of a team, which supports each other
- treat the students with respect