



St Cyprians School

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

St Cyprian's School has a positive, educative approach to discipline. Norms of behaviour are indicated in the School Code of Conduct and clear expectations as to how individuals should conduct themselves are laid down in the mission, values, Code of Conduct and other documentation of the school.

However, when learners transgress these expectations or act in a way that is negative to other learners or to the effective management of the school, the school will apply punitive measures designed to remediate behaviour. A fair, transparent disciplinary framework has been established to facilitate the implementation of corrective action.

2. PRINCIPLES

- a. Discipline in a school is necessary to preserve and promote educational excellence and for the protection of the rights of all stakeholders.
- b. The Disciplinary Procedure is associated with the Code of Conduct, and is applicable to all learners. Corrective action will be taken by the school should expected norms of conduct not be met by a learner.
- c. St Cyprian's School supports the principles of fair discipline and the consistent and justified application of appropriate disciplinary measures.
- d. Disciplinary measures may be formal or informal and are designed to prevent further occurrences of unacceptable behaviour, and to restore the school/learner relationship.
- e. Maintaining discipline and ensuring orderly classroom behaviour is an integral part of an educator's job, as is the responsibility for ensuring that disciplinary measures are applied equitably and effectively.
- f. Disciplinary measures may be imposed on learners whose behaviour outside of school negatively impacts the school/learner relationship, the reputation/ integrity of the school, or other learners in the school.

3. PARTNERSHIPS

In order to sustain a positive, orderly and disciplined learning environment, it is important that all stakeholders in the educational partnership – school, parent and learners – acknowledge their responsibilities.

3.1 Educators:

All educators at the school subscribe to the SACE Code of Professional Ethics and to the school's own Code of Conduct for Staff. Inter alia, this means that staff will

- Be punctual, well prepared and professional in their approach to education
- Manage learner performance effectively and motivate learners to achieve realistic and meaningful personal and educational goals

- Be sensitive to the needs of their learners and address learning difficulties in a positive manner
- Praise, encourage, recognize and reward learners who strive to achieve
- Create a classroom climate which is based on a learning partnership which makes education relevant and stimulating
- Set a positive example for their learners to follow
- Administer discipline correctively and with dignity when necessary

3.2 Parents/Guardians

While parents must expect the school and its educators to provide the best possible education with the resources available to the School, they must also accept responsibility to help the School achieve this goal. Parents would thus have the responsibility to

- Actively support the efforts of the School and its educators to teach their children
- Involve themselves to the fullest possible extent in School activities
- Make positive suggestions and contributions to improve the School's education process and learning environment
- Support the disciplinary structures and procedures of the school, and the reasonable efforts by the school to apply discipline effectively and fairly
- Encourage their children to participate fully in School and extra mural activities
- Participate in the learning process and assist their children with homework, provide encouragement, check results and communicate fully with the school.
- Not expect the school to meet their child's every need
- Ensure that their child is at all compulsory attendance events
- Acknowledge the guidance/expertise of educators

3.3 Learners

Constitutionally, all learners have the right to an education. However, this right must be seen in the context of the responsibilities they have to their parents, the School, their educators and their fellow learners. These responsibilities include:

- Complying with the rules of the School, its Code of Conduct, its Conditions of Enrolment and the instructions of school officials
- Behaving responsibly so as to not endanger the safety, welfare and rights of others
- Showing respect and care for the property of the school and others
- Maintaining sound relations with others at the school, being courteous and showing respect for the dignity and self worth of others
- Being punctual and observing the time keeping practices of the school
- Demonstrating a positive attitude towards the opportunity to learn and being diligent in their efforts to learn

- Behaving honestly and conducting themselves with integrity
- Not harassing, nor threatening violence nor using force to intimidate, abuse, coerce or interfere with others, with school activities or school property
- Accepting legitimate disciplinary measures taken against them as necessary.

4. **DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

Disciplinary measures applied in response to learner misconduct will require the school officials involved to exercise judgement in deciding on an appropriate and fair consequence.

Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the Code of Discipline adopted by the school. The Code sets out broad categories of infringement and norms for applying fair disciplinary measures across the school.

Principles:

Discipline can be initiated by the educator or the school authorities. The school will be entitled to apply corrective action/disciplinary measures *that it believes are appropriate to the circumstances*. Thus, the discretion to apply disciplinary measures will NOT be rigidly restricted by the code, but will be guided by the circumstances.

The severity of the action taken will depend upon the circumstances, the seriousness of the infringement, the interests of fellow learners, the school and its employees, the interests of the offending learner and any other mitigating or aggravating factors that are of relevance. Thus, the Disciplinary Code acts as a guide to promote consistency, but does not remove the necessary discretion of school authorities to apply a lesser or more severe penalty should the circumstances so dictate.

The Principle of Progressive Discipline

Wherever feasible and effective, discipline will be applied progressively. Category C Transgressions (Code of Conduct Infringements) will be dealt with at the level of the educator concerned or the Grade Head. However, repeated transgressions of a minor, similar or related offence will result in progressively more severe and formal action being taken, particularly where a clear trend is indicated by the learner's continued misconduct.

Notwithstanding the principle of progressive discipline, a serious transgression may justify a formal investigation and severe penalty, and mitigate against a lesser form of action.

Both Verbal and Written Warnings issued by the school will be noted on the learner's record. Copies of warnings issued will be provided to parents by the school.

5. **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Should the learner's transgression fall into Categories A or B (Very Serious Misconduct or Serious Infringement) a formal disciplinary process will be followed. This would include:

- An **Investigation**. After an incident has been reported by an educator/learner/parent to the Grade Head an investigation/informal enquiry takes place, wherein the learner has an opportunity to state her case.
- **Formal Disciplinary Measures** would include either the issuing of a **Formal Written** Warning and Contract OR the calling of a **Formal Disciplinary Hearing**. All formal measures will need to be handled by the relevant HOD or the Head.

Formal Disciplinary Hearing:

In the event of a Formal Disciplinary Hearing, the learner will be represented by a member of staff (School Counsellor, Class Teacher, Grade Head). Parents/Guardians will be allowed to observe the process, should they wish to do so.

As a Disciplinary Hearing is an internal school process, the learner will not be allowed any external representation at all.

6. APPEAL REVIEW

An Appeal Review is a fundamental right in terms of the “Rules of Natural Justice”, and thus could be requested by the learner or her parent if they do not agree with the outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing. The onus would be on the learner/parent/guardian to justify the reasons for the appeal. If the Appeal is successful, another Disciplinary Hearing would be set up.