



# LUTHERAN SCHOOL WAGGA WAGGA

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### BEHAVIOUR LEARNING

---

#### Rationale

As Christians, we believe that by nature we are all imperfect, and need the love, guidance and forgiveness that we receive through our relationship with Jesus Christ. In response to these gifts we seek to love, guide and forgive one another through our actions. The life of a functioning Christian community is characterised by positive relationships and open communication with others. God calls all people to love one another, as he has loved us. This love is demonstrated through actions and words that are responsive to the individual rights and needs of others, not in judgement. When working with children, our practices are aimed to nurture respectful and active citizens who: “embrace opportunities, make rational and informed decisions about their own lives and accept responsibility for their own actions” (*Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, 2008).

#### Policy

Lutheran School Wagga Wagga is a school that accepts and understands that the nature of humans is such that we are all imperfect and therefore, capable of making inappropriate choices. When students make inappropriate choices, those choices are identified by staff, students are made aware of their inappropriate choices and directed to learning positive behaviours. This guidance is given to help facilitate students’ taking responsibility for their personal actions, understanding the importance of reconciling relationships and learning how to resolve conflict positively and proactively.

If a student is involved in serious misbehaviour (eg behaviour that causes harm to others) or a student, after various supports and interventions, continues to place the safety and learning of others at risk, the school’s policy is to issue a suspension or expulsion following a procedurally fair process. The school does not have a policy on ‘exclusion’. Exclusion is the act of preventing a student’s admission to a number of schools.

#### Beliefs and Principles

At Lutheran School Wagga Wagga we teach and promote the values of respect, love, compassion, forgiveness, quality, justice, appreciation, service, humility, hope and courage. The learning of positive behaviours is in every lesson, every classroom, every activity and every playtime in the school. Students must be reminded and taught that as humans we are continually learning to improve our choices and that even when we know what to do, our sinful nature and other factors in our life can impact on our desire to make the right choices. We also believe that behaviours communicate emotion and needs. Therefore, students are taught to recognise their own feelings and learn strategies for emotional regulation. When emotions are regulated, students are better able to communicate their needs and tell their stories. All children need to feel safe to tell their story, as it takes courage to open up to adults and let them know they have made a choice that will disappoint them. Teachers and parents/caregivers should remember that young children are still developing the words they need to express different feelings and may choose inappropriate behaviour to communicate their frustrations.

We incorporate the language and principles of restorative practices as we help children grow in their behaviour learning. Rather than asking, *Who’s to blame?* and *What is the punishment?*, we instead ask *Who/What has been harmed?* and *How do we make it right?*

Positive, caring and respectful relationships between adults and children are a key component to adults being able to guide children through taking responsibility for their actions. In many incidences children will opt for hiding the truth to avoid embarrassment and consequences. Children need to be counselled to understand the importance of fixing the inappropriate choice by recognising why the choice was not appropriate, learning to change the behaviour and accepting a natural or imposed consequence may occur. Involving children in deciding appropriate consequences can be important in helping them understand their choices and their impact on others.

As Christians we believe that due to sin, no one will ever become perfect. Making inappropriate choices, having a lapse in judgement or being affected by other life factors will always be a part of being human. The goal is to help all people accept this human condition, seek forgiveness for wrong behaviour, learn to take responsibility for our actions, and be guided by God's word in living in harmony with all people.

### **Behaviour Learning Goals**

Our goals are to:

- Assist students to develop positive relationships;
- Assist students to develop effective social skills (including the use of restorative practices);
- Guide students to responsibly manage their own behaviour with respect for the rights and needs of others;
- Maintain a school social environment in which each student's right to security, learning, personal growth and self-esteem is affirmed;
- Assist students to recognise the value and power of forgiveness;
- Equip students with respect, empathy and resilience to become effective citizens.

### **The Role of Staff**

Teachers seek to promote appropriate student behaviour by:

- Establishing positive student relationships;
- Maintaining a Christ-centred, respectful, safe and engaging environment;
- Communicating clear expectations;
- Modelling behaviour, which is responsive to the rights and needs of others;
- Actively teaching social skills;
- Maintaining open communication with parents/caregivers, students and staff;
- Rewarding positive student behaviours;
- Sharing the forgiveness of Jesus
- Encouraging the rebuilding of trust by leading restorative conversations with students to right wrongs and restore relationships
- Being familiar with the Behaviour Learning procedures in order to assure consistency across the school with behavioural expectations.

Through the Christian Studies program students have further opportunity to learn about the Christian motivation for service through actions, which respond to the rights and needs of others.

Teachers have the responsibility for continuing to develop strategies to encourage positive behaviour from students. Staff maintain behaviour and language that demonstrates positive role modelling to students.

Classroom teachers will keep parents/caregivers informed of repeated or serious inappropriate behaviours. Classroom teachers will choose the most effective way of communicating to maintain positive relationships with parents/caregivers, which in most situations will be a diary note or a conversation over the phone or in person. Older students should be encouraged and supported (by teachers and parents/caregivers) to share the information themselves. The courage needed to do this should be recognised and affirmed. A record of phone contact or meetings with parents/caregivers will be recorded.

When students behave irresponsibly, teachers seek to respond in such a way as to lead students to recognise their error, attempt to repair any damage done, realise their need for forgiveness, and plan to behave more appropriately in the future. This may involve the imposing of consequences as defined within this policy.

It is the role of the teacher to develop positive and respectful relationships with their students, understanding and accepting that all students are individuals with unique interests, personalities, gifts and talents. Therefore, the first step in helping to promote positive student behaviour is for teachers to know their students, understand what triggers negative behaviours and know what interests and motivates their students.

### **The Role of Parents/Caregivers**

Assisting students in behaviour learning is most effective when parents/caregivers, students and teachers work together to establish the values and expectations of the school community and appropriate behaviour in the classroom and the playground.

Parents/caregivers have the primary responsibility for teaching their children to behave responsibly with respect for the rights and needs of others. Teachers have the primary responsibility for managing student behaviour at school. Where the values and expectations are the same, teachers and parents/caregivers can actively support one another to the benefit of the child.

It is essential that all parents/caregivers are familiar with the school's Behaviour Learning Policy and can support it. Likewise parents/caregivers are expected to actively support the teachers' management of their child's behaviour or, if they have difficulty doing so, to meet with the teacher concerned with the aim of planning a cooperative approach. The Principal or Deputy Principal may be invited to join such meetings.

In some circumstances where there are ongoing behaviour concerns, parents/caregivers will be invited to join with their child's teacher and other staff members such as the Learning Enhancement Teacher, School Chaplain, Deputy Principal and Principal to develop an individual learning plan to assist their child in developing appropriate behaviour patterns. An individual behaviour learning plan will identify the skills to be developed and will outline strategies to be used at school and, if appropriate, at home. We place great importance on this partnership and value the support of parents/caregivers and students.

Parents/caregivers can support their children and the school through:-

- encouraging their children to behave in line with the schools' Behaviour Learning Policy and the Christian ethos of the school;
- encouraging their children to appreciate the need for forgiveness and reconciliation;
- providing a learning environment at home, which encourages the completion of homework and good study skills;
- supporting school activities and events;
- approaching the class teacher first if they have a concern regarding their child (Deputy Principal and Principal should only be contacted if the issues have not been resolved or it is an ongoing issue);
- promoting a positive image of Lutheran School and directing concerns or criticisms to the appropriate staff member;
- supporting staff and parent/caregiver volunteers in the provision of extra-curricular activities.

### **The Role of Students**

We believe that it is essential for a school's behavioural expectations to be clear and known by all so that they can serve as an effective guide. At Lutheran School Wagga Wagga guidelines are inspired by God's Word, with respect to each individual's uniqueness, worth and basic rights as well as our corresponding responsibilities.

The ultimate aim for behaviour is to follow the perfect example we have in Jesus Christ, knowing that while we will never reach this level of perfection we can aim to be the best we can be and feel safe to ask for help and guidance when inappropriate choices are made.

Respect is central to our expectations as students are taught to respect themselves, others and property. Our guidelines define everybody's rights and responsibilities in the areas of fair play, learning, safety, property and communication.

Students are to be aware of our school's 'Restorative Practices' processes. Students need to know the purpose of restorative practices, how they work, and how they benefit every member of the school community.

It is also essential that students recognise two key understandings:

- **All students at LSWW have the right to feel safe at school.**

- **All students at LSWW have the right to ask a teacher for help.**

### **Expectations of Students**

At Lutheran School we have created five key expectations in order to achieve the two key understandings listed above. These five areas outline expectations of students and are displayed and referred to in classes. When addressing a student's choices and behaviour, these are worked through by the student to understand how their choice of behaviour has impacted on others and their belongings. Each of the five key expectations are outlined below.

## **FAIR PLAY – We play fairly with each other**

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS</b>
<p><i>We have the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be included;</li> <li>● Use play equipment and play space;</li> <li>● Learn about problem solving; and</li> <li>● Play in an environment where rules are enforced.</li> </ul>	<p><i>We have the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include others;</li> <li>● Use equipment correctly and return it properly;</li> <li>● Attempt to solve problems peacefully;</li> <li>● Choose fair rules and play by them; and</li> <li>● Share play equipment and play space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Excluding others unfairly;</li> <li>● Harassment;</li> <li>● Ignoring the rules when playing games;</li> <li>● Cheating;</li> <li>● Refusing to share school property; and</li> <li>● Bullying</li> </ul>

## **LEARNING – We do our best so that we can learn**

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS</b>
<p><i>We have the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discover more about the world and ourselves;</li> <li>● Develop our skills;</li> <li>● Express ourselves;</li> <li>● Use our talents; and</li> <li>● Use helpful resources.</li> </ul>	<p><i>We have the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give our best effort;</li> <li>● Obey class rules;</li> <li>● Be good listeners; and</li> <li>● Ask for help when we need it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Disturbing others;</li> <li>● Interrupting;</li> <li>● Ignoring instructions; and</li> <li>● Not sharing resources.</li> </ul>

## **SAFETY – We act safely by considering others and protecting them and ourselves**

<p><b>RIGHTS</b></p> <p><i>We have the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel safe and secure;</li> <li>• Learn about safety;</li> <li>• Be protected from unsafe conditions; and</li> <li>• Talk to someone we trust when in need.</li> </ul>	<p><b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p><i>We have the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act in a safe way;</li> <li>• Consider how our actions affect others;</li> <li>• Use equipment correctly</li> <li>• Play in our designated areas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hurting others emotionally and/or physically;</li> <li>• Leaving the school grounds without permission;</li> <li>• Using equipment wrongly;</li> <li>• Harassment;</li> <li>• Running on concrete;</li> <li>• Talking to strangers;</li> <li>• Being in an area without teacher supervision;</li> <li>• Running around corners;</li> <li>• Rough play; and</li> <li>• Climbing other than on playground equipment.</li> </ul>
---	---	--

**PROPERTY – We care for the school and respect one another’s property**

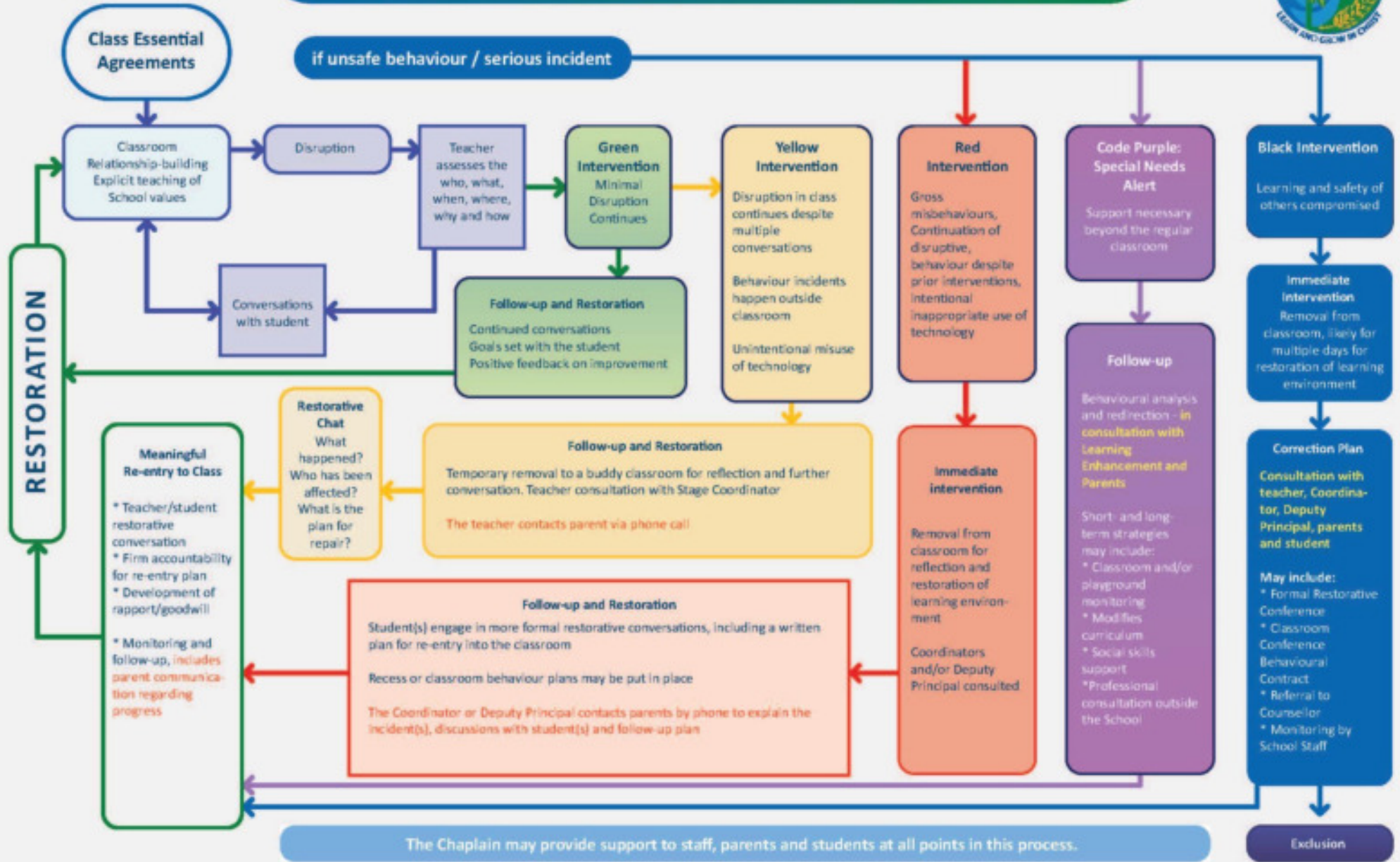
<p><b>RIGHTS</b></p> <p><i>We have the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a clean and tidy environment;</li> <li>• Use school property; and</li> <li>• Have our personal belongings protected.</li> </ul>	<p><b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p><i>We have the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat all school and one another’s property with care and respect;</li> <li>• Keep the yard free from litter and vandalism; and</li> <li>• Ask permission when borrowing each other’s belongings.</li> </ul>	<p><b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damaging school and/or one another’s property;</li> <li>• Misusing equipment;</li> <li>• Wasting water and natural resources;</li> <li>• Stealing;</li> <li>• Borrowing without asking;</li> <li>• Littering; and</li> <li>• Vandalism (including drawing on desks).</li> </ul>
--	---	--

**COMMUNICATION – We communicate with love and respect for one another**

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS</b>
<p><i>We have the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be listened to;</li> <li>● Be spoken to politely;</li> <li>● Attempt to solve problems by talking; and</li> <li>● Be told the truth</li> </ul>	<p><i>We have the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listen to each other;</li> <li>● Speak politely;</li> <li>● Attempt to solve problems by talking; and</li> <li>● Tell the truth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Put downs;</li> <li>● Swearing;</li> <li>● Ignoring or excluding others;</li> <li>● Name calling; and</li> <li>● Criticising those who are absent.</li> </ul>



# Behaviour Management: A Restorative Approach





## Bullying

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools (as outlined in <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying> ) says:

*Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).*

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

However, these conflicts or inappropriate behaviours still need to be addressed and resolved, and the school seeks to do this through the whole school approach of *Restorative Practices* which may include applying consequences.

### Preventative and Educational Approaches to Bullying

At LSWW we believe all students have the right to learn and make mistakes, therefore we seek to build skills such as resilience and self-control in students in order to teach them how to get along socially, academically and relationally. Some of the ways this is achieved is through;

#### *Classroom programs*

Students are involved in classroom level programs through Health units using resources such as the 'You Can Do It' which teaches skills in getting along, building confidence, resilience, organisation and persistence through all year levels. Social resilience and problem solving programs can be run in classes that require additional assistance in relationship building. This is a weekly lesson for a term led by the Chaplain, Deputy Principal and class teachers. Our Lutheran School values are also taught in classrooms and chapel services, including how to apply them in terms of behaviour and expectations.

#### *Bye Bye Bullying*

This school wide initiative is publicised throughout the school by posters, assemblies, SRC Representatives and staff. This program remind students to 'Spot it out' – be on the lookout for students being bullied, 'Speak it out' if they see someone who is being bullied, and through doing these things, know that they will be helping to 'Stomp it out.' These three catch phrases are taught and students are reminded to help prevent bullying behaviours.

#### *High 5 strategy*

Students are taught to use five strategies to build resilience in dealing with unwarranted behaviour by peers. These give students the confidence to try to sort out the problem themselves before seeking help. The strategies that students work through are; Speak friendly, Speak firmly, Ignore, Walk away, Report.

#### *Restorative Practices*

Students learn to have restorative conversations to help mend broken relationships with their peers and staff, due to their behaviour choices. Both victim and wrong doer are given the opportunity to express their feelings and discuss what happened and why. Staff act as mediators to help students solve problems, heal hurts and bring about restored relationships. This process can also involve parents/caregivers who may have been affected by choices made by a student.

#### *Safety surveys*

Surveys are undertaken each semester by Year 3-6 students who have the opportunity to disclose to the Principal how safe they feel at school, who they feel is being a bully to them and what the actions are that are causing them

harm. Students also have the option to write if they would like to speak to an adult about how they are feeling – and specify whom they would like to talk to. This information is shared with executive and class teachers in order to act on any information given.

### *Police Liaison Officer*

Lutheran School Wagga Wagga has a strong working relationship with the local Police Liaison Officer (PLO) who regularly visits the school to give age appropriate presentations to students on topics in relation to bullying. In the case of serious behaviour concerns (eg bullying and cyberbullying) the PLO is contacted by the Principal or Deputy Principal at their discretion. The PLO can be contacted at the Wagga Wagga Police Station (ph 02 6922 2599).

### **Approaches to Bullying**

We believe that a successful behaviour management approach is far more than a single program or product. It is an ongoing process involving every member of the school community. We aim to empower students to recognise and accept responsibility for how they choose to behave. Our focus is on expectations rather than rules, consequences rather than punishments and problem solving rather than conflict. Our dialogue with students is characterised by expressions such as those used in *Restorative Practices*.

Please see the details of the flow chart pages – sections of ‘Serious Misbehaviours’ and ‘Dangerous and Violent Behaviour’.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience.

A student will only be suspended or expelled from school in situations where all other reasonable measures have been implemented without success or where immediate suspension or expulsion is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student’s behaviour, or where the wellbeing or safety of another student or staff member is at risk.

**Suspension** is the temporary removal of a student from all classes or school activities they would normally attend, or temporary removal from the school, for a set period of time. **Expulsion** is the permanent removal of a student from the school.

Procedure:

1. Deputy Principal or Principal is advised of the behaviour incident or allegation (as outlined in the Restorative Flowchart).
2. Deputy Principal withdraws and interviews the student against whom the allegation has been made ensuring safety, confidentiality and procedural fairness. Written notes are kept of the interview.
3. Deputy Principal carries out further investigation and speaks with relevant staff and student witnesses. Written notes are kept of the interviews.
4. Deputy Principal speaks again to the student to seek his/her response to the allegations made and/or to the details of the incident provided by witnesses.
5. Deputy Principal reports to the Principal and provides notes/summaries of details of the incident and witness statements together with a recommendation for disciplinary action which may include suspension or expulsion. The purpose of suspension is to give parties a ‘cooling down’ period so that the learning environment might be restored and the person suspended can further reflect on how the damage might be repaired.
6. Principal considers the details and recommendation of the Deputy Principal and makes a decision on whether to suspend/expel the student (taking into account age of student, behaviour record, any special circumstances).
7. In the case of **suspension**:
  - The parents/caregivers of the student are advised by the Principal or Deputy Principal by telephone, and in writing, of the incident and the decision to suspend the student (either in-school or away from school) for a period of time
  - Parents/caregivers (and student) are asked to meet with the Principal and Deputy Principal prior to returning to school to discuss a Return to School Plan and/or a Behaviour Learning Plan to support the student's continuation at the school.

## 8. In the case of **expulsion**:

- Where a disciplinary issue arises which may result in expulsion the school will investigate the circumstances surrounding the issue. The Deputy Principal may direct the student not to attend school while the investigation takes place. An investigation will include the student being provided with information about the nature of the allegations and being given an opportunity to respond.
- If after receiving the results of the investigation and hearing representations from the student, the Deputy Principal forms the view that the student should be expelled, the Deputy Principal will make a recommendation to that effect to the Principal and advise the student and parents/caregivers at a face-to-face meeting that this recommendation has been made.
- The parents/caregivers or student may appeal against that recommendation to the Principal, setting out the reasons why the Principal should not act on the recommendation. Any appeal must be provided to the Principal no later than five school days nominated after the parents/caregivers have been advised of the recommendation.
- If no appeal is made within the time specified, the Principal will decide whether to accept the recommendation and advise the student and parents/caregivers of the decision.
- If the student or parents/caregivers have lodged an appeal, the Principal will consider the recommendations and the reasons provided by the student or parents/caregivers for not following the recommendation and will decide whether to accept the recommendation of the Deputy Principal. The Principal will then advise the student and parents/caregivers of the decision at a meeting and in writing
- The decision made by the Principal will be final.

## **Corporal Punishment**

The Education Reform Amendment (School Discipline) Act 1995 amends the Education Reform Act 1990, Section 47 to ban the use of corporal punishment in all schools in NSW.

Corporal punishment is defined as:-

*“corporal punishment of a student means the application of physical force in order to punish or correct the student, but does not include the application of force only to prevent personal injury to, or damage to or the destruction of property of, any person (including the student).”*

The ban on corporal punishment is supported by the School Board, administrators and staff of Lutheran School Wagga Wagga as corporal punishment is contrary to the basic philosophy and aims of the school. The school does not administer corporal punishment, or sanction the administration of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents/caregivers, to enforce discipline at school.

## **Resources**

[www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

[http://www.behaviourmatters.org.au/Restorative\\_Practice.php](http://www.behaviourmatters.org.au/Restorative_Practice.php)

## **Related Documents**

- Child Protection Policy
- Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Student Use of Electronic Devices and the Internet Policy