



Positive Behaviour and Relationship Plan

Rationale

Schools do not operate in vacuums. Despite best efforts, the school environment is impacted by wider social influences and prevailing cultural norms. The influential nature of mass media and seemingly limitless access to information and communication via the Internet and mobile technologies results in young people being exposed to forces often beyond the control of parents, schools, churches and local communities.

Unfortunately, students are often unable to appropriately filter the vast amount of information and discriminate between “good” information and “bad” information. Terms such as ‘cyber bullying’ and ‘sexting’ are in common use, and while the information revolution presents many benefits for life and learning, it carries with it the potential for considerable harm to children in their formative years where attitudes, values and behaviours are still in development.

Behavioural expectations vary considerably between cultures, social groups and child rearing practices. Adults’ attitudes about behaviour management are affected by personal events, culture and childhood experiences. Due to the diverse and inclusive nature of schools, opinion differs as to what constitutes acceptable and positive behaviour and what schools can and should do to develop, foster and maintain a positive behavioural environment. These factors combine to render behaviour management a growing challenge for contemporary schools. As a Catholic school, we are called to “work in the world” but not necessarily accept many of its ways. Indeed, we have a Gospel inspired mandate to reject those attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours which are inconsistent with Christ’s teaching, regardless of their prevalence, or even acceptance in our society.

At Mother of Good Counsel School, Jesus is our model who we base our values and behaviour on. Through the gospels, Jesus demonstrated how to treat and interact with others. These stories emphasise and reflect:

- Forgiveness
- Making choices and being responsible for them
- Making wrong situations right
- Helping people in need
- Welcoming others
- Living peacefully
- Being socially responsible
- Respecting self and others
- Restoring dignity in self and others
- Walking in other’s shoes and showing empathy

High quality curriculum and effective teaching and learning depend on a well-structured school and classroom behaviour management plan. Mother of Good Counsel fosters a holistic approach to individual growth and development; emphasising spiritual and academic development, and the development of social and behavioural skills that enable students to function successfully in their communities.

Research indicates ten percent of students are chronic rule breakers and a further 20 percent are regular rule breakers. It is the minority that often determines how effectively teachers carry out their work and how well students learn (Curwin, Mendler, Mendler, 2008). An effective behaviour management plan must meet the needs of each sub group to ensure the well behaved 70 percent are not alienated or unnecessarily regulated, the 20 percent 'somewhat regulars' are effectively managed, and the 10 percent of chronic offenders receive guidance and support to modify or change inappropriate behaviour.

Students ultimately utilise inappropriate behaviour as a means of communicating when they do not possess the language, experience or ability to express a need or seek attention. This inappropriate behaviour will continue until the need is met. Positive behaviour is the result of students making positive, appropriate behavioural choices. School-based interventions, strategies and constraints are directed to assist children make informed behavioural choices. To support students in making such choices, students are explicitly taught the value of personal responsibility rather than demanding blind obedience.

Obedience-style Behaviour Management Plans promote student immaturity, lack of responsibility, inability to think rationally or critically and fosters feelings of helplessness that manifest in withdrawal, aggressiveness or power struggles. Mother of Good Counsel does not advocate a punishment-based behaviour modification program. The school adopts an ecological approach that considers aspects of a student's home, school and community interests and relationships. Teachers must be skilful in looking beyond negative student behaviour to determine the underlying purpose of student behaviour and what goal it is set to achieve.

The primary focus of Mother of Good Counsel's Positive Behaviour and Relationship Plan (PBRP) is the development of strong, positive interpersonal relationships between all stakeholders. This plan raises student awareness of the impact behaviour and choices have on others. The Positive Behaviour and Relationship Plan moves beyond the simple management of student behaviour and toward strategies and practices that positively affect the lives of children, and empower them to make wise choices and manage personal behaviour. The highest virtue of education is to teach students to be self-responsible and fully functional. This is best achieved through teaching and modelling positive values.

Mother of Good Counsel School's philosophy fosters critical thinking and shared decision-making. Children cannot develop responsibility without making personal life choices or making mistakes and learning from them. Mother of Good Counsel endorses an approach to developing, supporting and nurturing students and school community in enhancing relationships.

The Positive Behaviour and Relationship Plan:

Mother of Good Counsel adopts a whole school approach embraced by all stakeholders (staff, students, parents, Outside School Hours Care-OSHC) and is embedded in the School Mission Statement.

Mother of Good Counsel promotes a positive school environment, with the goal of creating a caring, safe environment for all.

Mother of Good Counsel is proactive. No two children are alike and Mother of Good Counsel caters for individual differences, guiding children by:

- Explicitly teaching social skills (SEL);

- Helping students accept and be responsible for personal behaviour;
- Teaching students how to make good choices;
- Learning that poor choices can always be corrected; and
- Establishing and strengthening positive relationships.

This is achieved through:

- Developing strong links between school and home;
- Welcoming and encouraging parents to be actively involved with school; and
- Informing parents of their child's progress and development.

Mother of Good Counsel is supported by practical expectations, rules and consequences. The plan has consistent routines and roles. School, home and OSHC work collaboratively toward common goals.

Individuals occasionally operate outside acceptable boundaries established by the school community. Mother of Good Counsel incorporates a range of strategies to support members of the school community:

The school's 'Rescue and Support Package' supports the perpetrator, victim, staff members managing regular, inappropriate behaviour and parents who, in many cases, contend with similar issues in the home environment.

Staff and parents are regularly informed of current ideas and research relating to student behaviour through the provision of strategies, professional reading and guest speakers at inservices and information sessions.

Mother of Good Counsel regularly reviews and reflects on the effectiveness of the plan and makes necessary modifications to meet changing needs and requirements.

Behaviour management is a challenge for schools however, despite the challenge, through commitment and utilisation of the right plan, Mother of Good Counsel strives to assist children make sense of their complex world and act in ways that enables them to reach their full potential and enrich the lives of others.

In conclusion, an extract of an anonymous poem that reads true.

The Bottom Line

*You can change anything in your life
if you want it badly enough.
Excuses are for losers.
Those who take responsibility for their actions
are the real winners in life.
Winners meet life's challenges head on
knowing there are no guarantees
and give it all they've got.
It's never too late or too early to begin.
Time plays no favourites
and will pass whether you act or not.*

- Anonymous

What we value at Mother of Good Counsel

“I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Mother of Good Counsel employs a values-based approach to enforcing rules. Rules on their own provide limited motivation for students to follow them. It is the values on which rules are based and student involvement in rule development that provide the motivation. When students understand the need for rules, they are more willing to honour them and more likely to accept the consequences. Rules at Mother of Good Counsel are based on gospel values with an emphasis on teacher-student relationships, relevance to the curriculum and student’s belief in their capacity for individual success.

Mother of Good Counsel School values:

- Respect and care for self, others, property and school
- The provision of a safe learning environment
- Providing a positive learning environment
- Striving for personal best
- Cooperation
- Peaceful problem solving
- Being responsible for and owning personal behaviour

Mother of Good Counsel’s Positive Behaviour and Relationship Plan focuses on developing a supportive school environment and responsible, positive behaviour in all staff and students. The plan provides a framework for teaching students to use positive and appropriate behaviours and acknowledges that problem behaviours occur and need to be addressed within a framework of positive behavioural support.

The Positive Behaviour and Relationship Plan focuses on teaching students to use positive behaviours and supporting them as they learn these skills and incorporate them into everyday life. The plan acknowledges that positive behaviours cannot be taught effectively in isolation, but are best fostered in a supportive environment.

Staff and students at Mother of Good Counsel have the right to a working environment free from disruption, abuse or threat and to achieve their full potential in a safe and supportive environment. Students respond best to positive reinforcement. Positive behaviours are established through teaching new skills while responding effectively to problematic behaviours.

Practice and Procedure

Classroom rules:

- Remember safety first;
- Respect others and their property;
- Right Time – Right Place;
- Follow directions quickly and quietly;
- Do your best work on time;
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.

Recognition of acceptable behaviours

Teachers acknowledge behaviour through verbal confirmation, positive gesture and body language. Teachers incorporate individual reward systems into classroom practices. Class awards are recognised at Friday morning assemblies.

Classroom behaviour program

Materials:

- Class rules are clearly displayed in classrooms;
- Class lists are displayed at the front classrooms (note: weekly behaviour charts are submitted to the office).

Note: Specialist teachers forward behaviour to classroom teachers when necessary.

Procedure:

When a student infringes a class rule, the number corresponding to that class rule is entered into the first column of the class sheet. This column is referred to as step 1.

When a student infringes a class rule for the second time during the day, the number corresponding to that class rule is entered onto the second column of the class sheet. This is referred to as step 2.

If the student infringes a class rule for the third time, he/she is sent to a 'time out class' for a period of 30 minutes. On arrival to the 'time out class' the student is reminded of expectations of appropriate behaviour during this period. The student does not participate in the time out class' activities, he/she quietly completes work at the designated time-out area. After 30 minutes the student undergoes the 'Re-entry Process' and rejoins his/her classroom lesson. If the time out work is not completed to a satisfactory level, the student is expected to complete this work during his/her own time. The teacher notifies the child's parent/guardian via the diary, phone call or email that their child required time out. If the student does not participate in the class appropriately, the student is sent to the office.

Upon a fourth infringement of class rules for the day, the student is sent directly to the office for time out. The duration of time-out is 30 minutes. Work accompanies the student. A member from the Administration Team discusses the student's inappropriate behavior and parents are notified of their child's escalating behaviour and their possible exclusion for the rest of the day. After 30 minutes the student undergoes the 'Re-entry Process' and rejoins his/her classroom lesson. If the time out work is not completed to a satisfactory level, the student is expected to complete this work during his/her own time.

Upon a fifth infringement of the day, the student is sent to the office. A member of the Administration Team discusses the student's inappropriate behaviour. Parents are contacted immediately and the student is sent home. In the event parents are not contactable to pick up, the student is placed on internal suspension and is automatically excluded from school the following day. At this point in time the principal reminds the child of the procedure of Level A. Three visits to the office (step 4) for time-out within a school term results in the parents being called in for a review meeting with relevant parties.

At the end of each week any step 4 or above behaviour is recorded on the central register by the classroom teacher and forwarded to the Administration Leadership Team (principal, APRE, LST, Curriculum Coordinator).

A Re-entry Strategy - 5 W's

- What did you do?
- What rule did you break?
- What needs to be done to fix things?
- What might you do differently next time?
- What should happen if the same or similar behaviour occurs again today?

LEVEL A

If a student is sent home two times within a school term, the student is placed at Level A. A review meeting is organised with parents/guardians and relevant school personnel (principal, class teacher, school counselor, Learning Support Teacher, CES personnel). A review of the child's behaviour plan is conducted and consideration of reviewing the child's future enrolment is discussed.

A child at Level A constitutes going to the office for timeout (15 minutes) for each subsequent infringement after Step 2. At the second trip to the office, parents are called and the student is sent home.

A student remains at Level A for the duration of ten consecutive school days during which the child must not be required to report to the office.

When a student at Level A is sent home more than two times in a week or three times within a term, the student may be suspended for up to a week from school. Written correspondence of the child's future enrolment at the school is forwarded to the Executive Director of Catholic Education.

POLICY FOR EXTREME BEHAVIOURS

Incidents involving **INTENTIONAL SWEARING & / OR EXTREME / DELIBERATE VERBAL AGGRESSION** directed at a person results in the student immediately being sent to the office for 30 minutes (as per step 4) with a follow up phone call made to parents. Further infringements in the playground or classroom results in suspension for the rest of the day and up to a week at the discretion of the school's leadership team (as per step 5).

Students involved in incidents of **DELIBERATE PHYSICAL AGGRESSION** are immediately placed at step 5; the student is suspended for the remainder of the day and up to a week at the discretion of the leadership team. If parents are not contactable, the student remains in the office for the remainder of the day and is automatically suspended the next day.

Incidents involving serious, deliberate physical aggression signify the student requires a **GRADUAL INCLUSION PROGRAM**, which optimally takes five school days.

Students involved in serious deliberate acts of physical aggression twice in a term are suspended from school pending further action to be enforced by the school and parents.

Students are excluded from any or all of the following: special events, extra curricula activities, excursions, camps, over night sleepovers and opportunities for leading and leadership roles.

NOTES

Where a child has received a time out, parents are advised via the student's diary, which must be signed by a parent. When three incidents of classroom time out have occurred parents are requested to meet with the class teacher to discuss the behaviour of their child.

Where two or more students have demonstrated equal culpability, power and aggression, consequences for all students is equivalent as a matter of justice.

Consequences are commensurate with the severity of the incident particularly with regard to power imbalance.

In exceptional circumstances, children in Prep and Year 1 who exhibit deliberate and/or repeated physical aggression are placed on a modified version of this program, determined by administration.

Child Protection Legislation, Catholic Education Services Policy and Procedures and MOGC School Bullying Policy are referred to when further exceptional circumstances involving ongoing behavioural issues and/or abusive situations occur.

PLAYGROUND RULES

RESPECT OTHERS AND PROPERTY

4. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS QUICKLY AND QUIETLY

KEEP HANDS AND FEET TO YOURSELF.

MATERIALS

Playground reporting folder / Yellow detention slips

Kids who care vouchers for students displaying positive behaviours.

PROCEDURES

1. 'Kids Who Care' vouchers are given to children displaying appropriate behaviours. Vouchers are placed in designated boxes. Vouchers are drawn on a weekly basis for Preps – Yr 3 and Yr 4 – Yr 6 at Friday assembly.
2. Minor infringements result in immediate 'cool off' time at teacher's discretion.
3. Students are removed from the playground and given a yellow detention slip when 'Extreme Behaviours' are displayed. Names are entered into the playground detention folder.
4. Students receiving a yellow detention slip go to the office immediately to serve their detention.
5. At the office, the student presents the yellow slip to the teacher on duty. Names are recorded and signed off once the student completes their detention. If the infringement occurs at the end of break and it is not possible complete a detention, the student completes his/her detention the following day.
6. Names recorded on the playground duty folder and the detention register are crossed checked weekly. If a student fails to attend his/her allocated detention, his/her original time doubles.
7. If a student serves more than two detentions within a week or three detentions in a term, a member from the Administration Team contacts parents to address the matter at hand.

Curwin, R.L., Mendler, A.N., & Mendler, B. (2008). *Discipline with dignity: New challenges, new solutions*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum.