



GROWING TOGETHER
IN CHRIST

MATER DEI SCHOOL

29 HEATH ROAD, BLAKEHURST 2221

TELEPHONE: 9546 7298

FACSIMILE: 9547 2024

EMAIL: info@mdblakehurst.catholic.edu.au

DISCIPLINE POLICY

As a Christian community we, at Mater Dei, believe discipline is founded on a philosophy of Pastoral Care where we recognise and respect the rights of the individual. It is based on the behaviour model that Jesus gave us.

At Mater Dei the school rules are based on our beliefs:

- We believe that all people have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- We believe that all people have the right to feel and remain safe.
- We believe that discipline means guiding the child towards self-control and self-direction, by promoting constructive and positive behaviour and attending to misbehaviour. The ultimate goal is self-discipline as we aim to develop in children a sense of responsibility for the actions they choose.

In helping children to develop socially acceptable behaviour and to grow in responsibility and self-discipline, it is essential that the school, home and community work together. The children in our care are entitled to expect the security which comes from knowing what is expected of them through the provision of a safe and consistent environment.

In an effort to assist this growth, teachers may use a variety of management skills, which are to be used within the following context:

- there have been clearly established School Rules;
- no form of corporal punishment or ridicule is to be used at any time as it is demeaning and is contrary to the gospel values of respect, reconciliation and justice; and
- teachers have discussions with children on the reasons why people have problems getting along together and talk about how groups create rules to govern behaviour.

These discussions are based on Restorative Practice. The following questions are asked of those who caused harm:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you did and in what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

The second set of questions are asked of those who suffered harm:

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

- Fairness not sameness
- Rules are rules but consequences can be different
- Set boundaries but give them a choice. You can choose to do ... or....
- Long term consequences are not effective
- It is important to maintain relationships
- Have a no blame mentality
- We need to work together
- If we build bridges rather than walls we have a much better chance
- Collaborative dialogue
- Model, model, model
- The language we use is critical
- Reflection is key

- Appropriate behaviour is praised and encouraged.
- Time out is used both in the classroom and on the playground when necessary.
- Individual and group difficulties in maintaining appropriate behaviour will be discussed to clarify what is happening, why it is happening and to suggest strategies to overcome such difficulties.
- The children take responsibility for their own actions. They are encouraged, when they have done the wrong thing, to write down reasons why their behaviour has been unacceptable at Mater Dei. This form is signed by their parents and returned to the school. This promotes the partnership between parents and the school.

The School Rules are:

Hands off, feet off, words off

Be safe, be kind, be fair

Respect yourself and others

Respect property

No school hat, no play

(sit outside KJ)

A policy is promoted so that the children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. The children have the security of feeling safe and secure knowing that, whilst they are on the playground, physical violence in any form will not be tolerated. **Students who display physical violence or swearing will be sent to the Assistant Principal or Principal. This behaviour will be recorded on the incident report sheets. Depending on the severity of the first offence parents may be contacted. If a pattern of behaviour becomes apparent parents will be contacted by the Principal.**

At Mater Dei procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what are sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision. Procedural fairness includes making available to students and parents or caregivers policies and procedures under which disciplinary action is taken. It also includes providing details of an allegation relating to a specific matter or incident.'

The Mater Dei Discipline Policy includes statements that:

- i. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in the school

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Inform the student that their behaviour is being reported or recorded. Complete the appropriate form for bullying or serious incidents.

Students who accept responsibility for and the consequences of their actions may be acknowledged through staff completion of the Character Development slip.

If two or more children are involved in an incident and both are at fault or if they can not agree on who was at fault then there will be Time Out for all parties. Children need to think about what they are doing and how they are doing it.

After school students are to wait on pick-up lines to be collected or wait next to their parents.

Discipline matters regarding students MUST always be the responsibility and duty of only the staff and the School Executive. AT NO TIME is it appropriate for parents or carers to approach or speak to another child regarding incidents that may occur at school.

Your child's class teacher, the Assistant Principal or Principal should be informed of any issues about which you are concerned, so that appropriate follow-up action may occur.

Morally and legally, the School is not at liberty to inform parents of any disciplinary action taken against another child. However, please be assured that appropriate action is always taken.