DISCIPLINE AND RESPONSIBILITY

St Mary’s aims to provide a safe and stimulating environment for teaching and learning, in which opportunities abound, and where students both aim to fulfill their own potential and by their conduct, ensure that other students are able to fulfill theirs. It is understood that there is a common purpose between parents, students and staff to encourage individual and corporate conduct of a very high standard in the classroom and grounds, on the sporting field, in performance venues and within the wider community, both here and overseas.

Acquiring and upholding such standards requires considerable effort and is an ongoing process in which guidelines should be made clear, self-management should be encouraged and disciplinary action should be taken where required.

Discipline within the school is guided by the Code of Conduct, school regulations, expectations and ethos. It is an essential part of the role of parents, staff and students to see that high standards are upheld and it is part of everyone’s daily duty to monitor and encourage the development of acceptable conduct, care for others, teamwork, sportsmanship, and a corporate pride in uniform and appearance. Every encouragement should be given by parents, staff and student leaders to the development of good manners, cleanliness, tidiness, courtesy, personal responsibility and respect for the rights and beliefs of others. Self-discipline in habits of personal conduct, work and play should be expected and fostered, as well as respect for the learning environment, private and school property and for the greater landscape.

The key to discipline lies first with parents, who lay the foundation for all of the above and accept on enrolment the role of upholding the school Code of Conduct and uniform requirements. This is an ongoing commitment, which cannot be relaxed.

Responsibility within the school begins with the individual teacher who should deal with all disciplinary matters as they arise, in a manner appropriate to their subject and style of teaching. A high standard of student behaviour is expected at St Mary’s and teachers’ expectations in the classroom should reflect this. Persistent misbehaviour whether it relates to personal conduct, uniform, lack of books or preparation, delay in presentation of work or any other matter, should be discussed with the student concerned in the student’s own time. A teacher, in an attempt to modify unacceptable behaviour, may choose to detain a student during school hours to complete work in the subject concerned or to assist in some practical task which will help the student’s understanding of corporate responsibility. If detention out of school hours is required, notice will need to be given to parents by the student or if a more serious matter, by the staff member concerned or by the Dean of Students. If a teacher finds that a student continues to be a behaviour problem then this should be reported to the Link teacher and the Year Teacher. If it is established that several teachers find that a student’s behaviour is a problem then this will be referred to the Dean of Students or Principal who will, after discussion with those concerned, refer the student to a Counsellor or take further disciplinary action which may involve putting the student on daily report, detention or suspending the girl from the class. It is envisaged that the Counsellor’s role in the disciplinary process will be to try to isolate the cause of the problem through discussion, provide strategies to rectify the situation and to monitor the problem over subsequent weeks. In some cases the Year Teacher and Link teacher will have a role to fulfill, in terms of monitoring, supporting and encouraging the student concerned.
If occasions arise when behaviour becomes intolerable, the student should be reported to the Dean of Students immediately. Persistent and/or serious cases of misbehaviour will be reported by the Dean of Students to the Principal. Unacceptable behaviour at St Mary’s includes continual disruptive chatter, answering back or rudeness, conduct that makes it difficult for others to learn or prevents a teacher teaching to capacity. If a situation arises when there is no other recourse than to send a student out of the classroom, she should be sent with a note and work to the Dean of Students’ office or to the Principal’s Personal Assistant who will direct her to a member of Senior Staff. The signed note giving the reason for the referral and the time sent and will be placed in the student’s records. Being sent out of class will normally result in a detention. Parents and Link teacher will be notified of this.

On occasions, a student’s behaviour may be disruptive to the point of becoming intolerable in a number of classes. In this case the Dean of Students will inform the Principal so that the student can be put on daily report or given an ‘in school suspension’. In the latter case, the parents will be informed.

**Discipline Outside the Classroom**

In the grounds, outside the school, in Assembly or Chapel, discipline is the responsibility of each staff member. If a breach of rules or poor behaviour is observed it should be dealt with immediately, by the teacher who observes the incident. If a student persistently commits an offence then this should be reported to the Link teacher and Dean of Students so that the process outlined above can occur.

**Application to Learning**

Unacceptable behaviour as it relates to application to learning includes failure to come properly equipped to lessons, inadequate preparation for a lesson, not completing homework, not submitting assessment pieces and other related issues. These incidents are first handled by teacher and student together, but should the situation not be satisfactorily resolved, parents will be notified through Cause for Concern letters or Late Assignment letters, copies of which are also sent to Link teachers, Year Teachers and the Dean of Students. Where necessary further consultation will occur, in which subject teachers, parents, counsellors and the Deans, may be involved.

**Professional Learning**

In any type of unacceptable student behaviour staff are encouraged to discuss matters with senior colleagues, and to refer difficult problems to the Dean of Students, to ensure that action taken to rectify problems is consistent throughout the student body. The school undertakes to provide professional development for teachers in many of the areas that affect a child in a classroom. This is done both collectively and individually and is an ongoing process which addresses those things in classrooms which are changing rapidly and the many things in relationships between students and teachers which seem to stay the same.

**DIRECTORY OF TERMS**

**Detentions**

Detentions (detaining students outside the normal timetable) are not seen merely as a punishment but as an attempt to reach the cause and to institute the prevention of further unacceptable behaviour. They are not given lightly for various reasons. An interview with the student concerned is arranged, and parents are notified at least 24 hours in advance of the time and the reason for the detention. Staff members who feel a detention is warranted for some misdemeanour, discuss it with the Dean of Students. Work is set by the teacher concerned if it is a subject matter or by the Dean of Students if it is a general misdemeanour, and a supervisor arranged. If a large number of students is detained the teacher concerned supervises them. A small number of students will be supervised by Senior Staff in Administration after school.
Community Compensation
Community Compensation (also done outside the normal timetable) involves helping staff around the school and is normally given to girls for lesser misdemeanours to enable a positive contribution to compensate for some negative action or avoidance. Yard Guard is a lesser form of this service, which normally takes place during lunchtime.

Daily Report
Daily report requires that a student collect a Daily Report sheet from the Principal or Dean of Students, on which a written comment on behaviour and work accomplished, must be made by the class teacher at the end of each lesson. The sheet must be returned to the Principal or Dean each afternoon, and another collected the following morning. A student remains on daily report at the discretion of the Principal.

In-School Suspension
In-school suspension normally involves an interview or discussion with parents. A student will be required to work in the Administration building or another specified location from 8.45am to 4.45pm each school day on work set by staff. No contact with other students is permitted during the course of the day. Warning will be given of Out of School Suspension if unacceptable behaviour recurs.

Out of School Suspension
Out of school suspension follows a parent interview or discussion and is parent-supervised. The student is not permitted to attend school and must work on assigned tasks using her own resources. Warning will be given of expulsion if unacceptable behaviour continues.

Expulsion
Students will be required to leave the school in cases of extreme and ongoing misbehaviour. In some forms of bullying, expulsion will also be a possible consequence. In incidents which involve the supplying, possessing or ingesting of illicit drugs, expulsion will be the outcome.

Confiscation
A staff member has permission to confiscate items not permitted to be worn, carried, or present on school property, as all students and parents have received notice of these prior to entry to the school. Regulations on these matters are printed in each student’s school diary. Confiscated items of value are placed in a named and dated envelope or bag and handed to the Dean of Students or a member of Senior Staff. Valuables are placed in the strong room and can be claimed after a term from the Dean of Students.

Jewellery, hair combs, iPods, mobile phones, when incorrectly used, are the items most frequently requiring confiscation. Incorrectly worn items connected with the uniform are normally sent to the Dean of Students, from whom they must be claimed in person.

Loss of Belongings
Carelessness with belongings is unfortunately common; theft, on the other hand is rare, but has been known to occur. Students are advised to leave valuables at home and parents are requested to make sure this is implemented. All students are provided with a locker and padlock to ensure all of their belongings are inaccessible to other students or trespassers. Property needs to be carefully secured and students are advised that the best course of action is to make sure that only items needed for education are brought to school. Each student must take the responsibility for keeping her locker locked at any time it is unattended.
Valuables left in bags, in classrooms or changerooms are not necessarily secure. Any property left out of lockers overnight is accessible to trespassers. Calculators and musical instruments, which are readily resalable, should not be left unsecured overnight. If a student is sure property has been stolen and not just mislaid, the incident should be reported to the Dean of Students, so that other students and staff can be made aware of it, and action taken to prevent any repetition of the occurrence. Should a student be found stealing, it will be regarded very seriously and any course of action will involve parents and senior staff.

**Lost (and found) Property**

Self-discipline is required to ensure property is properly looked after, and parents should encourage good habits, as early as possible. For some students this does not happen overnight! All items should be clearly named and correctly stowed and parents need to be involved in both naming and training in this area. The school has a very efficient Lost Property room, which can be rendered inefficient by large quantities of unnamed articles. It is desirable for all families to develop a culture of looking after belongings and making sure an active effort is made to find any lost items. Unfortunately, some students have been known ‘to lose’ their expensive reading glasses and gym shoes, when they would rather have new ones, and parents are advised to check whether these items have in fact been ‘found’.

**Culture**

St Mary’s staff have worked over many years to develop an environment in which it is a pleasure to learn and grow, as well as to teach. Most students are keen to learn, and a good working tone has been prevalent. There are occasions on which students abuse their privileges and we wish to keep these to a minimum, by dealing with them quickly and effectively. If serious issues arise they are dealt with individually. Their resolution will involve the appropriate senior staff, parents and any external agencies deemed appropriate. We prefer to encourage good practice and support those students who are struggling to achieve it. We acknowledge that there are consequences for all actions and make sure that positive contributions are well rewarded.