



St. Rita's South Johnstone

School Welfare Plan

Purpose

As a Catholic school, St Rita's is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff. St Rita's strives to provide students with opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire values supportive of their lifelong wellbeing. Catholic values are the cornerstone of St Rita's School and are embedded in all practices and policy.

This School Welfare Plan is designed to affirm the right all school community members to feel safe at school, promoting care, respect and cooperation, valuing diversity. With an expectation for high standards of behaviour, students are able to participate positively within our school community. The aim of this school welfare plan is to facilitate effective learning and teaching in our school, building positive partnerships.

School Culture

Our School Welfare Plan provides intervention and response in relation to inappropriate behaviour, building a culture where good behaviour is recognized and celebrated.

At St. Rita's we have adopted three simple school rules that we feel foster quality learning experiences and encourage high standards of responsible behaviour:

- Be safe
- Be responsible
- Be respectful.

Process

The first step in facilitating standards of positive behaviour is communicating those standards to all members of the school community. Staff, students and parents will be provided access to and knowledge of a clearly stated, and consistently implemented, school welfare plan, which encourages students and other community members to make choices and accept responsibility for their own behaviour.

At St Rita's we emphasise the importance of directly teaching students those behaviours we want them to demonstrate at school. A key tool in the ongoing development of these behaviours is the school's social and emotional learning practice and policy. Communicating behavioural expectations is a form of universal behaviour support - a strategy directed towards all students, designed to prevent unacceptable behaviour, providing a framework for effective response.

A set of behavioural expectations in specific settings has been attached to each of our three school rules. The Schoolwide Expectations Teaching Matrix below outlines our agreed rules and specific behavioural expectations in all school settings.

SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS TEACHING MATRIX					
	ALL AREAS	CLASSROOM	PLAYGROUND	WALKWAYS AND STAIRS	TOILETS
BE RESPECTFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use equipment appropriately Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk Sit still Enter and exit room in an orderly manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in school approved games Wear shoes and socks at all times Be sun safe; wear a school uniform hat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rails are for hands Walk one step at a time Carry items Keep walk ways clear at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect privacy of others
BE RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask permission to leave the classroom Be on time Be in the right place at the right time Follow instructions straight away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be prepared Complete set tasks Take an active role in classroom activities Keep classroom tidy as well as personal work space Be honest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be a problem solver Return equipment to appropriate place at the bell Pick up equipment even if you didn't take it out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move quietly during transitions, especially when other classes are still working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use toilets during breaks. Only go to the toilet during class if it is absolutely necessary Leave the toilets tidy Use soap and paper products wisely
BE SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect others' personal space and property Care for equipment Clean up after yourself Use polite language Wait your turn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise your hand to speak Respect others' right to learn Talk in turns Be a good listener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play fairly – take turns, invite others to join in and follow rules Care for the environment – pick up any litter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk quietly and orderly so that others are not disturbed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash hands Walk Toilets are not to play in

These expectations are communicated to students via a number of strategies, including:

- Goal setting at the beginning of each school year, negotiated with students by classroom teachers;
- Reinforcement of learning from class/school goals on School Assemblies and during active supervision by staff during classroom and non-classroom activities.

St Rita's implements the following proactive and preventative processes and strategies to support student behaviour and welfare:

- Regular provision of information regarding student welfare to staff and parents whenever required via the most appropriate method of communication. The principal offers all necessary support to teachers, parents and students involved. St Rita's recognises the important partnership between the school and home in all matters.
- Comprehensive induction programs in the St Rita's School Welfare Plan delivered to new families in the School Handbook, as well as new and relief staff via a staff induction and the Staff Handbook. Existing staff are briefed at the beginning of each year to ensure knowledge of school practice and policy.
- Individual support profiles and journals developed for students with high behavioural needs, enabling staff to make the necessary adjustments to support these students consistently across all classroom and non-classroom settings.

- All documentation concerning student welfare is archived by the school in accordance with CES policy.

At St Rita's communication of our key messages about student welfare and behaviour is backed up through reinforcement, which provides students with feedback for conducting themselves in an appropriate manner. A formal recognition and monitoring system has been developed. This reinforcement system is designed to increase the quantity and quality of positive interactions between students and staff. All staff members are trained to give consistent and appropriate acknowledgement and rewards.

Positive Notice

Staff members hand Positive Notice cards out each day to students they observe following school rules in both classroom and non-classroom areas. This reinforcement occurs continuously throughout the day. When they 'catch' a student following the rules they can choose to give them a Positive Notice card. When students are given a Positive Notice card they drop the card in one of the designated collection points at the following locations:

- School office
- Library

Each Monday the principal reviews the submitted cards and identifies students with a minimum of five cards. These students are issued with a voucher that can be redeemed at the tuckshop. Each five-card set is then removed and tallied, with a more powerful reinforcer available for 50 cards and 100 cards. Cards are never removed as a consequence for problem behaviour.

Assembly Awards

At assemblies, held fortnightly, students are recognised in each class for exhibiting positive behaviour in the areas of learning and the manner in which they conduct themselves and demonstrate the school spirit.

Responding to unacceptable behaviour

As a Catholic school, we support the emotional, spiritual and academic growth of every child. Students come to school to learn. Providing an environment, which is conducive to learning for every student, is key at St Rita's. Therefore, there needs to be a clear process for responding to behaviour that in anyway interferes with this goal.

Minor and major behaviours

When responding to problem behaviour the staff member first determines if the problem behaviour is major or minor, with the following agreed understanding:

- **Minor** problem behaviour is handled by staff members at the time it happens
- **Major** problem behaviour is referred directly to the principal

Minor behaviours are those that:

- are minor breeches of the school rules
- do not seriously harm others or cause you to suspect that the student may be harmed
- do not violate the rights of others in any other serious way
- are not part of a pattern of problem behaviours
- do not require involvement of specialist support staff or Administration.

Minor problem behaviours may result in the following consequences:

- a minor consequence logically connected to the problem behaviour, such as complete removal from an activity or event for a specified period of time, partial removal (time away), individual meeting with the student, apology, restitution or detention for work completion.

- a re-direction procedure. The staff member takes the student aside and:
 1. names the behaviour that student is displaying,
 2. asks student to name expected school behaviour,
 3. states and explains expected school behaviour if necessary
 4. gives positive verbal acknowledgement for expected school behaviour.

Major behaviours are those that:

- significantly violate the rights of others
- puts others / self at risk of harm
- requires the involvement of the principal.

Major behaviours result in an immediate referral to the principal because of their seriousness. When major problem behaviour occurs, staff members calmly state the major problem behaviour and remind the student of expected school behaviour. The staff member then fills out the appropriate form to be filed in the behaviour folder and escorts the student to Administration.

Major problem behaviours may result in the following consequences:

- **Level One:** Parent contact, time in office, alternate lunchtime activities, loss of privilege, loss of break times, warning regarding future consequence for repeated offence
AND/OR
- **Level Two:** Parent contact, referral to School Counsellor, referral to principal and School Development Officer, suspension from school may be considered
- **Level Three:** Students who engage in very serious problem behaviours such as major violent physical assault, can expect to be recommended for exclusion from school following an immediate period of suspension.

Only in the most extreme circumstances will suspension be considered as an option. For further information regarding suspension please refer to the Catholic Education Cairns website.

Expulsion is a serious and considered process, used only as a last resort. It is only imposed after a wide range of options has been explored, consistent with the inclusive values of Catholic Education. Expulsion is the decision of the Executive Director of Catholic Education and the Bishop, under recommendation from the Principal.

The following table outlines examples of major and minor problem behaviours:

	Area	Minor	Major
Being Safe	Movement around school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running on concrete or around buildings Running or sliding in stairwells Not walking bike in school grounds 	
	Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect use of equipment Not playing school approved games Playing in toilets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throwing objects Possession of weapons
	Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor physical contact (eg: pushing and shoving) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious physical aggression Fighting
	Correct Attire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not wearing a hat in playground Not wearing shoes outside 	
Being Responsible	Class tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not completing set tasks that are at an appropriate level Refusing to work 	
	Being in the right place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being punctual (eg: lateness after breaks) Not in the right place at the right time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaving class without permission (out of sight) Leaving school without permission
	Follow instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low intensity failure to respond to adult request Non compliance Unco-operative behaviour 	
	Accept outcomes for behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor dishonesty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major dishonesty
	Rubbish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Littering 	
	Mobile Phone		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of a mobile phone in any part of the school for voicemail, email, text messaging or filming purposes without authorisation
Being Respectful	Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate language (written/verbal) Calling out Poor attitude Disrespectful tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offensive language Aggressive language Verbal abuse / directed profanity
	Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petty theft Lack of care for the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stealing / major theft Willful property damage Vandalism
	Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not playing fairly Minor disruption to class Minor defiance Minor bullying / harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major bullying / harassment Major disruption to class Blatant disrespect Major defiance

Emergency or critical incident responses

It is important that all staff have a consistent understanding of how to respond to emergency situations or critical incidents involving severe problem behaviour. This consistency ensures that appropriate actions are taken to ensure that both students and staff are kept safe.

An **emergency situation or critical incident** is defined as an occurrence that is sudden, urgent, and usually unexpected, or an occasion requiring immediate action.

Severe behaviour is defined as behaviour of such intensity, frequency, or duration that the physical safety of the student or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy.

Basic defusing strategies

Avoid escalating the problem behaviour

(Avoid shouting, cornering the student, moving into the student's space, touching or grabbing the student, sudden responses, sarcasm, becoming defensive, communicating anger and frustration through body language).

Maintain calmness, respect and detachment

(Model the behaviour you want students to adopt, stay calm and controlled, use a serious measured tone, choose your language carefully, avoid humiliating the student, be matter of fact and avoid responding emotionally).

Approach the student in a non-threatening manner

(Move slowly and deliberately toward the problem situation, speak privately to the student/s where possible, speak calmly and respectfully, minimise body language, keep a reasonable distance, establish eye level position, be brief, stay with the agenda, acknowledge cooperation, withdraw if the situation escalates).

Follow through

(If the student starts displaying the appropriate behaviour briefly acknowledge their choice and re-direct other students' attention towards their usual work/activity. If the student continues with the problem behaviour then remind them of the expected school behaviour and identify consequences of continued inappropriate behaviour).

Debrief

(Help the student to identify the sequence of events that led to the inappropriate behaviour, pinpoint decision moments during the sequence of events, evaluate decisions made, and identify acceptable decision options for future situations).

Physical Intervention

Staff may make legitimate use of physical intervention if all non-physical interventions have been exhausted and a student is:

- physically assaulting another student or staff member
- posing an immediate danger to him/herself or to others.

Appropriate physical intervention may be used to ensure that St Rita's duty of care to protect students and staff from foreseeable risks of injury is met. The use of physical intervention is only considered appropriate where the immediate safety of others is threatened and the strategy is used to prevent injury.

Physical intervention can involve coming between students, blocking a student's path, leading a student by the hand/arm, shepherding a student by placing a hand in the centre of the upper back, removing potentially dangerous objects and, in extreme situations, using more forceful restraint.

It is important that all staff understand:

- physical intervention cannot be used as a form of punishment
- physical intervention must not be used when a less severe response can effectively resolve the situation
- the underlying function of the behaviour.

Physical intervention is not to be used as a response to:

- property destruction
- school disruption
- refusal to comply
- verbal threats
- leaving a classroom or the school, unless student safety is clearly threatened.

Any physical intervention made must:

- be reasonable in the particular circumstances,
- be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident
- always be the minimum force needed to achieve the desired result, and
- take into account the age, stature, disability, understanding and gender of the student.

Record keeping

Each instance involving the use of physical intervention must be formally documented. The following records must be maintained:

- St Rita's Catholic School Behaviour Referral Form (Appendix A)
- Incident report (Appendix B)
- Debriefing report (for student and staff) (Appendix C).



Appendix A

St Rita's Catholic School Behaviour Referral Form

Problem Behaviour			
Minor (Please tick)		Major (Please tick)	
Defiance/Disrespect Low intensity brief failure to follow directions		Defiance/Disrespect Continued refusal to follow directions, talking back and / or socially rude interactions.	
Physical Contact Student engages in non-serious but inappropriate physical contact.		Physical Aggression Actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur (eg hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, scratching etc)	
Inappropriate language Low intensity language (eg shut up, idiot etc)		Inappropriate / Abusive language Repeated verbal messages that involve swearing or use of words in an inappropriate way directed at other individual or group	
Disruption Low intensity but inappropriate disruption.		Disruption Repeated behaviour causing an interruption in a class or playground. (eg. Yelling or screaming, noise with material, disrupting games, sustained out of seat behaviour etc)	
Property Misuse Low intensity misuse of property.		Vandalism Student engages in an activity that results in substantial destruction or disfigurement of property	
Dress Code Student wears clothing that is near not within the dress code guidelines defined by the school.		Dress Code Refusal to comply with school dress code.	
Safety Student engages in brief or low-level safety violation not involving hurting any other individuals or groups.		Safety Student engages in frequent unsafe activities where injury may occur.	
Dishonesty Student engages in minor lying/cheating not involving any other person.		Major Dishonesty Student delivers message that is untrue and / or deliberately violates rules and/or harms others	
Other		Harassment / Bullying Repeated teasing, physical and verbal intimidation of a student.	
		Other	

School Expectation Category			
Be SAFE		Be Respectful	Be Responsible

Others involved in incident						
None		Peers		Staff		Other



Appendix B

Incident Report

Name:

Date:

Person Completing Form:

What occurred?		
Date of incident:	Time incident started:	Time incident ended:
Where was the student when the incident occurred?		
Who was working with the student when the incident occurred?		
Where was staff when the incident occurred?		
Who was next to the student when the incident occurred?		
Who else was in the immediate area when the incident occurred?		
What was the general atmosphere like at the time of the incident?		
What was the student doing at the time of the incident?		
What occurred immediately before the incident? Describe the activity, task, event.		
Describe what the student did during the incident.		

Describe the level of severity of the incident. (e.g. damage, injury to self/others)

Describe who or what the incident was directed at.

What action was taken to de-escalate or re-direct the problem?

Briefly give your impression of why the student engaged in the above-described incident. (e.g. was angry because I asked him/her to stop teasing).

Appendix C

Debriefing Report

Formal debriefing should be led by a staff member trained in the process who has not been involved in the event. The goals of debriefing are to:

- **Reverse or minimise the negative effects of physical intervention**
- **Prevent the future use of physical intervention**
- **Address organisational problems and make appropriate changes**

Notes on the discussion that occurs during the debriefing report are not required to be documented, however a note should be made that the debriefing has occurred for both staff and students involved (e.g. names, date, time and outcomes).

Debriefing should provide information on:

- Who was involved
- What happened
- Where it happened
- Why it happened
- What we learned

The specific questions we want to answer through the debriefing process are:

- **FACTS:** what do we know happened?
- **FEELINGS:** how do you feel about the event that happened?
- **PLANNING:** what can/should we do next?

Questions for staff

- What were the first signs?
- What de-escalation techniques were used?
- What worked and what did not?
- What would you do differently next time?
- How can physical intervention be avoided in this situation in the future?
- What emotional impact does using physical intervention have on you?
- What was your emotional state at the time of the escalation?

Questions for student

- What was it that you needed?
- What upset you most?
- What did we do that was helpful?
- What did we do that got it that way?
- What can we do better next time?
- Is there anything that you would do differently?
- Would you do something differently next time?
- What could we have done to make the physical intervention less invasive?

For students who have language or communication difficulties the debriefing process will need to be modified to accommodate their specific receptive and expressive needs.