

Student Behaviour Management and Discipline

Berengarra takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)

Berengarra School policy relating to student discipline is based on principles of procedural fairness and does not permit corporal punishment

Context

Schools may discipline students for behaviour incidents:

- occurring at school
- at a school activity away from the school grounds
- while travelling to or from school or a school activity.

Disciplinary measures should form part of a teacher's classroom management plan and be consistent with a whole school approach to behaviour management.

Consider other strategies first

Before moving to a disciplinary response, staff should consider whether more effective strategies can be put in place for the student, such as wellbeing, engagement and mental health supports.

Measures should always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour, and are best used with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour.

The Education Training and Reform Act (2006) prohibits the use of corporal punishment and school discipline policies must include a statement that reflects this requirement.

The Equal Opportunity Act (2010) prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected attributes, including race, religion, disability, sex, age, gender identity and sexual orientation. Schools must ensure any disciplinary action does not breach this legislation.

In-school discipline

Graded in-school disciplinary measures can be used to respond to a range of challenging student behaviour and may be modified to suit particular circumstances as needed. Whilst these measures take place on school premises, they may occur outside school hours.

As with all forms of discipline, graded in-school disciplinary measures should be clearly set out in and aligned with the school's expectations around behaviour (see *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*), and should be used in a way that is proportionate to the behaviour being addressed.

Withdrawal of privileges

Schools may withdraw student privileges as a consequence of breaching classroom or school behavioural standards. The specific privileges withdrawn will vary between schools and even students at the same school, however they may include things such as representing the school at inter-school sports or attendance at a school event.

When withdrawing privileges as a disciplinary measure, schools should ensure that:

- the withdrawal is time-limited
- the reasons for and period of the withdrawal is clearly communicated to the student
- the student is made aware of the behaviour standards expected in order for the privileges to be reinstated
- consideration is given to the impact on the student's engagement (i.e. where the withdrawal of a privilege may contribute to a student's risk of disengaging from school, strategies are put in place to maintain student engagement during the withdrawal).

Withdrawal from class

If a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class or where there is possibility of harm to others, that student may be temporarily removed from regular classroom activities. In more serious cases the student may be required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.

Schools have a duty of care to ensure that students are supervised at all times, including when they are removed from a class. Where appropriate, parents and carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

Withdrawal from class does not constitute formal school exclusion such as suspension (including in-school suspension) or expulsion.

Detention

Detention is an appropriate response for a wide range of less serious classroom and school behaviour breaches. Detention can effectively reinforce to students the importance of maintaining appropriate behaviour standards.

During detention teachers may instruct a student to finish school work which has not been completed in regular classroom time as a result of the behaviour, new work or other duties. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this. Where students are required to undertake detention after school hours, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

Where the decision is made that an after-school detention is appropriate, the Principal or nominee should ensure that parents or carers are informed at least one day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that an after-school detention would create undue hardship, schools may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with the parent or carer. Examples include where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents or carers. Schools are permitted to detain students but are encouraged to take into account family circumstances and negotiate with parents and carers as appropriate.

Suspension

Suspension is the process of excluding a student from standard instruction or educational opportunities for part of a day, a full day, or multiple days.

Expulsion

Expulsion is a serious disciplinary measure for when all other measures have not produced a satisfactory response, or where there is a threat to another person and immediate action is required (see *Exclusion from School Policy*)

Reference:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/behaviour/student-behaviour/Pages/disciplinemethods.aspx#link6>

See *Berengarra School policies and procedures including:*

- *Bullying Prevention*
- *Care, Safety and Welfare of Students (Restrictive Interventions)*
- *Exclusion from School*
- *Student Wellbeing and Engagement*
- *Students Running away from School*

This policy will be reviewed as part of the Berengarra School review cycle.

May 2020

Endorsed by Board: Date 11 June 2020

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