Behaviour Management Policy and Principles

Preliminary Considerations

1. **THE NEED**

James Dobson, author of “Dare to Discipline”, writes: “Children need to be taught self-discipline and responsible behaviour. They need assistance in learning how to face the challenge and obligations of living. They must learn the art of self-control. They should be equipped with the personal strength needed to meet the demands imposed on them by their school, peer group and later adult responsibilities. There are those who believe these characteristics cannot be taught – that the best we can do is send the child down the path of least resistance, sweeping aside the hurdles during his formative years”.

“The advocates of this laissez-faire philosophy would recommend that a child be allowed to fail in school if he chooses – or maintain his bedroom like the proverbial pig-pen – or let his puppy go hungry. I reject this notion and have accumulated considerable evidence to refute it. Children thrive best in an atmosphere of genuine love, undergirded by reasonable, consistent discipline. In a day of widespread drug usage, immorality, civil disobedience, vandalism, and violence, we must not depend on hope and luck to fashion the critical attitudes we value in our children.”

Emerald Christian College recognises its responsibility to provide a school environment that will encourage self-discipline, respect for self and others, and cooperation.

2. **THE BASIS**

The basis of all relationships and conduct for the Christian community is that of love.

**Matthew 22:37-39:** … Love the Lord your God will all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.

**John 13:34-35:** A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.

**John 15:13:** Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

**1 Corinthians 13:1-8:** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If
I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

Matthew 5:44: But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Love may be defined as ‘the highest regard for the well-being of another’. Christian love transcends all human structures, status, race, gender, age and abilities. The primary motivation then, in any matter of conduct or discipline within the Christian School community, must be one of love.

3. THE BALANCE

i. Love and Discipline

It should be noted that love and discipline are not mutually exclusive terms for the Christian. Rather, the Scriptures teach that, because God loves His children, He disciplines them, eg:

Hebrews 12:5b-11: My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Revelation 3:19a: Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline.

There does, however, need to be a careful balance maintained between love and discipline. James Dobson writes:

“There is little question about the consequence of disciplinary extremes. On the side of harshness, a child suffers the humiliation of total domination. The atmosphere is icy and rigid, and he lives in constant fear. He is unable to make his own decisions and his personality is squelched beneath the
hobnailed boot of parental authority. Lasting characteristics of dependency, overwhelming hostility, and psychosis can emerge from this overbearing oppression. The opposite position, ultimate permissiveness, is equally tragic. Under this setting, the child is his own master from his earliest babyhood. He thinks the world revolves around his heady empire, and he often has utter contempt and disrespect for those closest to him. Anarchy and chaos reign in his home, and his mother is often the most nervous, frustrated woman in her block. When the child is young, the mother is stranded at home because she is too embarrassed to take her little devil anywhere. It would be worth enduring the hardships if this confusion produced healthy, secure children. Unfortunately, the child usually suffers the most difficulties from such anarchistic circumstances.\(^2\)

Emerald Christian College recognises its responsibility to administer discipline in love, seeking always the growth of the individual. It will be neither legalistic nor permissive, but will always aim to correct without causing offence through insincerity or injustices or by acting in a harsh or arbitrary way.

ii. Rights and Responsibilities

God demonstrated the value and worth of humanity to Him by creating mankind in His image (Genesis 1:26-27) and giving His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die for humanity that we might have eternal life (John 3:16). Because of this, all persons have value and worth, regardless of their age, social status, race, gender and physical or intellectual abilities.

Although humanity is created in the image of God, because of humanity's fallen state, the Scriptures provide clear guidance on how we are to act towards one another. Principles of love, justice, fairness, equity, honesty, integrity and trust pervade the Scriptures. These principles of conduct may be expressed in terms of 'rights and responsibilities'.

Rights may be defined as, 'the entitlement of an individual under law'. God established the rights of individuals under Biblical law, eg:

Protection of life (Exodus 21:12-32)
Protection of property (Exodus 22:1-14; Leviticus 19:11)
Protection of the poor and defenceless (Exodus 22:21-22; Leviticus 19:9-10, 14; Deuteronomy 15:7-11)
Protection of an individual’s freedom and liberty (Exodus 21:1-11; Deuteronomy 15:12-18)
Protection of the innocent (Exodus 23:7)
Protection of the employee (Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:14-15)

When an individual or group of people are deemed to have no rights, gross violation and abuse of these individuals becomes commonplace (eg slavery,
Within the Christian school community, it is accepted that all have rights and responsibilities. It is essential, however, that as a Christian school community, we focus upon our responsibilities towards others before looking for the fulfilment of our rights. If we all work towards fulfilling our responsibilities towards each other, then our rights will also be fulfilled.

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

(i) Encouragement
A document of this nature tends to focus primarily upon the corrective or disciplinary aspects of the ‘Behaviour Management Policy’. Within the daily life of the College, however, there is a commitment amongst the staff to continually encourage the students in positive attitudes and behaviour. Staff employ a variety of strategies including: verbal praise, notes of encouragement and appreciation, stars, stamps, stickers, points and congratulation slips. Children thrive on an environment that provides them with both encouragement and correction.

(ii) Responsibility and Privilege
Students are taught that privileges are a natural consequence of the proper exercise of responsibility.

(iii) Goal Setting
Children are trained in goal setting and time management skills from early primary school, which assists in the establishment of disciplined living in all areas of life.

(iv) Personal Guidance
Students have the opportunity to receive Biblical counsel on a daily basis from the College staff.
Cases requiring urgent actions would include:

Verbal abuse of members of staff.
Possession/use of alcohol, drugs or dangerous weapons.
Obscene acts.

Any other act that, in the opinion of the Principal, necessitates the immediate removal of the student from the college premises.

Suspension Process

Parents will be contacted prior to the commencement of the suspension by the Principal or a Board representative. The Principal will ensure that every reasonable step is taken to arrange a meeting with the parent. Support processes such as counselling will be considered at this stage if they have not been applied before.

The maximum period of time a student will be suspended at one time is ten days.

Parents may request a suspension conference involving relevant staff, student, parents and other support personnel as determined by the Principal after any suspension.

A suspension conference must be held at the latest when a student has been suspended for ten continuous school days on any one occasion and when a student has been suspended for a total of twenty days in one school year. It may be conducted during the suspension or as near as practicable afterwards.

The role of the suspension conference is to consider educational, welfare and disciplinary strategies in relation to the student.

EXPULSION

The College Principal, in consultation with an appointed Board representative, has the authority to permanently exclude a student from Emerald Christian College. When it has been determined that the harm a student is doing to the College is greater than the good he or she is receiving, then the student will not be retained in the College.

Grounds for Expulsion:

The College Principal, in consultation with an appointed Board representative, can expel a student from the College if:

The student does anything mentioned under Grounds for Suspension; and

The student’s behaviour is of such magnitude that the need of the student to

EMERALD CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Behaviour Management Principles

1 Timothy 4:12: Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

Principle 1:

Students have the right to feel safe and secure in the school environment, free from intimidation, bullying and harassment, and to be treated with love, justice and equity according to the Scriptures. Students have the responsibility to behave in a considerate and thoughtful manner, and to treat others with love, justice and equity.

Philippians 2:3-4: Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Galatians 5:19-26: The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

2 Timothy 1:17: They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

Standards and Rules:

Bullying, fighting and other forms of violence and/or intimidation (including “play fights”) are unacceptable.

Excluding, taunting and devaluing others are forbidden.

Possession of dangerous implements such as knives is prohibited.
People who are not members of the college are allowed within the college environs only with the permission of the Principal.

Students are not permitted to talk to outsiders at the fence line at any time.

**Principle 2**

*Students have the right to work and play in an environment free from interference or damage to personal property. Students have the responsibility to respect all property, including that of other students, and to do nothing that would harm another’s well-being.*

**Titus 2:6-7; 11-12:** Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.

**Ephesians 4:28:** He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

**Standards and Rules:**

Stealing, vandalism and defacing college or personal property are prohibited.

Valuable personal items, eg radios, tape recorders, collections are not to be brought to the college.

Bicycles are to be securely left at the bicycle racks provided.

Large sums of money should not be brought to school. Essential monies should be handed to the general office for safekeeping.

All lost property should be handed in whether the property is named or unnamed.

Students are expected to take a responsible and active part in keeping the college clean.

Litter must be placed in the bins provided.

Chewing gum and spitting are forbidden.

Steel rulers are prohibited unless supplied by teachers.

It is expected that all students will keep to the left when walking along verandas. Pushing and running along verandas is forbidden as is running along paths.

Students must not enter classrooms unless a teacher is present.

**Suspension**

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure that will normally only be used when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response.

**Grounds for suspension**

A student, whilst engaged in college related activities:

- behaves in such a way as to threaten or constitute a danger to the health of any staff member, pupil or any person assisting in the conducting of school activities; or
- commits an act of significant violence or causes significant damage or destruction to property, or is knowingly involved in the theft of property; or
- possesses, uses, or deliberately assists others to use illegal drugs or prohibited substances; or
- fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of the Principal, or teacher; or
- consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the educational opportunities of any other pupil; or
- behaves in a way which threatens the good order of the school’s program or facility; or
- engages in unacceptable discriminatory behaviour (including harassment) towards another person; or
- engages in immoral behaviour.

The Principal may also suspend a student if that student does anything mentioned in clauses (a) – (h) above, OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT. ‘Bad company corrupts good character’ and students can negatively influence each other. The College will not knowingly tolerate hypocritical behaviour where students pretend to be one thing whilst engaged in college related activities, but behave in a manner totally contrary to the principles of the Behaviour Management Policy outside of the school environment.

**Suspension procedures:**

Suspension may be applied in the instances mentioned under Grounds for Suspension.

Suspension proceedings will be enacted by the Principal, or in his/her absence, a Board representative. Except in cases where urgent action is required, a range of options will have been considered before suspending a student.
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF DISCIPLINE STRUCTURE

**Teacher**

Establishes class rules.
Facilitates the development of self-discipline in students.
Reinforces school rules.
Monitors student behaviour for the classroom.
Applies appropriate sanctions for disruptive behaviour.
Counsels students.
Refers students’ serious or persistent, unacceptable behaviour to the Principal.

**Principal**

Principal counsels students for serious and persistent breaches of the Behaviour Management Policy.
Contacts parents after discussion with the teacher.
Refers students for further counselling in consultation with the parents.
Applies appropriate sanctions.
Liaises with teachers.
Chairs meetings of parents, students and teachers when deemed appropriate or requested by parents.
Makes any suspension recommendation.
Implements urgent suspension procedures in consultation with the other teachers.
Oversees student behaviour and discipline procedures.
In consultation with appointed Board representative affirms or rejects suspension and completes necessary documentation.
Ensures notification of parent and maintains records.
Chairs suspension conferences.
Affirms or rejects any recommendations for expulsion in consultation with appointed Board representative.

Students should not lean back on chairs.
Classrooms are to be always left in a tidy condition.
Students need to be aware of the defined ‘out of bounds’ areas and keep away from them.
The riding of bicycles in the school grounds is forbidden (except when riding to or from school).
Students riding bicycles to and from school must wear a helmet.
Skateboards and roller blades are forbidden.
Baseball bats and hard cricket, hockey or baseballs are not allowed in the playground unsupervised.
The college roof is out of bounds.

**Principle 3:**

*Each student has the right to receive Biblical counsel and correction in love when needed from members of staff. Each student has the responsibility to receive Biblical counsel and correction when needed from members of staff.*

*Hebrews 12:5b-6:*  My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.

*Hebrews 13:17:*  Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

*2 Timothy 3:16:*  All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

**Standards and Rules:**

Students are expected to comply with all sanctions imposed, including: attending detention classes and yard duty; arriving for detention classes on time; completing any work assigned during detention; having the notice of detention signed by a parent and returned to the teacher.

**Principle 4:**

*Each student has the right to be valued and treated with respect. Courtesy, consideration of others, cooperation and honesty are essential to the proper functioning of a Christian community. Each student has the responsibility to treat others with respect and courtesy, to be honest and cooperative in all aspects of*
Colleges and respect authority.

Philippians 2:14-15: Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.

Colossians 3:8-10, 12-14: But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Ephesians 4:25; 5:4: Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour, for we are all members of one body. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

Standards and Rules:

Polite behaviour and speech are expected at all times. Rudeness or defiance is unacceptable.

Swearing and obscene, abusive, racist and sexist language or discriminatory behaviour is not acceptable.

The telling of deliberate lies to avoid responsibility for one's behaviour is unacceptable.

Grumbling, complaining and destructive criticism towards members of staff and the authority of the college are forbidden.

Any quotation or use of the work of others or assistance from other sources must be acknowledged.

The work of students found cheating will not be accepted for assessment.

Principle 5:

Each student has the right not to be exposed to harmful substances, influences or immoral behaviour in the school environment. Each student has the responsibility not to behave in a manner that could negatively influence others.

Philippians 4:8: Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever
Food and drink are not to be taken into classrooms without teacher permission. Library books are to be returned by the due date.

SANCTIONS IN DETAIL

Examples of how sanctions may be applied:

1. Discussion between student and teacher

When a particular aspect of a student’s behaviour is not in accordance with the standards of the College, the teacher will talk with the student to communicate the particular concerns. The discussion will seek to draw the student’s attention to how his or her behaviour is negatively affecting the student or other students, and the need for the student to accept responsibility for his or her actions. Biblical principles may also be discussed at this time. Opportunity is given for the student to explain his or her position, but the temptation to make excuses for unacceptable behaviour will be discouraged. The student will be encouraged to acknowledge any undesirable attitudes and behaviour and seek forgiveness from those who have been negatively affected by their conduct.

2. Demerits

Demerits are issued on a daily basis and are given for minor infringements of rules and procedures including: talking without permission; creating a disturbance in the classroom; and wasting time.

Demerits act as a warning system for the student. Students can receive two warnings (demerits) in a day without any sanction being applied. Three or more demerits incur a withdrawal of privileges. The demerit system seeks to train students in accepting responsibility for their own behaviour as classroom rules and boundaries are clearly established and reinforced.

3. Detentions

(i) Work related

Teachers may require a student to finish school work which has not been completed on time. Students may be required to remain in class during either break.

(ii) Behaviour related

Detentions may also be given for other infringements of the Behaviour Standards and Rules: Smoking, non-prescription drug taking and the consumption of alcohol are prohibited.

The possession of such things as cigarettes, cigarette lighters, matches, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, pornographic materials (including books, tapes, magazines, compact discs and videos) is forbidden.

All secular materials being brought into the school environs (including books, tapes, magazines, compact discs, videos, toys, games and computer programs) must be approved by a member of staff.

Principle 6:

Parents have the right to expect that their child will be treated fairly, reasonable and consistently by the Principal and staff in the implementation of the Behaviour Management Policy. Parents also have the right to expect that their children will be educated in a loving and disciplined environment in which love for God and others is encouraged. Parents have the responsibility to support the college in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment, and to provide a loving and disciplined home environment.

Colossians 3:20-4:1: Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Parents, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. Servants (employees), obey your earthly employers in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favour, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for mankind, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrong, and there is no favouritism. Employers, provide your servants (employees) with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have an employer in heaven.
Standards and Rules:

The Principal and staff are expected to be impartial and unbiased in the enforcement of standards and rules and application of sanctions.

Infringements of the Behaviour Management Policy by students should be dealt with before they become acute, with a minimum of formality and a maximum of cooperation between relevant students, parents and teachers.

Individual teachers are responsible for developing classroom management strategies consistent with the College’s Behaviour Management Policy. Those strategies should include the reinforcement of, and reward for, good performance and/or effort and behaviour.

Students are entitled to discuss the Behaviour Management Policy, as it has been applied to them with the relevant teacher or Principal.

Parents have the right to be informed through phone calls or letters, of serious or persistent behaviour that has resulted in sanctions being applied, and to discuss the situation with relevant staff.

Parents are expected to give staff the ‘benefit of the doubt’ over any concerns that come to their attention (from their child, other students, or parents) until the opportunity to communicate directly with the staff member involved has occurred.

Parents are asked to refrain from correcting another parent’s child about a school-related matter. Instead, parents are asked to refer the matter to their child’s teacher.

Student’s dress and appearance should be clean, neat and tidy. Students are required to wear only the approved college uniform. Those temporarily in incorrect college uniform are expected to bring a note of explanation signed by a parent.

Students may not leave the college grounds within normal college hours without a note from home and permission from a member of staff.

A note signed by a parent is required in the case of absence or lateness. This note is to be brought on the day of lateness or on the day the student returns to school.

A student will be permitted to go on an excursion only after an authorisation form is received from a parent.

Principle 7:

*Each teacher has the right to be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment. Students have the right to learn in an orderly and cooperative environment and to be able to develop their God-given talents and abilities. Each teacher has the responsibility to maintain an orderly and cooperative environment. Students have the responsibility to develop their God-given talents and abilities for His glory and to do nothing that would prevent others from learning.*

Romans 12:4-8: Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

2 Timothy 2:4-7: No-one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer. Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27: Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Standards and Rules:

Students must not disrupt the learning of other students by talking without permission, creating a disturbance, wasting time or any other form of misbehaviour.

Students are to be punctual to assemblies and all scheduled classes, and are to attend all classes at all times (unless prevented by sickness or approved absence).

It is the student’s responsibility to bring to class all necessary books, writing implements and equipment.

Students are expected to complete all set class work and homework.

School bags are not to be taken into the classroom.