

DISCIPLINE

Virtue Based Restorative Discipline™ Policy

At Holy Family Elementary discipline is the process in which students strive to develop the best versions of themselves. Developing the Christian virtues of moderation, temperance and prudence will help shape student behavior in a manner that will reflect Christian self-discipline.

To help guide students' growth in Christian virtue, attitudes, and behavior the faculty and staff strive to uphold the dignity and self-worth of each student, provide opportunities for a child to make personal decisions and to take upon him/herself the consequences of his/her actions, and establish regulations and procedures within the framework of respect, kindness, concern, and love of others.

CCC 1700: The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude. It is essential for a human being free to direct himself to this fulfillment. By his deliberate actions, the human person does or does not, conform to the good promised by God and attested by moral conscience...with the help of grace they grow in virtue, avoid sin, and if they sin they entrust themselves as did the prodigal son to the mercy of our Father in heaven. In this way, they attain to the perfection of charity.

Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline™

This initiative provides a framework in which the inherent goodness and dignity of each person are upheld while working to shape behavior more closely to the likeness of God. There are two main goals associated with VBRD™.

1. Decrease anti-social behaviors
 1. Harm, humiliation, and intimidation
 2. Disruptive behaviors

1. Increase faith practices
 1. Evangelization
 2. Sacramental practices
 3. Virtue education and development

CCC 1803: "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions. The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God.

Guiding Principles

1. We will dedicate ourselves to living virtue.
Annually discern the virtue of emphasis personally and as a school community

2. We will support others in living virtue.
Accountability is with peers through encouragement and acknowledging the good

3. We will commit to constructive thoughts, words, and deeds.

Refrain from gossip, rumors, criticizing, and judgment, as this attempt to distract from the good name we are given by God.

4. When faced with challenges or conflict, we will find solutions that cultivate virtue for ourselves and for one another. Children learn from adults how to solve problems--they come into the world we provide for them. We prayerfully attend to conflict and will uphold the human dignity assigned by God in dealing with one another.

The Restorative Process:

Incidents will require different types of responses, depending on whether they are low, mid, or high-level incidents. Remember: INTERVENE EARLY AND OFTEN! If small disruptions are addressed, there will be fewer high-level incidents.

Always refer to the posted Guiding Principles of VBRD when considering what behaviors to address and how to begin. The simplest question to ask is, "Which principle needs to be worked on right now?" That begins the conversation that holds each person responsible and accountable for his/her actions.

Adults must practice prudence in working with students. Do not expect someone to discuss issues without the ability to fully empathize. Active listening can build this skill in a young child. Nor do skills that may be developmentally reasonable develop simply through maturation. Be sure students are mature and ready to handle the higher level incidents by building skills and assessing their mastery along the way. Training both teens and adults to "separate the sin from the sinner" is critical to suspending judgment and promoting a positive resolution that restores relationships.

Proactive Planning & Policy

As a key strategy for setting norms for the school culture, both adults and students will participate in conversation circles. Classroom circles/meetings also offer a platform for virtue education, discussing classroom behavior, building community, and strengthening interpersonal skills as a way to prevent and reduce harmful interactions. Parents are also given resources and encouraged to provide this opportunity at home.

System to Identify Harm & Respond to Harm

Low-Level

Decide what constitutes low-level incidents: first-time events, disruptions that minimally affect others, talking out unintentionally, etc. Discuss expectations with students. Be clear about consequences and be consistent.

Mid-Level

Mid-level incidents may include hurtful name-calling or perhaps repeated events that would typically be low-level incidents. Check virtue and pray silently when disruption occurs. When the issue has been addressed, communicate with parents to inform them of the incident (both the harmed and harmers; witnesses if appropriate.)

High-Level

High-level incidents require a more rigorous process. The most important task is to help young people own the problem and solution.

Which guiding principle has been broken?

What happened?

What will it take to make things as right as possible?

Circle conferences and restoration circles will be necessary parties for handling high-level incidents.

When multiple students are involved, it is important to interview each student individually with the three questions for restoration:

An injustice occurred. What was it?

Restore equity: How can we make things as right as possible?

Guarantee a better future: What can we do to help each other?

Before bringing all the students and parents together, be clear about what each wants from the conference. Do not bring parties together if there is not a willingness to apologize and make things right. The only way to restore equity is to operate out of the virtues of humility and forgiveness.

Response to Harm

Restorative Discipline strategies provide a framework for collaboration in setting norms and expectations founded on the belief that “Human beings are happier, more cooperative, and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.” (International Institute for Restorative Practices, <https://www.iirp.edu/what-we-do/what-is-restorative-practices>)

When harm occurs, parents will be informed. With mid/high-level incidents, parent involvement in formal restorative conferences may be required to determine what can be done to repair harm and restore relationships. Formation and service are integrated as much as possible.

Affective Statements/Questions—Use with low-level and first-time incidents

A less formal approach to minor disruptions, and is free from harsh judgment or criticism, and can easily redirection behavior such as, but not limited to, name-calling, unintentional harm that is not repetitive.

When simple statements have not stopped the behavior, or there is a new, more escalated behavior, students will be asked to explain their behavior and redirect their actions to reflect positive interactions.

Small Impromptu Conference/Group or Circle—use with Mid-level incidents, or repeated minor disruptions

Students and adults together will seek an understanding of the cause for disruption or harm and will work together with those involved to restore relationships.

This may involve parents of those harmed and/or those responsible for the harm.

Formal Conference—Use with high-level incidents where there is serious harm

When student behavior requires a teacher or other adult to stop and address harm immediately, examples include but are not limited to, physical harm, repeated obscenities, name-calling, or repeated refusal to comply with expected behavior.

Parents of all involved parties will meet to establish what harm has been done, who is responsible, and how it will be repaired. Follow-up conferences can ensure safety has been restored for all parties.

Special Circumstances

There may be times when harm to students, staff, and the parent community is significant, and restoration is not possible. Such cases require special attention, and solutions may require time away from the school community. In serious cases, we will follow the diocesan handbook on the Violence and Weapons policy before VBRD practices are begun.

Students may be sent home to prevent further harm. The police may be called. The student may be required to meet with a counselor and acceptable assurances given from the counselor before returning to the school community. Possible probationary period may be required, or students may be asked to withdraw.

Suspension and expulsion procedures (including weapons possession) follow the policies set forth by the Diocese of Salina. For other infractions, a detention policy has been adopted to mold conduct according to Christian behavior in a Catholic school setting.

Suspension and Procedure

Suspension is a temporary withholding of the privilege of attending class/school. Suspension may be an “in-school” suspension in which the student is admitted to the school but not to class, or the suspension may be an “out-of-school” suspension.

A suspension may be imposed on a student only after giving the student oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and affording the student a hearing. However, if the presence of the student endangers other persons, or property, or substantially disrupts, impedes, or interferes with the operation of the school, the principal in consultation with the pastor may suspend the student forthwith without a hearing for a term not to exceed five (5) school days. A written notice and reasons for the suspension shall be given to the student and his/her parents or guardians within twenty-four (24) hours from the time of the suspension. A hearing shall be afforded the student no later than seventy-two (72) hours after the suspension has been imposed. Included in the notice of suspension should be the date, time, and place of hearing.

The hearing specified herein shall be conducted by the school principal and/or pastor or designee and should include the student, parent or legal guardian, and counselor whenever possible. (Diocesan Policy)

Expulsion and Procedure

Expulsion is the termination of enrollment for the remainder of the current year.

Expulsion shall be imposed only after the student has been afforded an opportunity for a formal hearing. In all cases where a student might be expelled, he/she shall be suspended first for a term not to exceed five (5) school days. A written notice of intent to expel and the charges upon which the expulsion is based shall be given to the student’s parents or guardians within seventy-two (72) hours of the student being suspended. The notice shall also contain the date, time, and place that the student will be afforded a formal hearing. This date shall be no later than the last day of the five (5) school day suspension. Formal hearings may be conducted by the local school council members or appropriate persons appointed by the pastor. The pastor shall make the final determination. (Diocesan Policy)

Grounds for Suspension/Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled for:

1. willful violation of any published regulation for student conduct adopted and approved by the school administration;
2. conduct which disrupts, impedes, or interferes with the operation of the school;
3. conduct which infringes upon or invades the rights of others;
4. disobedience of an order of a teacher, school security officer, or other school authority, when such disobedience can reasonably be anticipated to result in disorder, disruption, or interference with the operation of the school;
5. grave immoral conduct, or
6. continual conduct contrary to the official teachings of the Catholic Church. (Diocesan Policy)

Notice of Suspension or Expulsion

Whenever any written notice is sent to the parents or guardians of a student, it shall be sufficient if the notice is sent by registered mail to the address on file in the school records. In lieu of mailing such a written notice, the notice may be personally delivered. (Diocesan Policy)

Procedural Rights Required

In any formal or appeal hearing specified in these policies, the following additional rights of due process shall be afforded:

1. the right of the student to have the counsel of his/her parents' or guardians' choice present and to receive the advice of such counsel or other person they may select;
2. the right of the parents or guardians to be present at the hearing;
3. the right of the student and his/her counsel or advisor to hear or read a full report of the testimony or witnesses against him/her;
4. the right of the student to testify on his/her own behalf and give reasons for his/her conduct;
5. the right of the student to have an orderly hearing; and
6. the right of the student to a fair, impartial decision based on substantial evidence. (Diocesan Policy)

Expulsion of Pupils – Weapons Possession

In accordance with KSA 72-8902, it shall be the policy of all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Salina to expel from school, for a period of not less than one year, any student determined to be in possession of a weapon 1) at school; 2) on school property; or 3) at any school supervised activity. A weapon is defined as any object that creates a threat of physical harm to or physically harms a student or school personnel, is detrimental to the welfare or safety of a student or school personnel, adversely affects school discipline, or adversely affects educational programs.

In the event of such determination of weapons possession, the principal shall immediately refer the pupil to the appropriate state and local law enforcement agencies; and, if the pupil is juvenile, to the secretary of social and rehabilitation services.

Should the pupil be an exceptional child as defined in KSA 72-962, the expulsion requirement may be modified in a manner consistent with federal law. An annual report of weapons possession cases shall be submitted to the State Board of Education at the time and in the manner specified by the State Board.

On the local level, this policy shall be carried out in a manner corresponding to the implementation procedures outlined herein. (Diocesan Policy) (1-96)

Restitution & Reflection Form

Date/Time: _____

Location of Incident: _____

Those involved in the incident: _____

What happened? _____

What I did: _____

What virtue was lacking in this situation? _____

What virtue will restore the harm? _____

How will you restore the harm? _____

How will you cultivate these virtues for the future? _____

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date

Date