



Title	Student Discipline Policy
Effective Date:	September 23, 2022
Approval Date:	September 22, 2022
Approving Body:	Superintendent
Supersedes:	

### Background

At Pacific Christian School, we first see discipline as something to be nurtured *in* students, rather than as something done *to* students. Our strategic plan states that “Pacific Christian School seeks to create a community characterized by the presence of Shalom. That is a place where students, staff and others flourish as they are active participants in God’s story.” Since all members of our school community experience brokenness, there will be times when we fall short of this aim. In such situations our hope is that students (to whom this policy applies particularly) will take responsibility for their actions, come to an understanding of how their actions have impacted others, and seek to repair the harm that has been caused. Effective discipline is to guide people back into restored relationship with God and community.

PCS has adopted behavioural pillars to describe how we should interact with one another: **Respect, Accept, Care, Engage**. All members of the PCS community are expected to uphold these standards. Holding ourselves, and one another, accountable to these pillars nurtures discipline and contributes to our aim of being a place of Shalom.

When these standards are not upheld, specific disciplinary approaches with students will seek to:

- understand fully what has happened
- build understanding of the impact of the behaviour on individuals and the community
- journey with the student through the consequences of the behaviour
- ensure safety for victims and other community members
- support restoration of right relationships and, where possible, repair of harm caused

### Where does this policy apply?

The policy applies to conduct that occurs on or near the premises of Pacific Christian School. It also applies to conduct that occurs elsewhere if it is related to school sponsored transportation, programs or activities, (such as buses, travelling athletic teams or field trips), or if it occurs in the context of a relationship between the student and another Pacific Christian School student or family and is significantly impacting the well-being of the school community. This interaction may be electronic and includes actions like cyber-bullying.

## **Procedures**

### Examples of Disciplinary Consequences

- Verbal reminder, conversation
- Letter of Understanding
- Asked to stay at the end of class
- Suspension
- Probation
- Expulsion

When there is a concern, we will seek to intervene early and at the lowest level possible. This will usually involve a conversation between a student and a staff member. For matters that are more complex, or in which a student is resistant to entering conversation with the staff member, the administration and/or school counselors will assist in supporting the student to understand their actions, in restoring relationships, and in repairing harm. Parents will generally be included in the conversation at this level.

## **Definitions**

**Letter of Understanding**— a student (and typically their parent or guardian) agree that specific behaviours will result in specific consequences. These consequences will vary depending on the circumstances; however, they can include removal from school or expulsion.

**Suspension** - a student on suspension may not be on the school premises; this includes both during school hours and outside of school hours. A student on suspension also may not attend school or school-team events being held at other locations.

**Expulsion** – a student loses their right to continue at PCS. Typically, this will only happen in the case of chronic or very serious infractions where other interventions have failed.

## **Further Notes on Suspension**

For matters that pose significant community safety concerns, suspension from school may be necessary. Examples of such matters include, but are not limited to:

- serious disregard for another person (or group) that makes them feel unsafe or unvalued; this includes in-person and virtual interactions.
- possession or use of substances at school, on school trips, or at school events; substances include alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, and other drugs that are not medically prescribed to the specific student.
- providing illegal paraphernalia or substances to minors.
- fighting or making threats to physically harm someone.
- refusal to follow the reasonable requests made by a school staff member or designated volunteer.

Suspension may also be used pending an investigation to provide time and space for an appropriately considered response. Every effort will be made to conduct such investigations in a timely manner.

The following guidelines govern disciplinary suspensions:

1. Prior to suspension, the student will normally have the opportunity to speak with the principal or vice principal about the incident.
2. Parents will be notified in writing or via email (as well as via phone if possible) as soon as possible of a decision to suspend. Parents will usually be asked to pick the student up at school if the decision to suspend happens during the school day. The notice must include details related to the reason for the suspension and its length.
3. While recognizing that in-class learning cannot be duplicated, effort will be made to provide learning resources to support the student's continued learning during the suspension.
4. In some situations, an in-school suspension may be appropriate. Students on in-school suspension will not attend classes but work in a supervised area with alternate break times from the general student body.
5. The principal has the authority to issue suspensions of 3 days or fewer. For suspensions beyond 3 days, the superintendent must approve the suspension.
6. Expulsions will be made by the Superintendent on the advice of the appropriate site principal.
7. Notice of suspensions of greater than 3 days or expulsions will contain an appropriate reference to the school's [Procedural Fairness and Appeal Policy](#).
8. Students on suspension may be required to complete additional reflective questions or service tasks. Return from suspension depends on satisfactory engagement with such assignments.
9. Students returning from suspension must first meet with the principal or designated school staff member to discuss the learning process and the expectations for the student upon return; a behavioural contract that articulates the student's commitment to uphold stated expectations may be part of this conversation.