

Serious Offences Policy

Rationale

St Mary's College seeks to provide a safe, stable learning and social environment based on the Christian principles of love, truth, respect, justice and forgiveness. In line with the College Discipline Policy, students are required to be respectful of the rights and responsibilities of all members of the St Mary's community and that of our partner schools.

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) defines a serious offence as one which:

- undermines the ethos of a Catholic School
- affects the rights of teachers/students to participate in teaching and/or learning processes
- endangers the physical and/or emotional and/or moral welfare of the students and/or teaching staff
- interferes with the day to day running of the College.

Aims

- To develop esteem and promote a heightened sense of welfare for all members of the College community.
- To provide clear guidelines for how to respond to any serious offence that may be attributed to any student of the College.

Implementation

In the case of a serious offence, the College may have immediate recourse to one of its three special procedures: Contract, Suspension or Expulsion. These will be applicable to the particular partner school hosting the St Mary's campus where the offence occurred as well as St Mary's College.

While the CECV's description of serious offences is extensive, the College in particular, wishes students to note that the following would be classified as serious offences:

- Violence, violent threats or intimidation to personal and group safety
- Racial or sexual harassment
- The possession of potentially dangerous weapons:
- Direct and damaging interference with the property of the College or that of an individual;
- The use, carrying or arranging the use of illegal drugs and/or alcohol.
- Any action that involves a student deliberately using a mobile phone or other equipment to film or record an activity that may bring the College or its students into disrepute. (This serious offence also includes forwarding on such material to other people as well as it being posted directly or indirectly in some form on the Internet. The Internet is not a private space and students may not use this understanding to excuse any inappropriate actions under this particular serious offence concern.)

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