

H. Discipline

Discipline in the Catholic school is an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to provide a school climate conducive to learning and one that promotes character development.

Discipline is maintained in a classroom or school when students work cooperatively with the Principal, the teachers, and their classmates towards the attainment of the class and school objectives. However, it should be noted that the legitimate interest of the school extends beyond the school day and beyond the school hours.

Maintenance of Effective Discipline

Effective discipline is maintained when there is

- Reasonable quiet and order in the building
- Positive correction of behavior
- Constant encouragement of acceptable classroom conduct
- Firm but fair treatment of difficult students
- Consistent follow through

Disapproved Disciplinary Measures

The following disciplinary measures are forbidden:

- All corporal punishment, including shaking and slapping is unacceptable
- Language that is sarcastic or calculated to bring ridicule on the student, his or her parents, or background
- Using religious exercises or important class assignments as punitive measures
- Bizarre and unusual punishments
- Withholding or altering rightfully earned academic grades
- Any disciplinary action that isolates a student without proper supervision

Our discipline program at St. Frances of Rome Elementary School is geared to promote development of moral values that are lived in and outside of school.

Behavioral Expectations

Christian living is being in community with others. All members of the school community (students, parents, teachers, staff and administration) are expected to contribute positively and cooperatively to the building up of this community.

Discipline is learning appropriate behaviors and being able to act in acceptable ways in a variety of situations. Children are growing in their understanding of behavior and the ability to

act in positive ways. Discipline also means "being teachable". Children are expected to cooperate and behave in ways that encourage the learning of all at school. Adults also discipline themselves to work positively with other adults and children.

Teachers develop classroom rules and policies with their students. All classroom issues are handled by the teacher. Specific, age appropriate expectations and consequences are developed by grades according to the developmental level of the students. These expectations are explained to the parents at Back to School Night. The faculty establishes School Wide policies. These policies are developed for the smooth running of the entire school. In all instances, Christian conduct and polite, acceptable behavior, which does not interfere with the education of all students, is expected. Any behavior, which disrupts the Christian educational atmosphere of the school, is unacceptable.

All school community members (children and adults) are expected to treat others with respect, courtesy and kindness. Cooperation and appropriate behavior is expected of all persons. All community members are expected to understand and follow the harassment policies of the school and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Specific Expectations

Parents are expected to encourage students to:

1. observe classroom and school rules. Positive classroom behavior creates a successful learning environment.
2. complete their assignments and participate actively in class and school projects.
3. use classrooms, desks, materials, and school facilities and keep them in order with a sense of pride and responsibility. Personal property of others must be respected as well.
4. speak politely (using "please and thank you") and appropriately (no use of "obscene or street" language). No personal verbal or written abuse of students or adults is acceptable.
5. be responsible for the books given to them for their use and the property of the school. If students write in a book or deface it in any way, deface furniture (desks) in any way, or damage school or other student's property, parents will be required to pay for repair of the damage or replacement as needed. The replacement fee for lost/damaged textbooks is a minimum \$50 and workbooks at least \$25. Students should repay parents for the costs incurred as they are able.
6. be well groomed and wear a complete, clean school uniform each day or appropriate free dress on assigned days.
7. be on time for school each day and not leave school without permission.
8. play in ways that are fair, kind, and fun during recess and lunch times.
9. settle problems in a positive way and ask adults for help. Fighting or verbal abuse is not an acceptable solution for conflict. Parents and staff should model these qualities.
10. refrain from chewing gum and riding skateboards, skates, or bikes on the campus.

Behavioral Probation

A student may be put on probation for a clearly specified period of time (usually a grading period) for serious or continued misconduct. Parents and the student are made fully aware of the seriousness of the action and the reason for probation. A conference is held with parents, student, teacher and Principal, and a written form of behavioral

probation is signed by the parents, student, teacher, and Principal. During probation, students are expected to show improvement in behavior and show a positive attitude as they observe and follow classroom and school rules. Students will receive weekly progress reports regarding their behavior. Students may not participate in extracurricular activities while on probation.

A student may be suspended and placed on behavioral probation for one quarter for the following reasons or any other action considered a serious behavior problem by the Principal:

1. Receiving a "U" in conduct for the preceding quarter.
2. Serious infraction of the school rules.
3. Receiving Behavioral Expectations slips with no resulting change in

Behavior.

Student Harassment, Bullying, and Hazing Policy

This school is committed to providing a safe and comfortable learning environment that respects Christian values and is free from harassment, bullying, or hazing in any form. Harassment, bullying, or hazing of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, clergy, school volunteer, or parent/guardian is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of any such conduct seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. ***Substantiated acts of harassment, bullying, or hazing by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student.*** Students who file false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For students in transitional kindergarten through third grade, this disciplinary action shall depend on the maturity of the students and the circumstances involved. For students in fourth through eighth grades, the disciplinary action may include suspension or dismissal.

Harassment

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating. It includes but is not limited to:

Verbal Harassment

- Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.

Physical Harassment

- Unwanted physical touching, contact, or assault; deliberate impeding or blocking of another's movements; any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

Visual Harassment

- Include derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory gestures, posters, cartoons, written

words, drawings, images, and photos. Visual harassment can be communicated in person, in hard copy, or electronically (including on social media)

Sexual Harassment

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

Bullying

Bullying is the habitual harassing, intimidating, tormenting, browbeating, humiliating, terrorizing, oppressing, and/or threatening of another person. Bullying typically consists of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, shoving, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim or victims. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be indirect, such as spreading rumors that cause victims to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion.

Whether the bullying is direct or indirect, the key component of bullying is physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

Cyber bullying occurs when students bully each other using the Internet on computers, mobile phones, or other electronic devices. This can include but is not limited to:

- Sending inappropriate texts, emails, or instant messages.
- Posting inappropriate pictures, videos, or messages about others on blogs, social media, or websites.
- Using someone else's username to spread rumors or lies about another

person.

Student Threats

The school will take all student threats seriously, including those from students that threaten

serious harm to themselves or others or to destroy property. Whoever hears or becomes aware of any threat made by a student should immediately report it to the Pastor, the Principal, or a teacher. The Principal should notify the police and the Department of Catholic Schools immediately. Any student who has made the threat will be kept in the School Office under supervision until the police arrive. The parents/guardians of the student who has made the threat will be notified by the school. Any student or adult who has been identified as a potential victim, or mentioned in writing as a potential victim, should be notified immediately.

The student who has made the threat shall be suspended until the police and school investigation has been completed. At that time the student may face other disciplinary sanctions, up to and including removal from school.

The school will take all actions of a threatening nature seriously, including practical jokes or offhand comments, and the school will investigate them. The school may suspend or remove a student from school while the investigation is pending. On a case-by-case basis, the Pastor and Principal will make any decision to re-admit a student who has made a threat.

Hazing

Hazing is any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any student or other person.

School Searches

Students' legitimate expectation of privacy in their person and in the personal effects they bring to school must be balanced against the school's obligation to maintain discipline and provide a safe environment for the school community. School officials may conduct a search of a student's person and personal effects only upon a reasonable suspicion that the search will disclose evidence that the student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule.

If school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating the law or a school rule, school officials do not need a warrant or permission from parents/guardians to conduct the search. A "reasonable suspicion" may be established in many ways, including but not limited to personal observations, information provided by third parties or other students, or tips provided by law enforcement. An alert from a trained and certified detection dog is sufficient to establish a reasonable suspicion and serve as the basis for a warrantless search of the student's person, locker, car, or personal property and effects.

Whenever a school official conducts a search of a student's person or personal effects, an adult witness should be present. The school should notify the student's parents/guardians of any search of a student's person or personal effects.

Expectations of Privacy

A student does not own a locker or other school property. The school makes lockers available to the student. The student does have some expectation of privacy in his or her locker from other students. However, a student does not have a high expectation of privacy in his or her locker from the school and may not prevent school officials from searching the locker if the school official has a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating a law or school rule.

A student has a greater expectation of privacy regarding his or her person and personal effects. A school official who conducts a search of a student's backpack, purse, clothing, cell phone, or other personal effects must have a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating a law or school rule. Strip searches or searches that include a student's

underwear may only be conducted by law enforcement and may not be conducted by a school official.

Student Cooperation

If a student refuses to cooperate in a reasonable search of school or student property (including electronic devices), the school may call the student's parents/guardians and/or the police for assistance or referral.

Confiscating a Student's Personal Property

If any of the student's items are confiscated, the Principal should document the confiscation and when possible, take a photograph of the place where the confiscated object was found and of the object itself. It is also recommended that the school obtain a signature from the student acknowledging that the item was in his or her possession at the time it was found.

Alcohol, Narcotics, or Other Controlled Substances

Guidelines Related to Possession and Use

St. Frances of Rome Elementary School complies with state and federal laws that prohibit the use, sale, or delivery of alcohol to persons under 21, or of controlled substances to persons of any age, without a prescription. The school will consult law enforcement agencies when an alcohol or controlled substance violation occurs or the school learns of a violation, with each case judged individually.

If students or their friends experience problems related to the use of alcohol or controlled substances, the students should be encouraged to seek help from a school counselor for themselves or their friends. School personnel should have access to public or private resource agencies for substance abuse rehabilitation so that they can offer help to students and parents/guardians. If a student is known to be dealing in controlled substances or providing alcohol on or off campus, or if a student is convicted in court for sale, possession, or use of controlled substances, the student may be asked to withdraw from the school or may be expelled.

Procedures in the Case of Suspected Possession or Use

School Administrators will follow these procedures where a student's possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on campus is suspected:

- Evaluate observable symptoms.
- Attempt to determine if the student is in possession of alcohol, drugs, controlled substances, or other harmful substances.
- Interview the student in the presence of an adult witness.
- Request the student's cooperation in conducting a search of his or her person and possessions (the search may include the locker, other locations on the school grounds, or the student's backpack, or purse if administrators suspect that controlled or other harmful substances may be hidden).
- Determine if the student needs medical attention; if the student requires emergency medical treatment, contact the parents/guardians and follow the instructions on the student's Emergency Card.
- Recommend that a physician examine the student.
- Provide information to parents/guardians regarding the availability of public or private resource agencies for rehabilitation.

In cases where school administrators verify a student's sale or possession of alcohol or controlled substances, school administrators will follow these procedures:

- The administrator should confiscate all physical evidence obtained as a result of the investigation: seal the evidence in a container bearing the date and time of confiscation, the name of the student from whom it was confiscated, and the signature of the person who confiscated it.
- The administrator should consult the Police. The degree of police involvement will be determined in each case.
- If the student is arrested and removed from school, the law enforcement agency notifies the parents/guardians prior to the time that the student would normally return home from school. However, the school Principal shall take immediate steps to notify the parents/guardians about the release of the student to the officer and where the student is reportedly being taken. Even if an arrest does not occur, the student may be suspended from school. The school will promptly arrange a conference with the parents/guardians and student.

Cheating

Cheating is a form of stealing; it is taking work or thoughts from others. Students may feel the pressure to cheat because of peer, parental or teacher expectations. Students may also cheat because they have not taken the proper responsibility to be prepared on their own. Anyone caught cheating, copying homework, class work or exams, or giving such material to other students, will receive a zero grade to be averaged into the subject involved regardless of the assignment. No make-up opportunity will be given. Depending on the circumstances and gravity of the situation, the students involved could be suspended or expelled.

Detention

- No student shall be required to remain in the classroom during the lunch break, or during any recess. All students shall be required to leave the schoolrooms at recess and lunchtime, unless it would occasion a danger to health.
- Detention before or after school hours is considered an appropriate means of discipline.
- A student shall not be detained in school for disciplinary or other reasons for more than one hour after the close of the school day.
- Under no circumstances shall a student be detained at school without the knowledge and consent of the parent or guardian who should also be informed of the reason for detention and the exact time the period of detention will begin and end.

Suspension

- Any of the reasons listed for expulsion with mitigating circumstances are adequate cause for suspension of a student.
- No student shall be suspended from school for more than two consecutive weeks, unless there is an ongoing police investigation of a possible crime, in which case the student may be suspended during the entire investigation.
- Notice of suspension must be given to the parents or guardians by telephone or in a conference.
- The Principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student's parents or guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension especially the means by which the parents or guardians and the school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference.
- In no case will a teacher on his or her own authority suspend a student.

Expulsion

Reasons for expulsion are, but are not limited to, the following offenses committed by students:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Assault, battery or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or student
- Bullying, harassing or hazing school personnel or other students
- Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher
- Continued willful disobedience
- Use, sale or possession of narcotics, drugs or any other controlled substance
- Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any alcoholic beverages on or near school premises
- Smoking or having tobacco

- Vaping
- Stealing
- Forging signatures
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal belonging to the school
- Habitual truancy
- Possession of harmful weapons (e.g., knives, guns, etc.) or materials that can be used as weapons
- Membership in, active involvement in, or affiliation with a gang or group responsible for coercive or violent activity
- Actions in or out of school which are detrimental to the school's reputation
- Violation of the Electronic Use policies and guidelines
- Inappropriate conduct or behavior unbecoming of a student in a

Catholic school.

Procedure for Expulsion

Except in cases involving grave offenses, the following steps must be taken:

A conference must be held with the parents or guardians, student, teacher, and Principal present to advise the family that serious action is contemplated unless there is immediate improvement in behavior. In parish schools, the Pastor should be notified of the conference, given an opportunity to attend and provide a report of the discussion.

If there is no improvement in behavior, the final decision will be announced at a second conference attended by the Principal, teacher, and parents or guardians. If the parents fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the Pastor, Principal, and teacher will reach a final decision. The final decision rests with the Pastor in consultation with the Principal. In no case will a teacher on his or her own authority expel a student. Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of expulsion.

Written Record

A written record of the steps leading to expulsion must be kept on file with copies of all communications and reports.

Cases Involving Grave Offenses

In cases involving grave offenses, which may include a violation of criminal law or actions so outrageous as to shock the conscience or behavior of the community, the student is immediately suspended and there is no requirement to hold the initial parent-Principal conference. The procedure involving cases of grave offenses should be followed when the

continued presence of the student at school (even for a short period of time) will, in the reasonable judgment of the Principal, pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of another student or students, or faculty members. When immediate suspension is imposed, with probable expulsion, while the case is being investigated, the rules and the consequences of the violation should be clearly explained to the student and parents or guardians.

Time of Expulsion

An expulsion may be made immediately if the reasons are urgent. Only in exceptional cases shall expulsion of an eighth grade student who has been in the school one or more years be allowed. If an expulsion is to take place during the last quarter of the school year or during the last semester in the case of an eighth grade student, prior approval of the Department of Catholic Schools is required before the expulsion can take effect. If such action is contemplated, approval shall be obtained before the announcement of the final decision to the parents at the meeting described below

Reporting of Expulsions

All expulsions, even if they occur at the end of the year, are to be reported by telephone to the elementary supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools within 24 hours. The elementary school written report, Notice of Dismissal, should be mailed promptly to the supervisor. The County Office of Education shall be notified immediately of expulsions. A copy of the *Cumulative Student Record* should be held until requested.

Right to Make Exceptions

The Principal, in consultation with the Pastor of a parish school, retains the right to make exceptions in cases where mitigating circumstances call for a different response than policy suggests.