



MARIST COLLEGE ASHGROVE

A Catholic boys' day and boarding College in the Marist Tradition

Policy

The termination of a student's enrolment at Marist College Ashgrove is a carefully weighed decision taken when the interests and well-being of the student and/or the wider College community are most likely to be best served by following this course of action, and after the College has diligently discharged its responsibilities towards the student.

In all processes where termination of enrolment is being considered, matters shall be dealt with in an open, just and measured manner, and the student and parents/carers will be treated with respect and fairness.

Decisions regarding termination are reserved to the Head of College who is required to follow the principles and procedures described in this document.

The Head of College and other members of staff involved in any process of investigation shall be mindful that as Christian educators they are agents of the Gospel and shall strive to bring evangelical values such as truth, reconciliation, hope and compassion to their actions and attitudes, and eschew non-Christian views such as retribution, prejudice, intolerance, anger or lack of kindness.

As per the Marist College Ashgrove Enrolment Contract, the Head of College (or delegate) has the authority to apply whatever reasonable disciplinary measures are considered appropriate in relation to the conduct of the student. This includes measures ranging from classroom procedures to cancellation of enrolment.

Principles and Procedures

1. Possible Reasons leading to termination of enrolment

The Head of College is entitled to initiate a process leading to termination of enrolment in one or more of these situations:

- 1.1 persistent non-compliance by a student when exhaustive attempts for redressing the situation have proved recurrently unsuccessful;
- 1.2 one or more incidents of serious misconduct which endangers the moral or physical safety of other students or staff, or threaten the good order of the College. This includes those instances relating to laws regarding young people and all citizens (e.g. including but not limited to vaping, alcohol, smoking, illicit drugs, bullying, assault, firearms/weapons, misogyny, inappropriate use of electronic devices, inappropriate sexual conduct, bringing the

College into disrepute, threat of harm to self or others, damage to College property and racial and discriminatory language and behaviour);

- 1.3 the failure of parents/carers to honour the conditions of enrolment after reasonable attempts to redress the situation have been unsuccessful, for example the refusal of parents/carers to ensure their son's attendance in class or participation in other mandatory programs or lack of resolution regarding non-payment of fees.

2. Possible reasons for intervention and/or suspension of enrolment.

The Head of College may suspend the enrolment of a student in these situations:

- 2.1 during the time that termination of enrolment is being considered for matters described in 1 above;
- 2.2 as the result of a serious or persistent breach of conduct and prior to an interview with the student and the student's parents/carers for the purpose of determining the conditional and/or provisional arrangements under which enrolment may be resumed (e.g. including but not limited to, disruptive behaviours, ongoing refusal to meet uniform and hair standards, mobile phone usage during school, incomplete academic work, swearing in public, rudeness or backchat to teachers);
- 2.3 in order to diffuse an extreme situation or allow an event to continue without interruption for other students (for example the brandishing of a weapon, or the discovery of drugs on a camp), and for which time and space are required before the matter can be dispassionately or thoroughly investigated;
- 2.4 in order to require the student to participate in a non-disciplinary intervention to redress a specific matter (for example, a particular learning difficulty; anger management counselling; medical leave; overseas exchange; exploration of other educational or employment options.)

3. Purpose of suspension or termination of enrolment

The purpose of suspension of enrolment is to:

- 3.1 signal that the student's present behaviour is not acceptable;
- 3.2 allow a cooling-off period and time to set in motion a plan for assisting the student to demonstrate appropriate behaviour;
- 3.3 establish a negotiation process for the student's re-entry to the College, based on the student achieving some explicit goals related to improved behaviour;
- 3.4 ensure that the student's parents/carers are aware of the seriousness of the student's behaviour and are involved in the process of negotiation for re-entry;
- 3.5 protect the right of staff and students to establish environments that promote a positive learning environment for all.

The purpose of termination of enrolment is to:

- 3.6 signal that the student's behaviour is not accepted at the College because it seriously interferes with the safety and wellbeing of other students or staff;
- 3.7 remove the student from an established environment in which inappropriate behaviour patterns have occurred;
- 3.8 provide the student with an opportunity for a fresh start in another school, which may prove to be better suited to the student's needs; and
- 3.9 give an opportunity for respite and relief to the College, having made clear its values and reputation.

4. Protocol for sending a student home when suspended

- 4.1 The decision to suspend a student may be taken only by the Head of College, Deputy Head of College or Head of Students (or a delegate in their absence, acting within pre-agreed guidelines).
- 4.2 When the decision is taken, parents/carers are notified by telephone by the Head of Students, or by a Head of House acting on the instruction of the Head of Students, Deputy Head of College or Head of College. Arrangements are agreed regarding how the student will be collected or will travel home. If necessary, the student will remain in a suitable place in the school until he or she can be collected or travel.
- 4.3 An email will be sent to the parents/carers on the day of the suspension of enrolment, indicating the details.
- 4.4 During the suspension, work is to be sent home via email to the student and parents/carers to be completed by the student in full.

5. Negotiated change of school procedure

- 5.1 In some circumstances, a change of school or to an alternative educational setting, may be suggested as the most appropriate means to responsibly support a student's wellbeing and/or learning needs.
- 5.2 Negotiated change of school for a student may also be an appropriate method to protect the wellbeing of the College community (for example, when a student's continuing presence poses a juxtaposition to the values and ethos of the College).
- 5.3 The College is to record any discussions in relation to a negotiated change of school.
- 5.4 The Head of College should provide the parents/carers with an opportunity to discuss the implications of the negotiated change of school, and provide the parents/carers with information about why the change is an option.
- 5.5 The following matters should be considered:
 - 5.5.1 Why a fresh start at a new school would be of benefit to the student;

- 5.5.2 The environment that would best provide for the student's learning, personal, social, emotional and spiritual needs;
 - 5.5.3 Which school would provide an educational program suitable to the student's needs, abilities, and aspirations;
 - 5.5.4 The process by which the change is to be negotiated;
 - 5.5.5 The support required by the student and parents/carers to make the transition;
- 5.6 If a negotiated change of school cannot be achieved, the student should remain enrolled at the College, unless the student is excluded.

6. Process to be followed for considering termination of enrolment

These are the elements in a process which the Head of College may initiate for considering the possible termination of a student's enrolment as the result of a disciplinary matter:

- 6.1 The student's enrolment is suspended due to the findings.
- 6.2 A summary of the findings shall be presented to the parents/carers via phone or in person prior to any meeting with the Head of College, and thereby any conversation associated. This is managed by the person leading the investigation, not the Head of College.
- 6.3 During the student's suspension, a person delegated by the Head of College (often the Head of Students) shall manage any further required thorough but expedient investigation into the matter under consideration, in order to ascertain all relevant facts, both those that are irrefutable and those that may be contested.
- 6.4 The outcome of the investigation and communication with the family or families is presented to the Head of College. As a Marist, the Head of College shall then take time and space to consider carefully all the issues, to consult, and to pray about it.
- 6.5 At a mutually agreeable time, and usually within a week, the parents/carers and student meet with the Head of College. The Head of College may choose to meet with the parents/carers before bringing in their son. During the meeting, the Head of College shall first gain assurance that the parents/carers know and understand the facts of what has occurred, and any relevant policies, statements and/or values and expectations of the College. The Head of College may include the Deputy Head of College (or other member of staff) in the meeting to assist in this. The Head of College shall enter into dialogue with the parents/carers to weigh up the various factors in play and the options before them. The Head of College shall try to arrive at a consensus with them on the best way forward for their student and for the College.
- 6.6 If the mutually agreed outcome is the termination of enrolment, the Head of College shall do all that is possible to have the student feel fairly treated, and with viable options for the next step in the student's life. The Head of College shall actively assist the family, if it wants, in arranging a start in another school or pathway.

- 6.7 Once the possibility of a student's termination becomes known by the Head of College, then the Head of College shall contact the Regional Director to discuss the matter, and keep the Regional Director informed as the process unfolds.
- 6.8 In the case that the matter involving the student's possible termination relates directly to the Head of College and when a conflict of interest may exist (for example, a credible threat of physical harm to the Head of College or the Head of College's family), then the Head of College shall exclude himself from decision-making, and defer to the Regional Director.
- 6.9 In the event that a mutually agreed outcome cannot be reached, and where the parents/carers feel that they wish to contest the Head of College's decision because of inadequacies of process or errors of fact, then the matter can be referred to the Regional Director of Marist Schools Australia. The Regional Director shall ascertain whether or not there is cause for a reconsideration of the matter, and commission an independent investigation to assist in this. Any process so initiated by the Regional Director shall be carried forward as expeditiously as possible.
- 6.10 In the event that parents/carers remain dissatisfied and opt for redress at law, then the College shall also normally refer further carriage of the matter to its own lawyers.
- 6.11 At the conclusion of a process of termination, the Head of College shall include a file note in the student's file which would include the reasons for the termination and any other information which the Head of College may judge relevant for the future.