



Solid Foundations Discipline Policy (2021/1)

Discipline begins at home. It is the parent’s God-given responsibility to love and discipline their child, and the school’s responsibility to maintain the high standard established by the parents.

Educators are encouraged to use positive reinforcement techniques primarily, before resorting to disciplinary action in the classroom.

1. The school does not condone children being kept in at break times as a form of discipline.
2. The school frowns upon global punishment for individual misbehaviour (i.e. the whole class should not be punished for an individual child’s bad behaviour).
3. Children will be categorised according to a colour status to keep track of their behaviour in the course of a school year.

	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red	Expulsion
Interpretation of status	Well behaved	We’re concerned	Formal warning	Final warning	
Consequence		“Time out” in office and a phone-call/ email to the parents informing them of their child’s new status.	“Time out” in office together with a formal “warning” letter emailed to the parents.	“Time out” in office together with a formal “final warning” letter emailed to the parents.	Child is requested to leave the school. The principal determines if expulsion is immediate or within a certain time period.

4. Every year, each child begins on “green status” in terms of their behaviour.
5. **The following indicates how a child moves from one coloured status to the next:**

<p><u>The child gets TWO demerits</u> <i>Teachers keep record of minor offences and notify the office when a demerit is warranted. The principal keeps record of demerits issued, including the date and nature of the offence – and notifies parents.</i></p>	<u>OR</u>	<p><u>The child commits ONE “serious offence”</u> <i>i.e. these offences count the same “weight” as two demerits. Record keeping of serious offences will also be administered by the school principal – noting the date and nature of the offence. Parents are notified.</i></p>
<p>Offences resulting in ONE demerit are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework not done • Name-calling causing another pupil undue stress • Provoking a fight • Swearing • Showing disrespect towards a teacher 		<p>These are regarded as “serious offences”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forging a parent’s signature • Hiding letters sent home from teachers to parents • <u>Deliberate</u> damage to school property, graffiti or vandalism (same applies to damaging other children’s or teacher’s property) • Lying to teachers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignoring the instructions of a teacher • Failing to get tests signed • Wearing incorrect school uniform without an explanation letter or explanation phone-call from parents • Wearing incorrect PT uniform without an explanation letter or explanation phone-call from parents • Losing workbooks • Lateness for school (3 occurrences) • Being in possession of a technological device without permission from the principal <p>(TWO of any of the abovementioned offences will result in a “status change”.)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blatant and clear defiance • Truancy • Cheating • Physical bullying* <p><i>*In the preschool grades, in this instance, the principal will be directly involved in determining if the offence is a “serious offence” or only “one demerit worthy”. Understanding the nature of young children and their tendency to solve disputes physically, this will be taken into consideration when determining the child’s status – based on the context of the offence. It is, however, expected that Grade 1 – 7 pupils have developed sufficient self-restraint and will be given a “serious offence” for any physical bullying.</i></p> <p>(ONE of any of the abovementioned offences will result in a “status change”.)</p>
---	--	--

6. If a child is on “red status”, they will remain at this status for **6 school weeks**. If they have proven faithful in the six weeks and have not received any new demerits/ committed any “serious offences”, they will be placed back into “orange status”.
7. A single demerit after red status is sufficient grounds to expel a pupil.
8. A child retains their “orange status” or “yellow status” for the entire duration of a school year. This cannot be changed back to a “lighter” status until a new school year begins.
9. The office will keep thorough records of the status of each child and the reason for their status. Parents may enquire at any time about their child’s status.
10. Teachers have the right **NOT** to issue a demerit if they believe that the offence was not demerit worthy. Teachers may also have their own homework punitive system in place in their classrooms e.g. a teacher may decide that for her subject only a certain repetitive number of homework offences will result in a demerit. Teachers may differ widely in their approach to homework control. Once a demerit is issued, however, the general discipline policy of the school will be in effect. Parents may not contest if a teacher chooses not to administer a “build-up of offenses system” and issues a demerit for a single offense listed in the table above.
11. In addition to the above-mentioned punitive actions, homework/assignments incomplete by the due date may also result in zero marks being allocated for the work. This decision is made at the discretion of the teacher. Not understanding, losing or forgetting the work at home will not be regarded as an adequate excuse. Completing the work in pencil is proof of an attempt at doing the homework, even if the work was not understood.
12. A child found committing an offence – with irrefutable evidence or with two or more witnesses – is expected to own up to the offence, face the status change consequences and apologise for his/her misdemeanour. If a child refuses to confess/ admit to wrong-doing (with the testimony of two witnesses or irrefutable evidence), after a 24-hour period, the additional offence of “lying to a teacher” will be added to his/her status.
13. The following offences will put a child directly in the “Red” category, regardless of any prior record of offences:
 - Possession of pornography on school premises
 - Theft

- Inappropriate displays or discussions about sexuality. Displays of promiscuity or sexual harassment.
 - Bullying causing serious physical harm to another pupil.
 - Posting inappropriate pictures, sexual content or demeaning information concerning a fellow pupil, teacher or the school in general on social media.
14. The following offences will result in direct and immediate expulsion from the school regardless of any prior offences:
- Smoking in or out of school in any form. This includes vaping, electronic smoking or the smoking of cigarettes in any form.
 - Being in possession of cigarettes, vaping instruments, drugs, alcohol or weapons on school property, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs on school property
 - Arson
 - Planning or executing a bomb threat
15. As a private school, the school trustees (Mrs Helmbold and Mrs Bradshaw) reserve the right to expel a pupil based on the principles outlined in this policy.
16. The trustees also reserve the right to expel a child who is already on yellow or orange status and who commits an offence that would ordinarily place a child directly in “red status” (see point 12 above)
17. Should a parent/ pupil feel the need to contest the issuing of a “serious offence” or “demerit”, they are most welcome to do so. The teacher, pupil and preferably, a parent, are invited to meet in the office to obtain all the necessary facts and the school principal will act as ombudsman in this regard.
18. Should a child reach the level of expulsion based on the offences and consequences expounded in this policy, the parents of the child are summoned to a formal hearing, chaired by the principal, whereby the evidence or testimonies related to the case are presented. The child is present at this hearing. The child will have the right to defend him/ herself. In this instance, the statutes of the Discipline Policy itself are not on the table for re-examination or debate, but the accuracy of the evidence/ testimonies presented against the pupil may be challenged. Once the verdict is decided, the parents and child have the right to appeal for a 5-day period. In this time, the evidence can be re-examined and the parents may request a second hearing to challenge the truthfulness of the evidence or testimony. Once expulsion is irrefutably ruled, the principal determines the date for the child to leave the school.
19. Should a family choose NOT to attend a hearing, this is regarded as an acceptance of the expulsion status of the child. Parents will be required to confirm in writing that they understand that their child will not be returning to school from the date stipulated by the principal. Failure to attend a hearing within a seven-day period of the child reaching expulsion status will be regarded as an acceptance of expulsion status, and will be confirmed by the principal in writing.
20. The school is a place of safety, peace and cooperation. The purpose of drafting this policy is not to intimidate the well-mannered delightful pupils to which we are accustomed, but to emphasize the unfortunate consequences for those who would threaten the innocent’s serenity by their disrespectful conduct.