



## Responsible Thinking Process Policy

Policy Number	Date of Development	Implementation Date	Review Date	Reviewed By
GSCC - 003	March 2017	April 2017	November 2017	AP: Pastoral

### Policy Statement

Good Shepherd Catholic College has adopted a whole-school approach to discipline in the form of the Responsible Thinking Process (RTP). The Responsible Thinking Process is in place to manage student's behaviour. The underpinning element to the success of RTP are the student expectations and responsibilities as directed by the College, and by classroom teachers. The intent of this behaviour management process is to teach students to think of ways to reach their goals without violating the rights of others.

Good Shepherd Catholic College is focused on a holistic education within a welcoming and caring community, challenging all to maximise their potential, embracing their unique giftedness. As a College Community, it is vital that all members embrace authentic relationships, demonstrating mutual respect. The purpose of the Responsible Thinking Process is to ensure the rights of individuals are valued, specifically: students have the right to learn; teachers have the right to teach; students and staff have a right to feel safe at school.

This policy has been created in accordance with the Responsible Thinking Process, as implemented at Good Shepherd Catholic College. The Responsible Thinking Process values the classroom and outdoor areas as safe learning environments for work and leisure. It protects the rights of other students to learn and feel safe at school, and the teacher's right to teach without unacceptable disruptions.

### Policy Procedures

At Good Shepherd Catholic College, it is expected that students follow the behavioural expectations as directed by the College at all times. As RTP has a focus on disruption, it is imperative that all teaching staff clearly outline and go through their expectations/rules and procedures within the classroom prior to using the process. It is only fair that students know what is expected of them in the classroom.

As a part of the process, if students are demonstrating behaviours that do not comply with the Good Shepherd Catholic College student expectations, teachers will ask students a set of questions. **The Responsible Thinking Process only deals with disruptive behaviours.** Non-disruptive issues such as not working, not completing homework, lateness etc. should be dealt with in the classroom. Serious behaviour breaches will be referred to a member of the College Leadership Team.

#### Step 1

For disruptions to learning in the classroom, behaviours that compromise the health of safety of others or any other breach of expectations in the school grounds, students will be asked a set of questions in a calm and respectful manner:

1. What are you doing?
2. What should you be doing? or
3. What are the rules?
4. What will happen if you disrupt again?

These questions act as a warning for a student to adjust their behaviour to stay in class. If a student responds appropriately to the questions, offer some encouragement and continue teaching

#### **Noncompliance**

If a student does not respond appropriately to the RTP questions, simply ask one more question.

1. Are you willing to work on this with me or not?

If students say they are willing to engage in the process, ask the original questions again. If they say no, or offer another inappropriate answer, complete the referral form, ask them to leave the classroom to go to the Responsible Thinking Classroom. At this point teachers will also call the RTC to inform them that a student is on their way. If a student refuses to leave the classroom, a Pastoral Leader or member of the College Leadership Team should be contacted.



## **Automatic Referral**

On some occasions, a breach of expectations is more serious, and will result in an automatic referral to the Responsible Thinking Classroom. Should this occur, the teacher will still ask the student a set of questions:

1. What are you doing?
2. What should you be doing?
3. What are the rules?
4. Where do you need to go now?

*At this point in the process for an automatic referral, you would proceed to Step 3*

Examples of automatic referrals include: serious breaches of safety expectations, failing to follow instructions the first time, refusal to engage in the questioning process, serious behaviour disruptions, chewing gum.

It is vital that these questions are asked, as this ensures students are reminded of the classroom expectations, and are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour. Students **must** be asked these questions, because without the opportunity to reflect and improve, the process does not work.

There are some instances where Automatic Referrals are so serious that they result in an Automatic Referral Home (Appendix 1 outlines this procedure).

## **Step 2**

If students answer the questions and resumes learning but later disrupts again, they are asked a second set of questions:

- What are you doing?
- What should you be doing?
- What did you say would happen if you disrupted again?
- Where do you need to go now?

In responding to these questions, students are acknowledging that they understand the process.

At this point a student is referred to the Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC). The classroom teacher is to detail the disruption/ breach of College expectations on the 'Pink Slip', which is sent to the RTC with the student. Phone the RTC on extension 150 to inform staff that a student has been referred.

## **Step 3**

If a student is asked the questions from Step 2, they must then make their way promptly to the Responsible Thinking Classroom. The Responsible Thinking Classroom is supervised during all class times, and is a space where students are asked to reflect on their behaviour. Here they consider ways to prevent breaches of expectations from occurring. This reflection culminates in the creation of a plan, which documents their reflection and strategies for improved classroom behaviour. Staff in the RTC will assist students with their plan if required.

## **Step 4**

In order to re-enter the classroom, both the student and teacher must come to an agreement regarding their re-entry plan, this is the negotiation stage of the process. This process allows students an opportunity to explain how they are going to deal with the problem the next time it occurs. Negotiation is critical to building student-teacher relationships. On the pink-slip, teachers must allow numerous opportunities for students to negotiate. It is the responsibility of the student to approach their teacher for negotiation. A plan should never be ignored or refused; if part of their plan is unacceptable, alternatives should be offered. Using questions can help students through the negotiation process:

- Tell me about your plan?
- What will you do if you find yourself in this situation again?
- What might I see if you are following your plan successfully?
- What could make it difficult for you to complete your plan?
- If you are having difficulty with your plan, to whom will you go for help?



## The Responsible Thinking Classroom

Through the Responsible Thinking Process, support is provided by way of the Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC). Here, away from disturbances students are able to reflect on their actions, and create a plan for improvement. The RTC is supervised during all class times, and these supervisors are responsible for the day-to-day management of the process.

Some important notes in relation to RTP include:

- Students should miss no more than three classes before negotiation and re-entry is complete.
- Students are only referred to the RTC for the class/teacher they disrupted.
- Each time a student is referred to the RTC, the supervisor will log their details into the data capture system.
- Student attendance in the RTC is monitored carefully.

## Expected Outcomes

### RTP Escalation Process

#### Step 1

Teachers are to notify parents when a student has been referred to the RTC. After speaking with a parent/guardian, this notification will be entered onto the student management system.

**Note:** teachers do not need to contact parents regarding gum referrals.

#### Step 2

A Pastoral Leader will notify parents if students have disrupted more than **3 times within a 3-week** period, this will result in a Support Team meeting at the College.

**Note:** chewing gum referrals are not included in this tally.

#### Step 3

A member of the College Leadership Team will request an interview with the student, parents and Pastoral Leader if RTC referrals continue after Step 2. At this point in the process, students will withdraw from class for one (1) day to reflect on College expectations.

#### Step 4

A member of the College Leadership Team will request another interview with the student, parents and College Principal if RTC referrals continue after Step 3. At this point in the process, students will withdraw from the College for two (2) days to reflect on College expectations.

#### Step 5

On return from the withdrawal, the student and parents will meet with the Principal to complete a re-entry into the College.

#### Step 6

Upon re-entry to the College, if a student continues to breach expectations, a meeting with the student, parents and Principal will automatically occur to discuss the continued enrolment at the College.



## Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure the Responsible Thinking Process is effective and authentic students, teachers and parents must engage in the process.

Students will:

- Come to class prepared to follow expectations as directed by the College and classroom teachers.
- Acknowledge that different teachers/subjects have different expectations. This is particularly in relation to areas with health and safety concerns.
- Engage in the questioning process calmly and respectfully.
- Reflect on the behaviour, and its impact on others in the class.
- Complete a plan that is thoughtful and realistic. This plan should explain clearly the behaviours students should be demonstrating in class.
- Negotiate with the referring teacher within three lessons, to ensure there is no disadvantage to learning.
- Re-enter the class with a yellow slip, prepared to follow the negotiated plan.
- Follow the re-entry plan, being sure to follow College and classroom expectations.

Teachers will:

- Clearly and thoroughly explain classroom expectations.
- Consistently use the Responsible Thinking Process, as appropriate for each class.
- Follow the process, ensuring students are asked two sets of questions before being sent to the RTC (note: there would only be one set of questions if it is an automatic referral)
- Provide a detailed explanation of the breach of expectations on the RTP Pink-Slip.
- Ensure there are multiple opportunities for students to negotiate their re-entry.
- Engage in a genuine negotiation with the student. Suggest alternatives for the plan if it is insufficient to warrant their return to class.
- Contact a parent/guardian on the same day of the referral, informing them of the breach of expectations.
- Record the contact home on Data Jug, detailing the conversation.
- Follow up with students who have not negotiated (this may require the involvement of Pastoral Leader in some cases).

Parents can be supportive by:

- Reinforcing College expectations (as stated in the student diary) with children.
- Contacting the relevant Pastoral Leader if there are any concerns regarding the Responsible Thinking Process.
- Keeping the Homeroom Teacher and Pastoral Leader informed of any issues that may be affecting a student's behaviour.
- Attending meetings at the College if requested.
- Working with the College to observe expectations, policies and procedures.



## Responsible Thinking Process Policy

### Appendix 1

#### 'Automatic Home' Referral

An 'Automatic Home' referral is the temporary, part-time or full-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend the College and/or school related functions for a defined period of time. It is our hope that the College staff and parents/caregivers will work together, with the aim of assisting a withdrawn student to re-join the College community as quickly as possible.

The decision to enact an Automatic Home can only be made by the College Principal or their delegate and will be used only when other available measures have been implemented without success, or where the situation is serious, or demands an immediate response. The College, the student and their parents/caregivers will use the 'Automatic Home' period as an opportunity to both reflect on the current difficulties and develop positive, student-focused reengagement strategies.

The Principal or their delegate may automatically refer a student home where behaviour includes the following:

- Breach of the Hands Off Rule (this includes violence or threat of serious physical violence)
- Persistent non-compliance: Students, who in their relationships with staff, are persistently disobedient, insolent or engage in verbal harassment and abuse.
- Persistent disruption: Students who persistently disrupt and prevent the learning and teaching of others; and
- Breach of College's Student Behaviour Management Policy
- Serious Breach of Student Expectations
- Possession of alcohol or a suspected illegal drug
- Concerning or serious sexual behaviour
- Malicious and wilful damage to School or others' property

Any single withdrawal from the College will observe the following guidelines:

- A student shall be suspended for the shortest time necessary
- Indefinite withdrawal, where a student is continually re-suspended for the maximum period will not occur
- College Withdrawal can be part-time, in which event the student is not permitted to attend school for certain times of the day or of the school week.

#### Notification to Parents/Caregivers an Automatic Home Referral:

- If a student exhibits any of the behaviours above, a parent or guardian will be notified and they will be required to collect the student from the College immediately.
- Though interviews or discussion may take place by phone, notification of suspension will be provided to parents/caregivers in writing. In all cases, the notification will:
  - Indicate the reasons for the 'withdrawal, referring to the serious breach of the College's expectations.
  - Advise the length of the withdrawal, the expected return date, the conditions to be met to enable return and the re-entry support process.
  - Outline the responsibility of parents/caregivers for the care and safety of the student who is under suspension.
  - Request a 're-entry interview' that would be attended by a parent/caregiver and the student prior to re-entry to school.
  - Refer parents/caregivers to the College's Behaviour Management and Responsible Thinking Process Policies.



- As soon as practicable after an Automatic Home is enforced, the Principal or their delegate will ensure a full report is written on the background and reasons for withdrawal, with the period of withdrawal clearly specified. A copy of the letter to the parents/caregivers is to be attached to the report. Copies of the report and attached letter shall be placed onto the student management system.
- All automatic home referrals are forwarded to the Townsville Catholic Education Office to be signed by the College's Education Consultant.

**Other Points Regarding Automatic Home Referrals:**

- The College is not obliged to provide a student with schoolwork during an Automatic Home withdrawal period; however, the Principal or their delegate may provide such work if they consider it appropriate to do so.
- Parents/caregivers have responsibility for their children while they are withdrawn from the College, and as such have a responsibility to provide appropriate supervision.
- The student may not attend the College or school-related functions unless otherwise arranged by the Principal or their delegate.
- Students attending special programs, such as school based apprenticeships or training, are not automatically precluded from attending their program if they are temporarily withdrawn from the College.