CASTLE COVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Student Welfare Policy

Information for Parents
CASTLE COVE PUBLIC SCHOOL
School Rules and Code of Conduct

Our school rules are:

- Be Safe
- Be Fair
- Be Responsible

This applies to students whenever they are in the care of or being supervised by a teacher or could reasonably be seen to be acting as a student of Castle Cove Public School including:

- In classrooms
- In the playground
- On excursions
- While travelling to and from school.

Teachers discuss these rules with their students regularly and copies are displayed in classrooms and on the playground.
School Merit System

As well as individual class award systems, students also receive recognition for positive behaviour through a whole school merit system.

**Level 1**
- **Castle Cards**
  - Collect 10 Castle Cards for positive behaviour in the classroom or the playground

**Level 2**
- **Merit Awards**
  - Trade 10 Castle Cards in class for a Merit Award or
  - Receive a Merit Award at the weekly assembly

**Level 3**
- **Bronze, Silver, Gold Awards**
  - After 10 Merit Awards (including any A-Day Awards, which count as one Merit Award only) have been collected, a Bronze Certificate is awarded.
  - When 10 more Merit Awards are collected, students receive a Silver Certificate, and when 10 more Merit Awards have been collected again a Gold Certificate is awarded. The Gold Awards are accompanied with a school patch that can be sewn on to the uniform or kept somewhere special at home.

**Level 4**
- **Award Cycle 2**
  - Once a Gold Certificate has been awarded, the cycle starts again and students are awarded with Bronze 2, Silver 2 and Gold 2 Awards. Each subsequent Gold Level is issued with a bar to sew onto the uniform or keep somewhere special at home.
School Merit System

House Points
A house point system runs in conjunction with the Castle Card system. Students can earn points for their house group. At the end of the year, a trophy is awarded to the winning house. Points are earned through participation in various sporting events, such as carnivals. In Stages 2 and 3 they may also be awarded for positive behaviour. In these instances a Castle Card is awarded as well.

A-Day Awards
At the end of each term a special assembly is held to recognise students demonstrating positive behaviours and values. Each term recognises one of the following themes:
- Citizenship
- Attitude and Approach to Learning
- Creativity
- Academic Achievement and Excellence.

A-Day awards are equal to one Merit Award and, if awarded, should be included in the 10 merit cards required to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.
Strategies for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour

For minor breaches, consequences include a reprimand, warning, time out or loss of privilege. For further details, see the example classroom management plans and the procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour in the playground.

Formal in-school suspensions can be used when behaviour is repeated and/or aggressive. In more serious cases, out of school suspensions can be imposed.

Where appropriate, strategies that allow for restitution are taught. Restitution is a collaborative problem solving approach in which the student concerned faces the consequences of his or her action and focuses on ‘making things right’ or redressing damage.

These strategies are intended to teach positive behaviours, not to put the student on an endless journey of increasingly severe punishments. While most students will respond quickly to a standard set of procedures, some may not and will require an individual behaviour management plan.

The individual plans are devised by a team, including the classroom teacher and the grade supervisor. Often the parents, school counsellor and school principal are asked to assist in creating and managing the plan.
Examples of Classroom Management Plans

Some Reward Systems

- Castle Cards and House Points – These are used in accordance with our merit system policy.
- Group/Table Points – groups receive points for achievements such as working quietly and keeping their area tidy. The winning group receives an award, such as a sticker, or the right to go out to the playground first.
- Class Points – Good behaviour by the entire class may earn points towards a reward such as 5 minutes free play or game time.

Typical Consequence Systems (Early Stage 1-Stage 2)

Disruptive/Inappropriate behaviour:
- 2 reminders
- If the behaviour continues after 2 reminders, the student has a 5 minute time out in the classroom or withdrawal area.
- If the behaviour resumes after time out, the student is sent to another teacher’s room for a 10 minute time out. At CCPS, a buddy teacher system is in place to support each other in these instances.
- If work missed during time out, children may be required to complete it at lunch or for homework.
- If the disruptive or inappropriate behaviour is ongoing, the teacher consults with their supervisor to develop an individualised behaviour plan.

Consequence System (Stage 3)

Disruptive/Inappropriate Behaviour:
- A general reminder to the whole group focusing everyone on appropriate behaviour
- 1 reminder
- If the behaviour continues after a reminder, a 2nd reminder is given. In addition the student then writes a letter of apology to their teacher during recess, lunch or at home. The letter must outline:
  1. What the unacceptable behaviour was.
  2. Why the unacceptable behaviour occurred.
  3. Future action to eliminate the unacceptable behaviour.
Consequence System (Stage 3 cnt)

The letter is to noted in the student’s diary and returned to school the following day, having been signed by their parent or caregiver

If three letters of apology are written in one term a meeting with the student’s parents, teachers and possibly the principal is arranged to develop strategies to reduce the frequency of inappropriate behaviour.
Procedures for Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviours in the Playground

Unacceptable behaviour varies in the playground, and teachers endeavour to provide consequences that match the nature of the behaviour.

Unacceptable behaviour in the playground is managed in the following ways:

### Unsafe or Inappropriate Behaviour

1. **Warning** – The student is given a verbal reminder of the rules and why the behaviour is inappropriate.

2. **Time Out** – If the initial behaviour continues after a verbal reminder, the student is placed in time out for 5 minutes in designated area. After time out the student returns to play, except in the case of serious incidences (see procedures for physical or verbal aggression).

3. **Yellow Card** – When unacceptable behaviour persists after the first warning and time out, a Yellow Card is written for the student as an indicator that the student has continued with unacceptable behaviour. Yellow Cards are referred to an executive member of staff. In addition, the student is given time out for the remainder of the play period.

### Physical/Verbal Aggression

1. **Time Out** – Student/s are immediately placed in time out for 5 minutes regardless of their reasons for the behaviour. This will give them time to “cool off” while the teacher on duty investigates the incident.

   **Yellow Card** – All physical and verbal aggression immediately results in a Yellow Card being written. This is given to an executive member of staff as soon as possible.

   **Investigate** – While the student is in time out, the teacher on duty attempts to investigate the incident to determine its causes. Depending on the outcome the teacher may need to take further action such as peer mediation, or issuing consequences to other children involved.

2. **Removal from play** – If the same students are involved in further acts of physical or verbal aggression during the play period they are removed from the playground area and another yellow card is issued. An executive staff member is informed immediately.

*In cases of extreme, uncontrolled aggression it is appropriate for teachers to remove student from play for a longer period and send for an executive member of staff.*
The Yellow Card System

What is the yellow card system?
The yellow card system is part of our student welfare policy. It assists the school in monitoring student behaviour and in identifying students who may be experiencing social difficulties in the playground.

How are they used?
Yellow cards are used to report concerns about students in the playground. Behaviours that might warrant a yellow card include teasing, physical or verbal abuse, playing in an out of bounds area or refusal to follow a teacher’s instructions.

The teacher issuing the yellow card also deals with the behaviour at the time. Consequences for inappropriate behaviour vary depending on what the child has done. In some cases a verbal reminder or a discussion that redirects the child towards appropriate play may be enough. In other cases the child may be sent to a time out area. In more serious cases the child may be removed from the playground for a period of time.

As well as issuing a consequence, the duty teacher writes a brief description of the behaviour on a yellow card along with its consequence. The yellow card is then given to a member of the school executive.

What happens next?
The school executive reviews the yellow card to determine if further action is warranted. In most cases no action is required because the playground consequence was enough. However, if the behaviour was more serious, or it becomes clear that the child is repeating the behaviour, the executive may determine that follow up is required.

The type of follow up is determined by the child and the behaviour. In some cases follow up will involve contacting the child’s parents. In other cases the executive may find that a quiet word with the child or children involved is enough to stop the behaviour repeating. In all cases follow up is aimed at helping the child function happily and safely in the playground.

Why is it necessary?
A reporting process such as the yellow card system is required by schools because children interact with different teachers in the playground each day. A behaviour that appears minor could be repeating regularly and be evidence of a deeper problem.
Here are two examples of repeated minor incidents that could indicate a deeper problem:

1. A child is found playing in an out of bounds area of the school three days in a row. On the first occasion the child would simply be asked to rejoin the playground. If the child was found to be regularly repeating the behaviour the executive would do some follow up.

In a meeting with the child the executive discovers that the reason he goes to an out-of-bounds area to avoid some children in the playground who often tease him. At this point executive would take action to prevent the teasing and work with the children involved. The child who received a yellow card would not be punished, but instead would be guided to more effective strategies for dealing with teasing, such as reporting it to a teacher.

2. A child repeatedly kicks children in the ankles when trying to kick a soccer ball. On the first occasion, and if there was no loss of temper, the teacher would probably deem it to be an accident. However, if it became clear that this child was kicking people in every play period the executive would need to follow up with the child and devise a strategy to help that child engage in play without causing injury.

Other questions:

Should parents receive a yellow card notification?
Only if the behaviour is serious enough to warrant it. The yellow card is a device for reporting minor issues as well as more serious ones. Parents do not need to be informed of an accidental kick, or a warning for being out of bounds.

How many cards does a child need to get before their parents are contacted?
This will vary depending on the reasons for the yellow card. In some cases parents will be notified of an incident immediately. Another child may be issued 4 or 5 yellow cards and their parents not be informed because each incident was unrelated to the former ones and all were minor in nature.

Is this system uniformly practiced across the school?
Acts of violence and abuse should automatically lead to a yellow card. Teachers use their discretion for other incidents and may use other methods to report their concerns.

Do the kids know how the system works?
Yes, the yellow card system is explained to the children at various points in the year. If it becomes clear that students don’t understand the system we take the opportunity to explain it again.

What is the life of a yellow card?
Yellow cards are filed for one year. The cards of children about whom there are particular concerns may be kept for longer.

Do a certain number mean suspension?
No. Yellow cards are used to assist in the identification of students having difficulty socialising in the playground and are given for many different types of behaviours. Each situation is unique therefore there can be no automatic consequences.
What can you do if you have a problem?

- **Meet with the Teacher**
  
  Seeking information as early as possible can solve many problems. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone conversation or meeting.

- **Meet with the stage supervisor or school principal**
  
  If you have been unable to solve your problem by meeting with the class teacher, the school executive may be able to help you. You can contact the school office to make an appointment with the stage supervisor for your child or with the principal.

When you have a problem

- Try to identify the problem clearly before going to the school. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear.

- Decide whether the problem is a query, a concern or a complaint. This will help in finding a solution.

- Try to stay calm. Even if you don't feel it, being calm will help to get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.
What to do if you think your child is being bullied.

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

*Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy*

*NSW DEC*

If you think a student at Castle Cove Public School might be being bullied, please report it to the school as early as possible.

Some parents are reluctant to report bullying at first, because they do not want to get other students in trouble. However, it is better to “nip things in the bud” rather than allow things to escalate.

When making a report, try to include as much information as possible including times and dates, names of students involved and details of the incident. If it is an incident of cyberbullying, such as an inappropriate email, provide a copy of the email with your report. The more information we have, the easier it is to investigate.

Reports can be made to the classroom teacher, the stage supervisor or the school principal.

After a report has been made, the school investigates the incident. We do not assume that students accused of bullying are actually involved in bullying. In some cases, the students accused do not even realise that their behaviour could be perceived as bullying by another student.

Investigation may involve speaking with students and witnesses, observations of playground behaviour and the keeping of anecdotal records.

In most cases, these situations are resolved through peer mediation, however, in more serious cases, some sanctions may need to be applied. Incidents are dealt with case by case and the school’s response will differ depending on the circumstances.