



FAITHFULNESS IN SERVICE

BISHOP DRUITT COLLEGE

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BISHOP DRUITT COLLEGE STATEMENT ON PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals. In cases where there is a perceived incongruence between an individual's actions and College rules and expectations the College will aim for a fair decision, reached by an objective decision making process.

Procedural fairness seeks to ensure that decisions affecting all members of the community are reached only after the individual has been made aware of the allegations made against him or her. It also seeks to ensure that the individual has had the opportunity to present his or her claims in relation to the issues and the proposed decisions affecting him or her.

Procedural fairness also requires that the decision maker reaches a decision on the issue in an impartial manner. Care should be exercised to exclude real or perceived bias from the process.

Bishop Drutt College will follow the principles set out below, including dealings with students potentially facing suspension and expulsion.

Procedural fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements.

1. The right to be heard which includes:

- the right to know why the action is happening
- the right to know the way in which the issues will be determined
- the right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account
- the right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations.

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision, which includes:

- the right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases
- the right to an absence of bias by the decision maker.

Bishop Drutt College staff will direct staff, students and parent(s) or carer(s) to the relevant policies and procedures in the Student Diary or other relevant policy statements held by the College.

Both the investigative and decision-making stages will be conducted in a reasonable and objective manner aiming to act justly and arrive at a just decision. With regard to students, when investigating complicated issues that have the potential to lead to expulsion the Principal will endeavour to include the Assistant Principal as part of the investigation, wherever possible. Use of the College's Chain of Command will assist in ensuring the fairness of the process and may serve to minimise any potential conflict of interest.

To ensure the elements of procedural fairness are met, it is appropriate to provide staff, students and their parent(s) or carer(s) with details of all allegations relating to the incident. This usually will involve providing copies of any relevant statements. However, if it is determined that it is not appropriate to provide copies of statements, for example, because of a fear that witnesses may be intimidated, full details of the allegation(s) outlined in the statements should be provided.

If a long suspension or expulsion is a possible outcome of a disciplinary enquiry, the seriousness of the circumstances will be communicated to the student and a support person/observer may be arranged for formal interviews. Circumstances that may lead to long suspension or expulsion require particular emphasis on procedural fairness.

Key points of fact and agreements reached during formal disciplinary interviews should be taken down in writing.

Roger Oates
PRINCIPAL
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