

# OLNEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



425 E. Roosevelt Blvd. Phila, PA 19120  
[www.olneychristianschool.org](http://www.olneychristianschool.org)  
215.324.2323

## Discipline Policy

### Definition of Discipline

*ES and MS Student Handbooks 2023-2024*

Olney Christian defines discipline as the process of training students to love God and love others. We are not surprised when our students make poor choices since that reflects the sin that is in all of us. We will use biblical principles when we respond to those poor choices that include: forgiveness, making amends, restoration of fellowship, and reaping what you sow (logical consequences).

Our teachers are the primary disciplinarians in the classroom. We have hired teachers who we are confident will be good role models for students. Our teachers are expected to love and respect our students as Christ loves his church; lovingly disciplining and guiding their students towards spiritual, social and academic growth. The beginning of every school year will focus on building relationships with students and establishing strong classroom communities. These will serve as the foundation for any needed discipline interventions.

### Goals of discipline

1. The primary goal of all discipline measures will be the character growth of the child.
2. To build strong classroom communities.
3. To teach students how to solve their own problems.
4. To create a classroom environment that maximizes learning for each student.

### Role of parents

Olney Christian School believes that discipline is most effective when the school and parents work as a team. Parents have the ultimate authority and responsibility for the training of their children. The school seeks to partner with and support parents in raising children who love God and love others. Part of the partnership would be the full support of parents in enforcing school rules: including having someone designated to pick up a student who is being sent home for disciplinary reasons and managing at-home suspensions in a way that the student does not experience suspensions as “fun”.

If parents have questions or concerns about the discipline methods being used in the classroom, they are invited to arrange for a meeting with their student’s teacher. If that does not resolve their concern, then they can contact the principal. If the teacher and principal are not able to resolve concerns in a satisfactory manner, then parents will be directed as to how to contact the board. Please note that decisions made by the school board are final.

### Categories of misconduct

Misconduct is classified and divided into three categories depending on the seriousness of the violation.

#### Category 1

Category 1 misconduct includes minor issues that interfere with school or classroom order and instruction. Examples of Category I misconduct includes: excessive talking; meanness in words and actions; calling out; writing or passing notes; profanity; repeated inattention/sleeping; uniform violations and cell-phone policy violations. Also included in Category One is showing a lack of respect for authority. For example: disrespect for adults as evidenced by talking back, not following directions promptly and asking questions in an inappropriate manner.

### **Category 1 Interventions**

Most category 1 offenses will be handled at the classroom level. Discipline will be handled by the classroom teacher as much as possible. Teachers will use a set of interventions that include: non-verbal redirects, quiet verbal coaching and the class cool-down corner.

If these methods do not produce the desired change then teachers will follow the following procedure:

1. The student will be sent to another classroom for **Recovery**. The goals of recovery are two-fold: 1) To give the student space and strategies to emotionally regulate. 2) solve the problem the student helped to create. Students will complete a problem-solving worksheet while in Recovery.
2. Teachers will follow-up on every visit to recovery with a **heart-to-heart conversation**. These conversations are intended to be discipleship oriented. They will focus on: showing empathy, giving practical help in problem-solving and offering hope and encouragement through Scripture and prayer.
3. A student may also receive a **consequence** designed to help motivate them to make the desired changes. Consequences are not intended to be punishment but rather motivators.
4. For students who are sent to Recovery multiple times for the same offense:
  - a. First and second time: will be visible to parents on Teacher Ease.
  - b. Third time: the problem solving worksheet that was filled out in Recovery will be sent home for parents to review and sign. Students will not be permitted back in class without a signed form. Parents will be alerted that the form is coming home via email.
  - c. Fifth time: a conference call will be scheduled with parents, student, the student's advisor and other teachers as needed.
  - d. Eighth time: An in-person meeting with principal, parents, student and teachers will be scheduled
  - e. Eleventh time: Student will be suspended and return to school on probation. Please see below for a more complete description of probation.

Note: Repeated category 1 offenses could result in category 2 consequences.

### **Category 2**

Category 2 misconduct includes behaviors that represent a larger threat to the classroom and school community. Examples of typical Category 2 offenses include:

1. Using their hands or feet to solve their problems. For example: pushing another student to get to their place in line. Students will be held to this standard even if they are provoked by another student. **Our goal is to train students to choose to walk away or use their words or other resources to solve conflicts.**
2. Fighting. Using physical force to hurt someone else, whether the other person "started it" or not. **"Play-fighting" is also not permitted. It is our experience that incidents of physical playfulness escalate far too easily into situations where one person thinks that they are still playing but it no longer feels like a game to one or both of the students.**
3. Threats. Making a verbal, written or electronic statement of intent to harm another student, teachers or administration or the school building. ***This includes threats that were intended to be a joke.***
4. Cheating and/or plagiarism (see appendix on Academic Integrity for a more complete explanation)
5. Bullying including cyberbullying (see the appendix for more information)
6. Sexual Misconduct (see the appendix for more information)
7. Frequent and repeated Category 1 violations.

## **Category 2 interventions:**

Category 2 violations will likely result in an in-school or at-home suspension. In order to be reinstated to the school community guardians and students will be required to attend a conference with the teacher and administration.

## **Probation**

At Olney Christian School, a student may be placed on probation when the principal, with the agreement of the school board and input of the student's classroom teacher, judges that a change of behavior and attitude is necessary for the student to continue at the school.

The most likely (but not the only) reason for a student to be placed on probation are:

- A student has been suspended
- A student's behavior has repeatedly violated school rules
- A student has repeatedly acted in a way that is disruptive to the learning environment of the classroom and/or school community.
- A student has jeopardized the safety and well-being of the school community

The goal of probation will be to work at school and at home to try to change a specific behavior pattern. A lack of changed behavior could lead to expulsion.

## **Category 3**

Category 3 misconduct includes activities that violate federal, state, or city laws, or that violate Biblical moral codes of conduct. It also includes activities that might result in jail time if the student were an adult. Examples of category three misconduct include:

1. Destroying school property and/or vandalism,
2. Stealing
3. Being under the influence of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs or tobacco while on the school campus
4. Possession of weapons (Items such as knives, mace, pepper spray, lighters, switch blades, hunting-type knives) explosive devices (including fireworks, etc.) or other objects that could be used as weapons must not be brought to school or to any school-sponsored function
5. Pornography or engaging in sexual immorality
6. Starting fires, pulling fire alarms
7. Frequent and repeated Category 2 violations.

## **Category 3 Violation Consequences**

Category 3 violations will result in an automatic suspension and possible expulsion from the school. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted if necessary. Because the goal of our disciplinary program is restoration, each situation will be dealt with on an individual basis with parent involvement. Special consideration may be given to any student who comes voluntarily to the administration and displays an attitude of openness and honesty.

During or immediately after the suspension, parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to have a hearing with the school board. At the hearing, parents, and possibly students, will have the chance to offer explanations and possible solutions. The school board will then make decisions about the student's future involvement at Olney Christian. Their decision will be final.

## **Parent violations and consequences**

If any person connected to a child enrolled at Olney Christian behaves in an aggressive or violent way while on the school campus, at a bus stop or on a field trip, that person will no longer be allowed in the school building. If the offense happens at a bus stop, that student will no longer be permitted to ride the bus. Please remember that you can be arrested for stepping onto a school bus. Aggressive or violent behavior by a guardian/adult sibling will likely be cause for immediate expulsion of the enrolled student.

Parents are encouraged to avoid gossip and slander and instead arrange to meet with teachers and/or the principal if they are dissatisfied with some aspect of their student's school experience. Parents who use indirect or passive/aggressive methods to address their concerns jeopardize the health of the entire school community. Repeated offenses could lead to a child not being accepted for re-enrollment the following school year.