

STUDENT INTERVIEWS

POLICY

Rationale:

Schools have an obligation to ensure that students are made available for interviews where appropriate, but must at the same time ensure that students are not subjected to inappropriate interviews, are protected from interviews with people who do not have a right to interview the child, that parents rights are upheld, and that the urgency of matters is considered.

Aims:

To ensure that both the school's obligations and student's rights are being met when students are being requested to be interviewed by outside agencies.

Implementation:

- The rights of students, parents and external agencies such as the police in matters relating to the interviewing of students at school are complex and circumstantial.
- All interviews with students by external agencies must be brought to the attention of and approved by the principal or his/her representative.
- Generally, student interviews with police or explosive inspectors or Department of Human Services workers will only occur if parents are notified and give consent and/or are present (or a parent nominee is present). However if the matter is of such an urgent nature as judged by the principal that time forbids parents being contacted or that delays for parent approval may cause physical injury to a person, or a miscarriage of justice, or that there are reasonable grounds for excluding the parents (eg: suspected case of child abuse) the principal may approve of the interview and the principal (or their adult nominee if appropriate) will be present and represent the student/parents interests during the interview.
- Instances where police or explosive inspectors wish to interview a student at school because they are suspected of an offence will only be permitted to proceed by the principal in the absence of parents or their nominee in very urgent and extreme circumstances where delays may cause the safety of others to be put at imminent risk.
- All students involved in interviews will be informed that a note of the circumstances and the content of the interview will be made and communicated to their parents/guardians as soon as possible, unless provision of the interview details will put the student or others at risk.
- Parents not present at student interviews will be provided with a note of the circumstances and content of the interview as soon as possible, unless provision of the interview details will put the student or others at risk.
- The principal or their nominee who attends the interview with a student in the absence of their parents (or their nominee) must support the student, ensure the student understands what is happening, ensure the student understands their rights, inform the student in serious cases that they may not answer questions but seek legal advice, take notes of the interview, refrain from passing judgement and generally act in the interests of the student.

Evaluation:

To be reviewed as part of the school's three-year cyclic review process, or as changes in the law or Department of Education protocols dictate.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

March 2015