

James Sheahan Catholic High School

Merit Level System

Student Guide



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Introduction – Why have a Merit Level System?

The Merit Level System will allow you to be recognised and rewarded for achievement, effort and excellence. You will be able to manage your own behaviour whilst at school or when in school uniform. You should be able to look after yourself, other students and your school. It is hoped that through actively engaging with the Merit Level System you will develop a sense of belonging in your school community, which will in turn nurture in you a positive self-image and identity.

The Merit Level System is integral to James Sheahan's Positive Behaviour for Learning program. It encourages students to Be Safe, Be a Learner and Be Respectful.

It should be your goal to advance your way through the levels. You are encouraged to discuss your ongoing level promotion with your Year Coordinator. The Merit Level System recognises a number of areas in which you may contribute to school life.

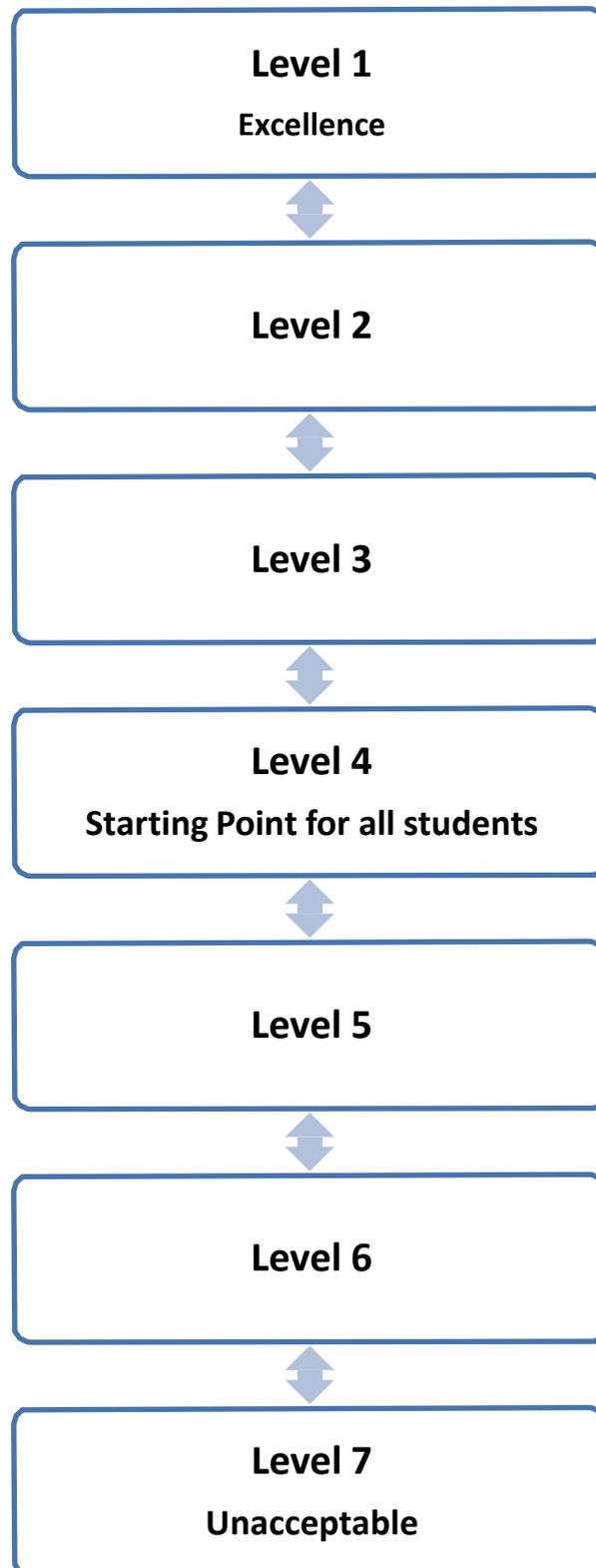
- Academic Achievement
- Application to studies (effort)
- Student Leadership
- Service to the wider community
- School Service eg house-based initiatives, sports days, fundraising
- Contribution to performing arts eg drama, music, production, choir, band, dance
- Exemplary attendance, eg classes, carnivals and special days
- Sporting representation and assisting with coaching of teams
- Extra-curricular representative eg chess, debating, public speaking, Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Involvement in the religious life of the school eg Minister of Holy Communion, Altar Servers, processors, reading at Mass
- Being recognised for positive behaviour through the receipt of blue tickets.

Students who continually contravene school rules will move down through the levels until such time that their behavioural issues are rectified. Those who are experiencing discipline problems will be provided with as much support and guidance as is necessary to help them to overcome their challenges and take control of their behaviour. This also relies on parental support for the decisions that the school makes.

Year Coordinators and/or the Assistant Principal reserve the right to make decisions on level placements upon review of all available information.

The Level Systems provides a guide as to actions that may be taken by the school. The Principal reserves the right to impose consequences on a case-by-case basis reflecting the seriousness of individual incidents, the obligation of the school to ensure staff confidence in providing Duty of Care, to uphold the reputation of the school in the wider community, and to safeguard the wellbeing of all students and staff. Students may be banned for periods of time in participating in voluntary excursions and in school representation based on these considerations regardless of the level they are on. Parents would be informed of the reasons for such additional action at the time of the incident in such circumstances.

Outline of the Merit Level System



The Starting Point – Level 4

Level Description – LEVEL 4

All students will be placed at this level when they enrol at James Sheahan Catholic High School.

Students at this level:

- cooperate with teachers and peers and show respect for others
- meet their responsibilities eg homework, punctuality, assessment tasks, being prepared for lessons - allow learning to happen

A student at this level can expect:

- to enjoy the opportunity for full participation in school life eg Discos, Sport teams, cultural opportunities
- the opportunity to represent your peers at SRC level (Year 7 only)

The Positive Levels – Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3

Level Description - LEVEL 1

Also known as the James Sheahan Excellence Award. Students who have achieved this level have displayed an exceptional approach to their studies and have contributed to a wide range of activities. They have made a genuine commitment to improve the school community through leadership and service.

Students at this level have:

- demonstrated an excellent work ethic that is shown in semester reports, awards and/or consistency and effort certificates
- been involved in regular sustained community service and have served in a leadership or volunteer capacity for/in an outside organisation for at least two school terms
- demonstrated themselves to be a strong role model for other students
- shown outstanding commitment and achievement in at least four areas of school life
- allowed at least two terms to pass since their previous level advancement

A Student at this level can expect:

- to be presented with a Certificate at the school's annual Presentation Evening
- to receive a gift from the school including a Level 1 Badge
- to have their name published in the school newsletter/facebook/print media
- to have their name recorded on display board at the conclusion of their HSC year
- an invitation to a Principal's rewards lunch

Level Description - LEVEL 2

Students at this level have displayed a mature approach to their studies and have made a positive contribution to a range of activities at the school.

Students at this level have:

- completed regular sustained community service at a venue outside of school for one term
- a strong work ethic that has been reflected by the comments and effort grades on their semester reports which may be supported by academic excellence awards and/or consistency and effort certificates
- maintained excellent levels of attendance, conduct and grooming
- played a leadership role within the school community
- avoided detentions and negative referrals
- shown commitment and achievement in at least three areas of school life eg co and/or extra-curricular
- allowed at least two school terms to have passed since their previous level advancement

A Student at this level can expect:

- to be presented with a Certificate from the Principal
- an invitation to a rewards lunch

Level Description – LEVEL 3

Students at this level have worked consistently at their studies and have involved themselves in some aspects of school life. They have also shown respect for the rights of others and an ability to exercise responsibility.

Students at this level have:

- a sound and consistent work ethic that has been reflected by the comments/effort grades received in their semester/interim reports
- consistently received Compass positive entries on Compass
- been willing to involve themselves commendably in two aspects of school life eg co and/or extra-curricular
- met school expectations for uniform and grooming
- avoided detentions and negative referrals
- been punctual and recorded excellent attendance

A Student at this level can expect:

- Certificate by their Year Coordinator at their year meeting
- to be eligible to apply for a leadership position in the school (Years 8 to 10)

The Negative Levels - Level 5, Level 6 and Level 7

Regardless of current level, a student will automatically be demoted levels if they:

- are suspended
- the Year Coordinator determines through multiple regular negative entries on Compass that this is necessary. A letter of warning/phone call to parent/carer must precede this level change

Level Description - LEVEL 5

Students are placed at this level when their conduct indicates they are not cooperating with school rules and expectations.

Students at this level have (one or more):

- not applied necessary application and effort in two or more subjects
- not attempted homework or completed assessment tasks to an acceptable standard as determined by KLA Coordinator
- occasional disruption to the learning of others
- not respected the rights of their peers or members of staff
- been in repeated breach of school uniform and grooming expectations
- vandalism to personal or school property
- contravening the Positive Behaviour for Learning Expectations

A Student at this level can expect:

- a letter home to parents
- regular progress monitoring by Year Coordinator

Level Description - LEVEL 6

Students at this level have shown that they do not want to work within the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program. They exhibit negative attitudes about being at school.

Students at this level have (two or more):

- had repeated M2/Friday afternoon detentions
- not recognised the rights of others
- not taken responsibility for their actions
- continually disrupted the learning of others
- continually failed to complete homework and/or assessment tasks to an acceptable standard as determined by KLA Coordinators
- regularly truanted from school
- represented a threat to the safety of others
- contravened the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program
- "N" warning letters

A Student at this level can expect:

- withdrawal from classes
- to be placed on a Positive Behaviour for Learning monitoring card
- possible suspension (internal or external)
- parent/carer interview with Assistant Principal, or Year Coordinator
- referral to Counsellor and/or Careers Advisor
- involvement in school-based restorative activities
- exclusion from school representation and activities eg discos, sporting teams and non- compulsory school excursions

Level Description - LEVEL 7

Students at this level have not responded to the help and support afforded to them. They have continued to demonstrate overtly negative attitudes towards being at school.

Students at this level have all but exhausted the school's wellbeing resources and disciplinary measures.

A Student at this level can expect:

- notification that their enrolment is in jeopardy
- further parent/carer interview involving the Principal and/or Assistant Principal
- suspension (internal or external)
- renewal of Positive Behaviour for Learning monitoring card
- reduced attendance at school eg part days
- exclusion from all school representation, excursions and activities
- the Principal may recommend that a student take Principal's Leave for an
 - extended period
- the Principal may decide that the student's enrolment will be terminated
- if in Year 10, that a possible place in Senior School is in jeopardy

How do I go up a level (5 - 1)?

- Students are responsible for organising this through their Year Coordinator
- Students collect the relevant level change form from the Wellbeing Centre.
- Students complete this form and return the completed form to the Year Coordinator and they will make the decision about whether the promotion will go ahead.

How do I go up a level (7 - 6 and 6 - 5)?

- Students complete the Positive Behaviour for Learning Monitoring Card for a period of two weeks. This card must be completed following rules stipulated on the card. Students must also not receive any major negative incidents recorded on Compass.

Returning to where I was

- This does not happen automatically
- Students must apply using the appropriate "Request to Advance a Level" form
- Students must stay on the lower level for a minimum of two weeks

Ways in Which James Sheahan Supports Students in Maintaining their Positive Behaviour and Progressing Through Positive Levels

- Counselling/Involvement of Mental Health services
- Learning Enhancement Team
- Working with Parents to develop strategies
- Student Mentoring
- Teacher Mentoring
- Careers Advisor
- Intervention by Leadership Team
- Restorative Justice
- Positive Behaviour Monitoring Card
- Teacher teams
- Parent Teacher Meetings

Last Amended: 1 March 2019