

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

The Behaviour Management Policy of Melbourne Montessori School ('MMS') is based on the fundamental guiding of the educational philosophy of Dr Montessori.

These guidelines support our beliefs that:

- All children are born innocent
- With patience, love, sensitivity, respect and intuition, we can link the adolescent's inner drive for excellence with a supporting environment
- There is an interdependence between the student, the school, the family and the world
- Each student has a unique potentiality and that our task is to create an environment to assist its fruition
- It is only the student who can construct the person he or she will become
- Every student has the right to feel safe and be safe
- All students, staff and parents in the school have the right to enjoy an environment free from all forms of harassment and bullying, including racial, religious, physical, sexual and emotional
- With these rights come corresponding responsibilities of care and respect for others
- No corporal punishment will ever be allowed.

The values underlying the MMS Behaviour Management Policy are that its goal is to help create an individual who becomes self-disciplined (this includes having a well-developed and balanced conscience) and who has maturing attitudes about his/her social responsibilities.

The process by which the creation of self-discipline happens is a focus on work and concentration leading to normalisation and a strong, loving, consistent and respectful external discipline in Cycle 1, which during Cycle 2, 3, 4 and 5 gradually transforms into an internal and self-determined discipline.

SCOPE OF THE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. In the event of an antisocial act
2. Student's responsibilities
3. Teachers' responsibilities
4. Parents' responsibilities
5. Breach of the Policy

DEFINITIONS

Behaviour - is defined as the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others. In general terms, it can be considered to be anything we say or do.

Appropriate behaviour - is behaving in a manner that is suitable for a public gathering, respecting the other members of the forum (class, meeting, assembly, gathering) and treating others as you would wish to be treated. Members are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to show mutual respect, maturity, and common sense. In general, appropriate behaviour is any behaviour that contributes to the positive learning environment and aligns with our school rules, codes of conduct and behavioural expectations.

Inappropriate behaviour or unacceptable behaviour (including bullying, harassment and victimisation) - may involve actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be perceived to be the cause of another person's distress or discomfort. Unacceptable behaviour does not have to be face-to-face, and may take many forms such as gestures, written, telephone or e-mail communications or through social media.

Discipline - is a form of control of behaviour. Control may be exerted externally (eg through government, religion, parents or teachers) or internally (from a developed conscience).

Normalisation - is the integration of the mind, body and spirit of the child into a harmonious whole – see Montessori, Absorbent Mind).

Respect - is to show appreciation for another person's worth or qualities or point of view, personal physical space or body and property.

Bullying is an act of deliberate aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another:

- It is repeated over time
- It is an abuse of power
- It can take a number of forms – physical, verbal, extortion, gesture, and exclusion
- Individuals or groups may be involved
- The source of bullying is a personality which requires support from a positive environment in order to make the necessary changes
- Bullying is problematic for both the victim and the perpetrator.

Bullying may include:

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing, shoving or invasion of personal space
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- Name calling, teasing or spreading rumors about others or their families
- Using stand-over tactics, put-downs or belittling others abilities or achievements
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- Making degrading comments about another's appearance, culture, religious or social background
- Excluding others from a group with the intention to hurt the excluded person
- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual harassment
- Forcing others to act against their will
- Any anti-social online actions.

Discriminatory conduct - is conduct whereby an individual is treated less favourably on the basis of a relevant attribute, including their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, physical appearance or belief or gender reassignment. Such action may constitute discriminatory conduct that is contrary to Commonwealth and Victorian anti-discrimination legislation.

Challenging behaviour - is behaviour that significantly challenges the day to day functioning of the school. The behaviour impacts on learning and interrupts students' and staff capacity to feel safe or function in a safe and orderly environment.

At Risk behaviour - is any behaviour that has the potential to cause harm or injury to self or other. This includes physical, emotional or psychological harm.

Criminal offences - refers to forms of unacceptable behaviour that may be serious enough to constitute a criminal offence. If MMS becomes aware that an offence has been or may have been committed, these concerns will be reported to the police or other authorities, as appropriate.

PROCEDURES

1. In the Event of an Antisocial Act

- 1.1. When an antisocial act is observed or reported in the classroom or playground by a student, parent or teacher, it must be reported to the student's Advisor.
- 1.2. A teacher needs to speak to the student/students to identify the cause and result of the act.
- 1.3. If it falls into the bullying categories listed above, the student is warned and a commitment sought from the student that the act will not be repeated using the community conflict resolution procedure (Restorative Practices). Students are expected to seek resolution and strive to commit that it will not happen again.
- 1.4. If the act is repeated then parents will be asked to meet with the teacher or Advisor and student and together they will develop a set of agreed goals and behaviours. Notes are kept by the teacher.
- 1.5. If the behaviour continues after this and the agreement is breached, then the students will be excluded from certain classroom activities for an agreed period of time. Instead they will participate in other community building activities as deemed necessary. These are designed to prove the student is still willing to commit to participation in the community expectations.
- 1.6. All behaviour needs to be discussed at the following Staff Meeting (as part of the regular agenda item called Pastoral Care) and noted so that all teachers can act consistently. This information is confidential and kept online. Any classroom behaviour can be discussed with the Principal, Head of Campus or another member of staff on a need to know basis. Notes are kept by the Advisor of these discussions.
- 1.7. If the imposing of the consequences does not help to change the student's behaviour, the student's Advisor will meet with the parents (and in some cases the Principal or Head of Campus) to discuss why the student may be acting in this way and to work out strategies to help. Notes are kept by the teacher or Advisor.
- 1.8. External specialist assessment may be requested. This is funded by the parents.
- 1.9. If the student's behaviour is still not improving and the parents are not attending to appropriate support and the student is causing significant disruption the student may be asked to leave the school after a review of the case by the Principal. The Chairperson and Business Manager will be informed of this decision and the appropriate adjustments in the fees will be made.
- 1.10. For online anti-social behaviour refer to the Responsible Online Behaviour Policy.

Withdrawal from class – If a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class or where there is possibility of harm to others, that student may be temporarily removed from regular classroom activities. In more serious cases the student may be required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time. Schools have a duty of care to ensure that students are supervised at all times, including when they are removed from a class. Where appropriate, parents and carers will be informed of such withdrawals.

Withdrawal from class does not constitute formal school exclusion such as suspension (including in-school suspension) or expulsion.

Detention – Detention is an appropriate response for a wide range of less serious classroom and school behaviour breaches. Detention can effectively reinforce to students the importance of maintaining appropriate behaviour standards.

During detention teachers may instruct a student to finish school work which has not been completed in regular classroom time as a result of the behaviour, new work or other duties. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this. Where students are required to undertake detention after school hours, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

Where the decision is made that an after-school detention is appropriate, the principal should ensure that parents or carers are informed at least one day before the detention. Where family circumstances

are such that an after-school detention would create undue hardship, MMS may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with the parent or carer. Examples include where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents or carers. Schools are permitted to detain students but are encouraged to take into account family circumstances and negotiate with parents and carers as appropriate.

Suspension, Negotiated Transfer or Expulsion. In some instances, it may be appropriate to suspend or expel a student who consistently compromises the safety and order of the school in order to protect the learning environment for remaining students and continue with effective teaching. Suspension and expulsion are serious disciplinary measures and are for when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response, or where there is a threat to another person and immediate action is required.

Suspension occurs when a student's attendance at school has been temporarily withdrawn on the authority of the principal, for a set period of time. Suspension allows the parties involved to reflect on and enter into dialogue about the behaviour and circumstances that have led to the suspension, and to plan and/or review learning and behaviour supports to assist a student to engage positively with school and learning.

Negotiated transfer means a documented and mutually agreed move to another school is arranged. Negotiated transfer occurs when all other pastoral and discipline measures, including suspension, have failed to resolve an issue of serious inappropriate student behaviour. A negotiated transfer ends the enrolment agreement with the first school and requires an enrolment in another school.

Expulsion – Expulsion involves the termination of the contract entered into at the time of the enrolment by the parent(s)/carer(s)/relevant person. Melbourne Montessori School's enrolment agreement explicitly records at the time of acceptance of the enrolment of a student that unacceptable behaviour by a child, or parent may result in suspension or termination of the child's enrolment.

Note: The purpose of the above is to facilitate open communication between the teacher and the parents. If either party believes this is not occurring, the Grievance Process should be adopted.

Positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour

Melbourne Montessori School (MMS)will implement culturally inclusive strategies to reinforce appropriate behaviour which may include verbal recognition, communication with parents/wider school community, as appropriate.

Tier 1: School-wide supports

MMS implements culturally inclusive, school-wide preventative and early intervention strategies and practices for all its students to support positive behaviours, including:

- establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- providing physical environments that are conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- ensuring student participation in the development and implementation of whole school expectations
- empowering students by creating opportunities to take responsibility and be involved in decision making
- monitoring attendance and academic progress of students with the view to recognising students at risk and intervening early
- developing Behaviour Learning Plans (BLP) in consultation with the Learning Difference Unit (LDU) where appropriate for individual students.

Tier 2: Targeted supports

In addition to Tier 1 supports, some students may require targeted support or interventions to meet behavioural standards, including regular attendance. These students will be supported through a culturally appropriate staged response, including:

- understanding the student's background and needs
- ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- scaffolding the student's learning program
- data collection and documentation of incidents relating to the management of student behaviours to inform decision making
- revision of the Behaviour Learning Plan (BLP)
- parent consultation via phone, email, videoconference or interview
- the design and Implementation of support strategies that assist the student to self-calm such a quiet space or designated alternative area that they can go to if they are feeling overwhelmed
- case conference with specialist providers (this may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or EAL/New Arrival/Refugee Learning Consultants where culturally appropriate).

Tier 3: Intensive intervention

When Tier 1 and Tier 2 systems are in place, the foundation for implementing Tier 3 supports is established. Complex behaviours are targeted to remediate and prevent further escalations. Support provided to students at MMS will be aligned directly with the goals and targets set out in the students' Behaviour Learning Plan (BLP). Data systems provide school personnel with accurate, timely and practical information for making decisions about the fidelity and impact of individualised interventions that:

- value the student and support positive interaction
- have a clear data-informed strategy focused on preventing the occurrence of an identified behaviour by avoiding or adapting the circumstances that usually trigger this behaviour
- focus on building skills and developing alternative preferred behaviours
- consider the motivation for or functions of behaviours
- use the student's strengths and interests to increase success.

MMS will implement more intensive intervention strategies for students presenting with complex and ongoing difficulties or extended school refusal. Development of plans will require support from parents/carers and will often require consent to access specialised services. MMS will support students with complex behaviours of concern through a culturally appropriate staged response which will generally include:

- ongoing implementation of universal and Tier 2 strategies
- use of data to inform and monitor the implementation of evidence-based interventions
- regular Student Support Group meetings to review ILP and BLP, safety plans and/or Attendance Maximisation Plans
- consultations with mutually agreed specialised support services
- implementation of explicit, data informed strategies designed to support the student to display safe behaviours. The design of the individualised support will be informed by the identified function of the behaviour and the explicit teaching of skills and desired behaviours.

Shared Behaviour Expectations

Melbourne Montessori recognises the importance of providing clear guidance and expectations which are applicable to all members of the school community.

2. STUDENTS' Responsibilities

Every student has the right to feel safe. Consequently every student has responsibilities to help to create a safe environment as outlined in the Students' Charter.

- 2.1 Every student has the responsibility to interact and work safely and to encourage others to interact and work safely.
- 2.2 Every student has the responsibility to speak/address respectfully to and of others.
- 2.3 Every student has the responsibility to learn and help others to learn.
- 2.4 Every student has the responsibility to report any incident of harassment or bullying.
- 2.5 Every student has the responsibility (according to age) to learn about the expectations embodied in the Children's Charter and to learn the particular rules of his or her classroom and the playground.

3. TEACHERS' Responsibilities

Every person in our school has the right to be treated respectfully without fear of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Consequently:

- 3.1 Every staff member has the responsibility to treat others respectfully and to follow the policies and processes in use at the school.
- 3.2 Every staff member has a responsibility to others to raise issues of concern by following the Grievance Procedure or at staff meetings.
- 3.3 Every staff member has the responsibility to the best of his or her ability to act as a good role model for students and parents.
- 3.4 Teachers have the responsibility to raise issues of concern over student's behaviour with parents and suggest specialist assessment where appropriate.
- 3.5 Teachers have the responsibility of creating a stimulating learning environment where each student is encouraged to learn and where the adult adapts their teaching to meet the learning styles of each student.
- 3.6 Teachers have the responsibility of having reasonable expectations of each student's behaviour, appropriate to his or her age, social maturity and personality.
- 3.7 Teachers have the responsibility to listen openly and neutrally to students and parents.
- 3.8 All staff have the responsibility to protect the reputation of all students by discussing a student only with those who need to know and can help.

4. PARENTS' Responsibilities

Every person in our school has the right to be treated respectfully without fear of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Consequently:

- 4.1 Every parent has the responsibility to treat others respectfully and to be aware of and follow the policies and processes in use at the school.
- 4.2 Every parent has the responsibility to learn about the Montessori philosophy and its implementation at our school.
- 4.3 Every parent has the responsibility to work with the teacher in a partnership when his or her own student has been identified as needing extra help or assistance.
- 4.4 Every parent has the responsibility of not having unreasonable expectations of the staff in the carrying out of their duties.
- 4.5 Every parent has the responsibility to learn about and support the expectations embodied in the Students' Charter and the particular rules of the student's classroom.

- 4.6 Every parent has the responsibility to bring to the notice of the teacher any issues of concern regarding family matters which may affect the student's behaviour at school.

5. Breach of the Policy

Any breach of this policy will be considered by the Principal and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The Principal make take such action as considered appropriate in response to a breach of this policy including:

- 5.1 if the breach is by a student – providing a warning, counselling, withdrawal of certain privileges or opportunities, suspension, or expulsion.
- 5.2 if the breach is by a staff member – providing a warning, counselling, withdrawal of certain privileges, suspension from duties, or termination of employment.
- 5.3 if the breach is by a parent – providing a warning, withdrawal of certain privileges or opportunities, exclusion from future school events or functions, exclusion from the school grounds and facilities, or revocation of their child's enrolment.

Consequences for student misbehaviour

MMS adopts a staged response to challenging behaviour and appropriate reinforcement of appropriate behaviour noting that an effective Behaviour Learning Plan (BLP) is developed to support the student in learning skills required for positive social interaction, along with the ability to become a more effective and successful learner. Consequences for misbehaviour are also implemented which may take the form of:

- non-verbal warning – e.g. eye contact / hand movement / shake of head / teacher positioning to stand near misbehaving student(s)
- verbal warning which identifies the misbehaviour and gives student the opportunity to change his/her behaviour
- moving student in the room to a less disrupting situation
- separating student from the class for a short period of time to provide an opportunity for the student to settle
- student required to stay in after class for set period of time
- student required to complete work during recess / lunchtime
- student engaged in restorative actions supervised by classroom teacher
- student re-entry meeting.

When concerns arise about a student's on-going behaviour or when a student is displaying chronic patterns of problem behaviour, MMS will implement a targeted response to identify and address the presenting issues and reinforce replacement behaviours. This may involve the following support strategies:

- convening a Student Support Group (PSG) meeting involving parents/carers/Learning Diversity/Head of Campus and the student where appropriate.
- developing/Revising a Behaviour Learning Plan (BLP) or attendance plan
- referral to ISV or external Health or Allied Health providers
- consultation with external professionals, paediatrician, psychologist specialist practitioner

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may

have contributed to the student's behaviour. Measures should always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour and are best used with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour and implementation of strategies to limit reoccurrence of inappropriate behaviour.

- review of Behaviour Support and Safety Plans with specialised support
- restorative practice
- withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
- detention
- withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class. In situations where the student is not able to comply with the instruction to relocate, the class (all other students) will be relocated/evacuated. The student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities to provide an opportunity to de-escalate or for a specified period of time. Parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.
- in circumstances where the student is unable to calm, remains in a heightened state of anxiety or is a danger to self or others, the parents will be asked to take the student home for the remainder of the school day.
- contracts for conduct/attendance/bullying
- suspension (in-school and out of school)
- negotiated Transfer
- expulsion
- referral to police, DHHS, emergency service or appropriate agency.

A student may be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success, or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour which may put the health, safety and well-being of other students, staff or themselves at significant risk or where actions require reporting to police or appropriate agencies.

A breach of this policy may also involve a breach of other Melbourne Montessori School other policies – see below.

SOURCES

Melbourne Montessori Blueprint, Philosophy, Mission and Values

LINKED WITH:

Code of Conduct
Critical Incident Policy
Responsible Online Behaviour Policy
Special Learning Policy
Transition Policy

REVIEWED: OCT/2022