



Behaviour Guidance Policy

Educators will give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FROM THE MONTESSORI PHILOSOPHY

The Montessori Approach stresses the importance of total development which includes care of the physical, emotional and moral, as well as the intellectual needs of all children. Activities and experiences are planned to help the child develop the ability to take responsibility for their own well-being and to care for others.

At all times the interest of the child is the central concern.

Discipline presupposes a certain degree of obedience. Before the age of three a child is truly unable to obey unless what is asked happens to correspond with one of their vital urges. At this stage, the personality hasn't formed to the level where the child is capable of making a choice to obey. It is this level which Montessori termed the first level of obedience. A toddler can obey, but not always. The second level of obedience is reached when the child is capable of understanding another person's wishes and can express them in their own behaviour. When this second level of obedience is reached, most parents and teachers would think they had reached their goal. Most adults ask only that children obey. The goals of Montessori reach beyond this, however, to the third level which Montessori called "joyful obedience". At this stage the child has internalized obedience, or we might say, had developed self-discipline where the child sees clearly the value of what is being offered to them by authority and rushes to obey. This is not blind obedience at all, but is a fully informed choice by a personality which has grown in freedom and developed to its fullest potential. This is what we want for our children. With this level of obedience or self-discipline comes a degree of self-respect in which a child cannot help but respect the rights and needs of others alongside their own. He/she is then able to learn and grow freely in the security of a community of respectful individuals.

The Montessori approach is to assist the child to develop that self-control and discipline. Some of this is developed through the use of the materials and the inability of the child to enforce their will onto something else or the need to develop control over oneself in order to complete the work effectively.

Children are considered to be whole and good but their actions may not be in keeping with the expectations of the social community. Any discussion with the child is in the context of their actions and not on their character or being.

Children who have difficulties with another are encouraged in the first instance to discuss their problem with the other child concerned. Children remain with each other until both have discussed the issue and reached an agreement that satisfies both parties. Lessons are given to children as a group and on an individual basis and situation on ways to discuss an issue with another person and ways to resolve the conflict.

Educators are aware that any verbal or visual observation may not give a true picture of the situation and that all parties involved in the conflict should also be involved in the resolution.

Children having difficulties with being involved in the discussion or seem to be having difficulties with being with or near other children that day are encouraged to take time away from the other children or to remain with the supervising adult until it is felt that they can manage themselves again.

If there is regular disruption or conflict with other children, consideration may be given to the work or play the child is involved in; personal difficulties e.g. illness, medication, out of school problems. Developmental difficulties or

other considerations, discussion and support should be sought from the parents to assist the child. Assistance may also be sought from other educators or professionals as felt necessary to assist the child's social development.

Teachers will endeavour to make themselves aware of professional help available e.g. community health centres, speech therapists, optometrists, screening facilities etc. Regular communication is maintained for all children by providing opportunities to advise and discuss appropriate avenues for help and support with families as the need arises.

In the event that the safety of the child or the group is at risk, consideration may be required for alternative arrangements for the child. However, the Farmhouse Montessori School policy is to provide as much support to the child and family assisting in his/her development as part of the community as is possible. It is our belief that children having difficulties with social interaction have the best support in a Montessori environment. Exclusion from the school is only considered as a very last resort.

In keeping with the Montessori Philosophy and the Education Reform Amendment (Corporal Punishment) Act 1995, at no time is corporal punishment permitted by anyone on the premises. The Farmhouse Montessori School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline.

The goal of the Montessori classroom whether it is a prepared environment for infants and toddlers, pre-schoolers, elementary, or secondary students, is first and foremost the development of skills necessary for a productive and fulfilling life. The best of the academic curriculums are useless if the child does not develop inner discipline, integrity, and respect for others and oneself. The young person who faces the world of tomorrow armed with self-confidence and self-discipline is far more likely to achieve success and happiness. They will be prepared to meet any challenges that the "real world" may present, and will hopefully bring to that world some of the peace and joy they experienced in the Montessori environment. ***Following on from this philosophy we do not issue homework to our students.***

The traditional view of discipline is one of controlling the children. This type of discipline is based on coercion, rewards and punishment. It is an external discipline imposed on a child.

True discipline, Montessori believed, comes from within. Our aim is to show the child the way to discipline. The child who can obey his/her interior guide is a disciplined child. Montessori wrote,

"The peaceful atmosphere that pervaded the classroom as the children pursued their work was extremely touching. No-one had provoked it, and no-one could have obtained it by external means." M. Montessori

This type of discipline is a developmental process. In a Montessori classroom there are children who have developed a degree of self-control and those who have little. The Teacher must observe the children and endeavour to put them in contact with work which engages their concentration. For it is only through the work of the child that true discipline will come.

Children in a Montessori school are free - free to choose what work they will do and free to move about. They do not sit at fixed desks. This does not mean there is no organisation. In fact the opposite is true. The organisation in a Montessori classroom has to be extremely thorough in order for the child to be free.

The children guide themselves in work. The Teachers do not rely on rewards or punishments to motivate the child to work. The aim here is to "cultivate a friendly feeling" towards mistakes and errors, letting the child correct themselves through the use of the materials and assisting to understand that we learn through making mistakes.

The following will serve as guidelines for supporting children in their road to self-discipline. As such, these strategies aim to clarify our approaches to common situations with children as they gain self-control. They are not

directives, however, and it is essential to remember that each situation with each child will require its own responses to best support that child's growth.

RATIONALE

Expectations of behaviour vary greatly and as part of the anti-bias program, the School aims to be sensitive to these differences and other people's feelings. We believe setting limits for behaviour is important for the safety and protection of children, others and the environment. We believe consistency to be important in order to help the child orient themselves in the world. We believe that there is no occasion on which physical punishment should be used against a child. Children have an enormous capacity to absorb information, including social and cultural "cues", about themselves, others and the environment in which they live. Awareness of self, others and the environment is a vital quality for all children to develop in order to live harmoniously. Self-regulation is a means by which children are helped to develop that awareness.

AIMS

To help inculcate children, with an understanding of the limits to acceptable behaviour. and the reason for these limits.

To help children learn the consequences of their behaviour so that they understand how their actions affect those around them.

To enable children to become, self-disciplined and self-directed, so that their needs and interests become clearer to themselves and those about them.

To be sensitive to differing cultures, social groupings and child rearing practices, along with other people's feelings when considering appropriate behaviour guidance and management for the children.

IMPLEMENTATION

Underlying principles

- We respect ourselves and other people
- We show this respect by treating others as we like them to treat us. We all have a wide range of emotional reactions to situations. It is important to respect these reactions as valid. It is OK to be angry. However we do not translate this anger into inappropriate aggression against others. Destroying things is also inappropriate
- We are careful with our own and others' work and belongings.
- We are respectful with insects, animals and plants. Like us they are living things.
- We keep ourselves and our surroundings clean.
- We are considerate to others when we move about our environment calmly and safely.

Behaviour that is Unacceptable

- Rude or foul language being used on school premises.
- Slandering or defaming another student or member of the school community.
- Aggressive or violent behaviour.
- Spreading rumours about another child, parent or teacher.
- Stealing from the school premises, students, or teaching staff.
- Manipulating students to rally against their fellow peers.
- Telling Lies.
- Not following the classroom charter. (A contract signed by the children regarding their behaviour in school)
- Not respecting the teacher's instructions in class or on the playground.
- Not respecting the classroom environment or the materials within it.

In-house procedure to deal with Inappropriate Behavior.

- Teachers, parents or staff will report the incident and investigations will proceed internally.
- The parents of the student/students will be informed of the incident and given guidance on how to proceed.
- The school and parents will put measures in place to deal with the behaviour and this will be monitored over the course of 1 week.
- If the behaviour is still ongoing after 1 week, parents will be called in to school to speak with the principal and steps will be agreed upon by both parties.

Setting Appropriate Limits for Behaviour

By setting appropriate and consistent limits to behaviour we provide a secure environment in which children can explore their physical and social world. Behaviour management is instructive when:-

- it supports self-esteem and allows children to feel capable and competent;
- it takes into account a child's developmental level of understanding and ability. Needs and behaviour change as children grow;
- it acknowledges caring, cooperative, desirable behaviour,
- it is expressed positively. We speak of what we "do", not what we don't do
- it guides, gives simple explanations, and offers alternatives so that a child can make choices. In time this will aid the making of appropriate choices;
- it is consistent;
- it is based on self-discipline, and self-control - not coercion. It recognises that this is a gradual, developmental process.

Setting limits helps children to:

- feel secure and orient themselves in the world
- find appropriate expression for feelings that are hard to control, and thus satisfying;
- start a process that is a life- long learning process.

Strategies for Behaviour Guidance and Management include:

Prevention:

- Get to know the children - they are more likely to respond to your expectations if they sense you know and like them.
- Change the environment to facilitate movement that is considerate to others.
- Be aware of the need to settle or redirect work at transition times.
- Model good behaviour – the children learn through imitation.
- When children are not yet sure of you, they may act inappropriately to get your attention.

If prevention of inappropriate behaviour doesn't work

- Try first to distract or defuse a situation, giving children a release.
- Use "do's" rather than "don'ts", and give brief explanations.
- Respond in a calm but firm manner, indicating what is expected from the child and what choices the child has.
- Help the child to realise the consequences of his or her actions.
- Follow through with the consequences.
- When it's all over it is essential to restore a positive relationship between the staff member and the child, before either go home.

Procedural Fairness:

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what are sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.

The 'hearing rule' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:

- know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter

- know the process by which the matter will be considered
- respond to the allegations
- know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.
- The 'right to an unbiased decision' includes the right to:
- impartiality in an investigation and decision-making
- an absence of bias by a decision-maker.

Procedural fairness includes making available to students and parents or caregivers the policies and procedures under which disciplinary action is taken. It also includes providing details of an allegation relating to a specific matter or incident. This will usually involve providing an outline of the allegations made in witness statements and consideration of witness protection. As part of ensuring the right to be heard, schools could establish any need for parents/caregivers to be provided with interpreter services and, if required, make arrangements for such services to be available.

While it is generally preferable that different people carry out the investigation and decision-making, in the school setting this may not always be possible. If the principal is conducting both the investigative and decision-making stages, he or she must be reasonable and objective. To be procedurally fair, the principal must act justly and be seen to act justly. While it is difficult to combine the roles of investigator and adjudicator, it is acceptable to do so given the nature of the principal's responsibilities. Nevertheless, it may be preferable to have another appropriate officer, such as an assistant principal or independent person, carry out the investigation where possible. The review mechanism adds to the fairness of the process.

In matters where a long suspension, expulsion or exclusion is contemplated, the gravity of the circumstances requires particular emphasis to be given to procedural fairness. This includes the offer of having a support person/observer attend formal interviews. The key points of the interview/discussion should be recorded in writing.

Evidence of compliance

A registered non-government school must have in place and implement policies related to the discipline of students, including but not limited to the suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students, that are based on procedural fairness.

Common situations

When one child bites another

- Attend first to the victim to comfort the child and assess the situation. Apply first aid.
- While attending to the victim (or immediately after) draw - in the biter. Explain the situation and the consequences of their action in language understandable to the biter. Encourage the biter to help with first aid where appropriate.
- For an older child: Ask what happened and listen to the children's response. Talk about how the problem arose and encourage the biter to verbalise their feelings. "I know you are frustrated and angry because you wanted a turn but instead of biting what could you say to (name).
- Write an accident report. Parents of the victim do not need to know who bit their child.
- Document the incident, briefly, in each child's observation records. Record how the biting situation arose and why the child bit. A pattern can be established and situations compared from observations. This information will help to prevent another such event.
- If biting is an ongoing concern with a particular child their parents should be informed and strategies developed that are consistent between home and the School.
- Points to remember:
- Correct the behaviour not the child. Afterwards involve the biter in a positive experience to show that you still like them as a person.
- Prevention is the key issue; be aware of children likely to bite, when this occurs and why.
- Recognise why children bite - remember developmental stages.

- Remember, children need you to verbalise what they cannot. When the adult talks out what happened it can help the children to reach appropriate solutions. This one-to-one communication between carer and biter needs to occur immediately after the bite has occurred.

When children swear (usually 2 to 5 year olds)

- As children get older they learn the effects of using swear words.
- Assess the situation - remember there is usually a reason why the child is swearing. Deal with the issue or problem which has led to the child swearing. Encourage children to talk about what has happened and develop solutions to work through the problem.
- Teach children to use appropriate language to express how they feel. Help them with appropriate words to use.
- Model appropriate language.
- If swearing is an ongoing problem with a particular child talk to the child about how it makes others feel when they use those words, talk about why they use those words and talk about words the child can use instead of swearing.
- Talk to parents of the child if swearing is an ongoing problem. Devise methods of responding to swearing that are consistent between home and the School.

Dealing with temper tantrums

It is important to recognise that most children reach a stage in their development where they are becoming independent yet need to feel secure. The world is exciting and invites exploration yet can be frustrating. It is at this stage of development that temper tantrums are beginning. Tantrum behaviour includes stamping feet, throwing self on the ground, and screaming.

- Assess the situation:
Why has the tantrum occurred? Usually the child will have a tantrum because he or she has been denied something he or she wants to have or something the child wants to do.
Is the child likely to hurt themselves or another child? If so it may be necessary to clear a space free from objects and "onlookers".
- Reason with the child after they have calmed down. It is important to talk about what has happened. Children are beginning to learn ways of expressing how they feel and often can be shocked by the force of their own emotions (especially if it is the first time they have had a tantrum). They need to know you still like them as a person but didn't like what they just did. By talking and reasoning with children we believe it teaches them that it is OK to feel angry, frustrated or upset while helping them learn how to express these emotions in an appropriate way.
For a young child this may simply be a cuddle, followed by offering the child something else to do. Children will begin to learn to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour. Children will be given positive guidance towards acceptable behaviour so they learn what to do instead of what not to do

For an older child it is important to verbalise what has happened, talk about other ways of dealing with the situation, explaining why they couldn't do what they wanted to do (e.g. it's dangerous). By doing this you are showing the child that you still like them and are restoring a positive relationship with the child.

- Educators will encourage the individual social development in each child. All children will be encouraged to co-operate positively with others. We strive to develop in children self-control and an understanding of the feelings of others.
- Praise will be given freely for positive behaviour, allowing children to develop self-discipline, a respect for others, and for property. It is important that children understand what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is.

- We need to prepare children to know how to behave in an acceptable manner in everyday life situations so that they may develop self-respect and tolerance. If a child hurts another child, they will be encouraged to assist the hurt child to feel better, whether that be to apologise or to help hold the ice pack with adult guidance.
- Children need to develop awareness of how their actions impact on others and on others feelings. Educators will encourage children's emotional development, and children will also be assisted in understanding how their own feelings are an indicator to them of the acceptability of their own behaviour.
- The feelings of others will be discussed with the children throughout the curriculum to help children to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Children will be encouraged to use their words rather than actions to resolve conflicts and strengthen communication and enrich the environment with effective verbal communication. Children are encouraged to:
- Greet others when they arrive and depart from the Centre
- Share Centre owned toys and games
- Tidy up after an activity is finished
- Say 'please' and 'thank you'
- Say 'I'm sorry' or to act in a way that indicates a sense of empathy, for example giving a cuddle after behaving in an unacceptable manner towards another person
- Wait their turn for an appropriate period of time depending on age and development.
- Educators will use positive guidance through redirection. In the instance of undesirable behaviour being continually observed, Educators will evaluate their program, room set up, supervision etc. in terms of whether or not these aspects are a cause of such behaviour and if so make appropriate changes in consultation with one another.
- Educators will role model appropriate behaviour and language, encouraging children to socialise with children of different cultural backgrounds as well as from different age groups and different sexes.
- "Time with" an adult will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted and no positive response was forthcoming. "Time with" allows children time to reflect on their actions, assisting in fostering self-discipline and to acknowledge that there are consequences to actions. "Time with" will occur under the supervision of other Educators.
- Behaviour management will always take into account the past experiences of the child or young person as he or she may be responding to past trauma such as changes in routine, changes or losses within the family, placement in care, or more serious circumstances involving abuse, neglect, or family violence.
- Behaviour management will be sensitive to these earlier experiences and plans should include strategies that will facilitate alternative and positive behaviour.
- All behaviour management will be appropriate to the child or young person's age and developmental capacity.
- Behaviour management will always emphasise positive approaches and prohibit cruel, harsh, humiliating or degrading actions.
- Families will be informed of behaviour management as it occurs with their child, this includes; the highs and the lows in the day. With the help of the parents, the Educators will develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental level, the child's family, the parent's feelings, and any recent events, which may be influencing the child's behaviour, such as teething.
- Educators will consult with industry professionals to support the child within the service and implement techniques within the program to benefit all. Educators will commit to in-service training and industry information regarding behaviour management.
- Whilst we are committed to the care and protection of the children and abide fully by the guidelines set down by the appropriate 'Acts' and Department of Family and Community Services and the NESAs, it sometimes becomes necessary to physically re-direct a child who may be causing or about to cause harm to himself or herself, another child or adult. Such incidents can include a child who is kicking, spitting, biting, throwing furniture or toys, punching or hitting. It may also include an incident where a child places itself in a dangerous situation, for example, climbing a fence or hiding under furniture. In all of these incidents safety is a priority and this may mean using physical re-direction in which an Educator will actually remove the child from the harmful situation. The Educator will gently physically re-direct or lift the child with both hands under the supervision of another Educator.

- In an instance where this action has been necessary, the child's parent will be informed in writing and a copy kept on file.
- Where a similar incidence occurs three times the child's parents and Educators will meet to discuss the issue and create a plan of action to support the child in the environment.
- Exchange of information between Educators and families on the subject of behaviour management is encouraged both on an informal and more formal basis, such as parent interviews and through newsletters.
- When a Behaviour Management Plan has been developed, Educators will be adequately briefed, trained and supervised to implement such a plan ensuring that information is collected and recorded for evaluation and reflection on its effectiveness for the child.

Useful Websites for information about parenting and discipline:

<http://raisingchildren.net.au>; www.napcan.org.au; www.cyh.com; www.acwa.asn.au; www.community.nsw.gov.au

"Let us remember that inner discipline is something to come to and not something already present. Our Task is to show the way to discipline. Discipline is born when the child concentrates his attention on some object that attracts him/her not only with the useful exercise but with the control of error."

MARIA MONTESSORI,

Source

- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2015
- The Anti-Bias approach in Early Childhood, Second Edition, Elizabeth Dau 2001
- Early Childhood Australia
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (the Act),
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2000 (the Regulation) and Children Legislation Amendment (Wood Recommendations) Act 2009.

Policy Review Date		
May 2018	Amendment	Next Review
6/3/2019	Appendix 1 added	

Appendix 1

CODE OF CONDUCT-STUDENTS POLICY



PURPOSE

The aim of this Code is to ensure that the school is a safe and effective place in which learning takes place; that students develop self-discipline and consideration for others; and that the property and reputation of the school is protected.

The vision of the school, is to raise up effective leaders, who will blend academic achievement and truth, to influence society, thus fulfilling his or her responsibilities with integrity, and respects the rights of others in the school and community.

These rights and responsibilities are developed in conjunction with the School Values

Value	Definition	Example
Cooperation	Cooperating, collaborating and leading or following as the situation demands.	Work with each other and share the teacher's time. Share the playground areas and equipment.
Integrity	Being honest and demonstrating a considered sense of fairness.	Be honest and fair to yourself and others in the classroom and the playground.
Persistence	Persevering and remaining focused and looking for ways to reach your goal.	Always give your best effort even if you are not successful the first time. Not giving up.
Respect	Respecting ourselves, others and the environment around us	Speak positively and politely. Listen carefully. Be courteous and respectful of others. Respect other' differences, Respect and take care of others.
Resilience	Ability to manage and learn from difficulties and to bounce back. Self-reliant and have a learning/coping reaction rather than the victim blaming reaction.	Resolve problems in a sensible and reasonable manner. Bounce back after difficulty
Responsibility	Taking action for our learning and behaviour.	Move safely in the buildings. Respect and take care of other's possessions.

Your child's class teacher will spend time working with the class to describe these values further. Children will also discuss consequences for not following these rights, responsibilities and values. Teachers will also spend time discussing how children might deal with problems that may occur, e.g. speaking to a trusted adult such as a parent.

If a student does not follow school expectations, then consequences will apply. A child may be reminded about the school values and expectations; they may also be reminded about the consequence and Breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

BREACH OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Behaviour that is Unacceptable

- Rude or foul language being used on school premises.
- Slandering or defaming another student or member of the school community.
- Aggressive or violent behaviour.
- Spreading rumours about another child, parent or teacher.
- Stealing from the school premises, students, or teaching staff.
- Manipulating students to rally against their fellow peers.
- Telling Lies.
- Not following the classroom charter. (A contract signed by the children regarding their behaviour in school)
- Not respecting the teacher's instructions in class or on the playground.

- Not respecting the classroom environment or the materials within it.

In-house procedure to deal with Inappropriate Behavior.

- The student will be informed of their breach of the code of conduct and will be informed that this is not appropriate, and the next steps will mean that the child will lose the privilege to choose where they sit.
- If the behaviour continues, the child will be informed that they will have to sit at a table designated by the teacher.
- If the behaviour continues, or the child refuses to move to the allocated position, they will be asked to meet with Gavin, who will call the parents in question to arrange a meeting between the teaching staff, the student and the parents.
- The meeting will take place where strategies will be put in place at home and within the school to assist the child to work within the boundaries of the code of conduct.
- The staff will reflect upon the changes made and the progress gained during the process.

The Farmhouse Montessori School has a proud history of being an outstanding school and our students are fortunate to be able to continue our tradition. After reading this agreement and discussing it with your child, please sign below, and return to school.

COMPLAINTS

Any decision of the School, with which a student, or his or her parents, does not agree, may be reviewed by following the procedure set out in the school's Grievance Policy.



Note:

The Student Code of Conduct may be varied at any time by the Principal in consultation with the Executive team. I have read and agree with the standards and requirements of this Code of Conduct:

I have discussed the Student Code of Conduct with my child and I believe my child will do his/her best to follow the School's Code of Conduct. I have also reinforced the need to speak with a trusted adult, (e.g. parent or teacher) to seek advice on how to deal with a problem.

Child's Name: _____

Child's Class: _____

Child's Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Source

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015

Review

Policy May 2018