

Discipline Policy



NESA

COMPLIANCE STANDARD AREA	B9.1, Sec 47 (1), (h)
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NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA:		
NQS	QA2	CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY
NQS	QA5	RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

RATIONALE

"Discipline is "not ...a fact but a way." True discipline comes more from within than without and is the result of steadily developing inner growth. Just as the very young child must first learn to stand before she can walk, she must develop an inward order through work before she is able to choose and carry out her own acts. Surprisingly enough, Montessori found that it was through the very liberty inherent in her classrooms that the children were given the means to reveal their inner or self-discipline. Independence did not diminish respect for authority but rather deepened it. One of the things that aroused her greatest interest was that order and discipline seemed to be so closely united that they resulted in freedom." Maria Montessori

DEFINITION

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 has not formed to the level where he/she 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 the third level stage, the child has internalized obedience, or we might say, had developed self-discipline where he/she 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.

AIMS

- To create a safe and healthy environment in which the children feel secure and nurtured.
- To promote the development of the whole child.
- To help the children grow in self-worth, confidence and independence of thought.
- To communicate to the children, values and beliefs, that are in keeping with our philosophy.
- To protect the children from physical, social, emotional and intellectual harm and to provide them with the skills to cope with possible threats to their personal safety, both within and outside school.

- To encourage tolerance, empathy and sensitivity to the needs of others.
- To promote warm, positive and respectful relationships between children, staff and parents.
- Encourage all to share of their giftedness and energies in a spirit of service;
- Support staff through structures which allow for personal and professional growth;
- Give every opportunity to parents, who enter into an educational partnership with their children's educators, to share in their children's intellectual, emotional and spiritual development;
- Support staff, students and families in times of grief, sickness and stress.

IMPLEMENTATION

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.

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

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

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 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.

Staffs 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 he/she 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 staff members or professionals as felt necessary to assist the child's social development.

At no time is corporal punishment permitted or to be encouraged by anyone.

The goal of the Montessori classroom whether it is a prepared environment for infants and toddlers, pre-primary, primary, 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.

The more the capacity to concentrate is developed, the more often the profound tranquillity in work is achieved, then the clearer will be the manifestation of discipline within the child.

Maria Montessori

This policy sets the framework through which Farmhouse Montessori School generally manages student discipline

Discipline is reinforced using positive initiatives and incentives with particular regard to the student(s) concerned.

This policy is consistent with the Education Reform Amendment (Corporal Punishment) Act 1995. Underlying our practices are fundamental principles of human respect and dignity, and fair treatment.

It is every person's right to expect to be treated according to these principles. We are also conscious of a need to attend to gender equity and anti-harassment. A right can only be enjoyed when everyone acts responsibly. Students are encouraged and expected to be responsible for their own conduct and behaviour.

Each student at Farmhouse Montessori School is expected to behave in a way that:

- is considerate to other people
- is not harmful or dangerous to themselves or to others
- brings credit to herself, their family and to Farmhouse Montessori
- is respectful of others and the property of the School.

Discipline is necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of all our students, teachers and staff and to provide a conducive learning environment.

Procedural Fairness

Procedural fairness includes making available to students and parents or caregivers this policy 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. Parents/carers will be involved in the processes of procedural fairness for suspension and expulsion. Procedural Fairness includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made, including the following:

- 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

Strategies to Promote Good Discipline

The School seeks to develop a culture of positive discipline by setting clear expectations of students and encouraging positive behaviour.

Strategies for developing this culture include:

- clearly setting behaviour expectations
- establishing specific teaching and learning
- programs communicating expectations with the wider School community
- acknowledging positive behaviours in a range of ways from informal verbal
- acknowledgement through to structured merit awards maintaining records with respect to student behaviour.

Prohibition of Corporate Punishment

It is our policy that:

- we prohibit corporal punishment at Farmhouse Montessori or at other venues that involve Farmhouse Montessori students
- we do not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the School.

The use of any corporal punishment by a staff member is strictly prohibited. Any staff member who breaches this rule will be subject to disciplinary proceedings which may include dismissal.

School Rules and Expected Standards of Behaviour

Students are expected to abide by the rules and expectations of the School, and the directions of teachers and staff.

Examples of written rules that students are expected to follow are dealt with in:

- Student Code of Conduct School Rules
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Bullying-Discrimination and Harassment Policy

Consequences

Where a student breaches the School's expectations, disregards School rules, disobeys instructions or otherwise engages in conduct which causes or may cause harm, inconvenience or embarrassment to the School, staff members or other students, or damage to their own reputation or the reputation of the School, staff members or other students, the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

There are a range of consequences that the School may implement. These include but are not limited to:

- warnings or reprimands (verbal or written)
- cancellation of privileges
- withdrawal from School activities
- suspension
- expulsion.

This is not an exhaustive list, and other consequences may be appropriate depending on the circumstances of the case.

The consequences imposed will vary according to the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the prior record of the student.

The School will make decisions around such consequences in its absolute discretion.

Definitions

Suspension: The temporary removal of a student from all of the classes that a student would normally attend for a set period of time (this to be done at home).

Expulsion: The permanent removal of a student from the Farmhouse Montessori School.

Suspension and Expulsion

A decision to suspend or expel a student may only be made by the Principal.

- Suspension is a temporary removal of a student from all of the classes that a student would normally attend at a school for a set period of time.
- Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from one particular school. Farmhouse Montessori School disciplinary actions do not include exclusion.

The school may use suspension to allow the School a proper opportunity to investigate and consider a situation and manage any risks arising. The school may also use suspension as a disciplinary measure.

Suspension to investigate and manage risks arising

The Principal (or the Principal's delegate) may immediately remove a student to provide the School with a proper opportunity to investigate and consider a situation of alleged serious inappropriate behaviour and manage any risks arising.

Disciplinary Suspension and Expulsion

The decision to suspend or expel a student may be made by the Principal.

The disciplinary procedures adopted and consequences imposed by the School will vary according to the seriousness of the alleged behaviour and the School will determine on a case by case basis the appropriate steps to be taken.

The School's approach will be informed by principles of procedural fairness. Where the alleged behaviour, if proved, may result in disciplinary suspension or expulsion, the student and parents will generally be informed of the allegations and procedural steps to be followed in dealing with the matter.

In the case of disciplinary suspension or expulsion, where the Principal has formed a preliminary view that the appropriate penalty is disciplinary suspension or expulsion, they will generally provide the student (and parent/s) with an opportunity to respond to their preliminary view and consider any response provided before making a final decision. The Principal's decision is not subject to any further review or appeal.

Individual Behaviour Management Plan

Where a student's behaviour breaches the School's Code of Conduct, individual behaviour management plans may be put in place.

Plans will generally be discussed between School staff, students and parents/guardians before they are implemented, and will generally consider the student's:

- age
- developmental needs
- behavioural context.

The desired behaviour of the student will be clearly described. The plan will also generally outline any changes required to the learning environment to support the student to modify their behaviour.

The School may refer the student to other support available and review, assess, change and modify the plan as needed.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through:

- staff training and professional development opportunities in behaviour management
- communicating this policy to the School community
- monitoring the effectiveness of the policy
- reviewing and evaluating the policy annually.

General

This Policy is not intended to extend responsibilities of the school beyond the law. The school reserves the right to change or modify this policy at any time by notice on the School website and in correspondence to parents.

Source

- **Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).**
- **Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).**
- **Compliance Standard NESAS Section 47 of the Education Act 1990 No 8 (NSW)**

Policy Review Date

Policy Review Date	Modification	Next Review Date
May 2018	New Logo Added	2019
6/3/2019	No changes added	2020
Nov 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • realignment of content within the policy • deleted content that was repeated in different sections or moved into a different section • changed order of some points • additional definitions added • rewording of some points • notification to regulatory authority added • sources updated and checked for currency 	2022
March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inserted actions and procedures around behaviors of a serious nature. 	2022
31 October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NESAS, NQA & Regulations tables inserted. • Sources table updated 	2026