

Behaviour Guidelines

Students are required to follow behaviour guidelines when under the jurisdiction of the School.

School Jurisdiction

Students are under the jurisdiction of the School at any time they are in the building, on school grounds, or with a school group. Students are also under the jurisdiction of the School when they are involved in any school-sponsored activities, whether on or off the school grounds, including any field trip, student clubs, and school-sponsored social and recreational events. Students are also under the jurisdiction of the School when they are attending a school sponsored program such as the Forest School. While under the jurisdiction of the School, students are subject to all policies and guidelines.

Supervisors

Supervising adults have the authority to ensure that students abide by the school's policies and guidelines at all times. It is the responsibility of the students to cooperate in every way with the requests of supervisors, particularly when safety is an issue. If there is any question as to the fairness or necessity of a request made by a supervisor, the student should discuss the issue politely with the supervisor or seek mediation. The supervisor is responsible for being as fair as possible, listening to the student's issues and trying to meet the child's needs if possible. Children must understand that the supervisor is also responsible for the safety of everyone and the maintenance of a suitable learning environment.

Maintaining a Positive Environment

Behaviour guidelines, staff training and other procedures are in place as a measure to prevent violence, to promote emotional safety and to maintain a generally peaceful learning community. All efforts are made to deal with situations as quickly as possible, and to ensure that conditions that could lead to ongoing teasing, taunting, coercion, intimidation, or discrimination are not permitted.

Principles of Behaviour

During many discussions involving students, teachers and volunteers a consensus has been reached on the following principles. Students who join the school or any school program are

bound by these principles and must agree to them prior to joining. This canon is displayed in the school and is to be followed by all.

**No violence,
Respect all life,
Respect diversity,
Respect all people,
Respect the learning environment,
Use things with care,
Enjoy learning,
Help other people learn,
Be prepared.**

Nonviolence

Nonviolence involves actions, words, tone of voice, intention and taking responsibility for one's emotions. Respectful behaviour is required towards all other people in the school. Violence will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Constructive, harmonious and responsive communication is expected at all times. Language expectations may be different in different age groups and situations while remaining nonviolent. Adults will help children understand the expectations, and everyone should do his or her best to be responsible and cooperative.

Specific Guidelines

Guidelines exist for the whole school and for certain rooms. Each student must try to learn these guidelines by listening to others. Students are expected to use common sense and do their best to follow all guidelines. A few of the school guidelines follow, (not an exhaustive list):

Inside the building, running, throwing objects, and rough play are NOT permitted for safety reasons. Learning environments, including specially chosen equipment, are set at staff and community meetings. In general, personal toys, cards, etc. may NOT be brought to school. After discussion in a community meeting, if educational value can be established for a certain item, it may be permitted under certain circumstances. Children may bring educational books from home. Staff are responsible for determining if a certain type of book is educational, bearing in mind the school philosophies on advertising, nonviolence, historical accuracy, discrimination etc. Students must leave all dangerous items at home, including cap guns, fireworks, etc.

When outdoors, students play games that are safe and fun for everyone. Everyone needs to respect other people, all equipment, and the environment. Throwing sticks, rocks, etc. is NOT permitted for safety reasons. Mock guns and other pretend weapons are NOT permitted

because of their effect on others. A “hands-off” policy exists in most outdoor games and during free exploration of the grounds. Tagging games are considered safe if played appropriately. During certain organized games where “hands-off” does not apply, the rules of the game will be made clear, an adult supervisor will be present, and a debrief will take place following the game.

Play wars, games that include pretend weapons of war, or games that include discussion of mock wars and/or weaponry are counter to the school’s peaceful philosophy, and are NOT permitted unless part of an adult-supervised, structured, learning experience. Educational discussions or re-enactments of war are acceptable if they have an educational goal. Serious stories on these topics may be acceptable, but care must be taken not to scare people and not to justify, idealize or romanticize fighting or violence. Individuals may make personal drawings that include weapons of war, but these may NOT be shared in any way with other students. A designated judgment committee should look at, and judge, cases where this policy is unclear.

During fire and earthquake drills, students are required to maintain absolute silence and pay close attention to all instructions given by the teacher. Fire and Earthquake Drills are practice for situations that could arise, and this practice must be orderly and respectful.

The school building, equipment and grounds will be used in a safe and responsible manner at all times. Freedom and responsibility will be afforded to students based on their age, abilities and demonstrated level of commitment to respectful and responsible behaviour. The level of supervision for all group and individual student activities will depend on the students involved.

Students will have no unsupervised access to the adjacent park or roads, without explicit permission and purpose. Students are subject to all school policies and guidelines while at the adjacent park and field, and must show respect for our neighbours and other park users.

Situations Arising Outside of School

Troubling behaviours occurring outside of school where students may be interacting either in person or electronically will be scrutinized and mediated when brought to the attention of staff. Parents may be asked to be involved in working out any problems that have occurred through student activities outside of the walls of the school. Parents will be expected to take responsibility for the activities of their child outside of school, and support the resolution of any problems that occur between students. Staff will be fully involved in the resolution of any student activities reported to them that could lead to ongoing teasing, taunting, coercion, intimidation, or discrimination outside of the school environment.

Conflict Resolution

Seek Help and Mediation

Individuals who find themselves in a conflict situation that they are unable to resolve peacefully are asked to seek help from someone who is able to mediate or find a mediator. This will usually be a staff member. After a suitable cooling off period a mediator will enter into a negotiation with all individuals involved. The negotiation should include, but is not limited to, hearing individual observations and feelings, determining a suitable solution by consensus, and determining ways to avoid a similar situation in the future.

Consequences

Usually, natural consequences will follow inappropriate behaviours (e.g. forget a sunhat = restricted to shade, make a mess = clean up the mess). Individuals who exhibit repeated antisocial or disrespectful behaviours will be required to negotiate future consequences for the behaviour. Everyone needs to understand and respect the creation of a peaceful, reasonably quiet learning environment.

Class and Community Meetings

Class and Community Meetings will be held often to discuss and solve any problems that pertain to the group as a whole. Any individual can bring items to the agenda for these meetings. Attendance will be required at certain whole group meetings; students should participate to the best of their abilities. All meetings will be facilitated by a trained facilitator/mediator and will use a consensus decision-making procedure.

Violence Prevention

Violence, either premeditated or retaliatory cannot be tolerated as it disrupts the safety of the learning environment. In isolated cases, the violence will be mediated by removing an individual from the vicinity of other students, allowing for a cooling off period, and negotiating the issue. The individual will need to determine more appropriate and nonviolent ways to deal with their feelings. Repeated acts of violence by an individual may lead to the individual being sent or kept home. A violence prevention program will then be worked out involving the family.