



Effective Date: September 25, 2023

Pacific Montessori Society Discipline Policy

Policy Statement

The Pacific Montessori Society expects all students, staff, and other members of the Pacific Montessori Society to be treated with respect and courtesy, in accordance with the [Code of Conduct](#).

Expectations of the level of behaviour vary according to the age and developmental level of a student.

When parents/caregivers choose to enrol their child at Selkirk Montessori School, they are committing themselves to its philosophy of discipline. It is expected that parents/caregivers and teachers will work together to guide and support student behaviour.

Policy Rationale

At Selkirk Montessori School, discipline is approached in a positive and cooperative manner consistent with the Montessori philosophy, illustrating Maria Montessori's emphasis on "grace and courtesy."

The intent of discipline in education is to support students with the development of respect and courtesy for themselves, their teachers, their fellow students, as well as for the environment in the classroom and beyond.

At Selkirk Montessori School, we value respect for each other. This allows students, staff, and society members to feel safe, to develop a sense of belonging, to forge friendships with peers and maintain respectful relationships. With this sense of community, teaching and learning thrive.

Scope

The school takes responsibility for the students within school hours and during authorized school functions while the students are under its care. Before school and after dismissal are the responsibility of the parents/caregivers.

Policy and Procedures

I. Purpose

Our policy is to take a constructive approach to discipline that creates opportunities for students to address problems and misunderstandings and develop better self-control and motivation to become engaged, constructive members of society.

II. Awareness

Through programs, staff shall help raise awareness of the [Code of Conduct](#) and how students can incorporate it in their daily behaviours.

III. Prevention

Our staff are leaders who nurture and model a school climate that fosters community and civil behaviour.

- Each class will follow the principles of related programs such as the Second Step Program.
- Staff shall make students aware that they can safely (and confidentially) communicate complaints about problems with other students (and any other matter) to staff.

IV. Intervention

Staff may exercise their judgment to choose, depending on circumstances, whether to start intervention at Stage 1, or go directly to Stage 2 or Stage 3. Descriptions of special situations follow below the descriptions of three stages of intervention.

Stages of Intervention

Stage 1

In this stage, the issue is **addressed by the parties and the first member of staff that is aware of a problem.**

1. Staff shall, where appropriate, encourage students to work out issues among themselves.
2. If this does not help to resolve an issue, the staff shall give guidance. Depending on the situation, this may include one or more of: redirection, confiscation, isolation from others, discussing/clarifying seriousness, and consequences, and writing a Second Step plan.

3. Staff may inform parents/caregivers of student(s) involved. Staff may send home a Second Step plan and ask parents/caregivers to sign it. Staff may meet with parents/caregivers.
4. Staff shall maintain confidentiality.
5. If the staff's guidance does not resolve the difficulty, the staff shall report the matter to the Head of School or their delegate (go to Stage 2).

Stage 2

In this stage, the issue is **addressed with the involvement of the Head of School or their delegate**.

- a. The Head of School or their delegate shall investigate every staff report about a discipline problem. The Head of School or their delegate shall interview participants and witnesses, and review evidence, as necessary.
- b. The Head of School or their delegate shall assess the harm to determine how to proceed (e.g., is the issue harassment, bullying, child abuse, violent behaviour, or other. *See references on page 6.*)
- c. The Head of School or their delegate shall consider informing parents/caregivers of student(s) involved and involving the parents/caregivers early in the discussion.
- d. The Head of School or their delegate shall involve the student(s) in a process that may include the following activities:
 - Describe the issue or problematic behaviour to the student(s) in a specific and concrete way and explain the impact(s).
 - State the school's policy on discipline, and possible action or consequences.
 - Discuss expectations in a specific and concrete way.
 - Explain options and encourage student(s) to suggest remedies.
 - Indicate when the Head of School or their delegate will check back with the student(s), staff, and parents/caregivers to see if the issue has been resolved.
5. The Head of School or their delegate shall document a summary of these events, including names, times and methods of communication, and retain a copy in administrative files.

Stage 3

In this stage, the issue is **addressed with a formal plan and may involve authorities outside the school**. The Head of School or their delegate shall take the following action:

1. Notify student(s) and parents/caregivers involved and the Board of Directors of the Pacific Montessori Society that action will be taken.
2. Assess the need to refer to the appropriate authorities.
3. Ensure that a formal plan is prepared to address the cause of the discipline problem. The plan shall include specific accountabilities for monitoring and follow-up and may include serious disciplinary action.

4. Ensure that all steps in the plan are implemented in a timely manner. Document a summary of these events, including names, times and methods of communication, and retain a copy in the administrative files.

The following issues require a Stage 3 response:

Probation: The Head of School or their delegate may set a limited probationary period of one to four weeks to try to work out the problems if there is a serious question about whether the student can function in a healthy way in the school.

Counselling: The Head of School or their delegate may ask the family to seek appropriate counselling or other assistance, to best meet the needs of the student and to maintain a quality program for all students.

Student Suspensions

When misbehaviour creates a serious infraction of the [Code of Conduct](#), a student may be required to leave the classroom for an in-school suspension or may be required to leave the school for a school suspension. These may occur at the discretion of the Head of School or their delegate.

When a suspension is invoked, the parents/caregivers will be called to pick up the student immediately. The student will only be released to an authorized person. The suspension is terminated by a meeting with the Head of School or their delegate, the student, and the parents/caregivers. Conditions for reinstatement will be agreed upon by all parties.

Meetings with Parents/Caregivers: Parents/caregivers of the student(s) involved may be called in for an emergency meeting with the Head of School or their delegate to discuss the problem, as well as to exchange ideas about suitable solutions and possible further consequences.

Violent Behaviour

If a student acts violently towards another student or staff, the circumstances will be immediately reviewed by the Head of School, or their delegate, and the student may be suspended from the school for one or more days without a warning. For behaviours that are repeated or escalating in nature, the suspension shall be for five or more days, without a warning, and the student may be expelled.

Weapons

A weapon is anything that is commonly used or designed to hurt someone or to cause someone to be fearful. This policy uses the [definition of a weapon in the Criminal Code of Canada](#): anything used, designed to be used or intended for use (a) in causing death or injury to any person, or (b) for the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person.

Weapons of any kind are prohibited on school premises. If a student is found in possession of a weapon, the circumstances will be immediately reviewed by the Head of School or their

delegate and the student may be suspended from the school for one day, without a warning. For weapons threats of a serious nature, the suspension shall be for five or more days, without a warning, and the student may be expelled.

Drugs

If a student is found in possession of non-prescription drugs, the circumstances will be immediately reviewed by the Head of School or their delegate and the student shall be suspended from the school for one or more days, without a warning, and the student may be expelled. (See the [Student Substance Abuse Policy](#).)

Process and Timelines

To enable timely responses to discipline issues as they arise, the Head of School may delegate his/her authority under this policy for periods when the Head of School or their delegate is unavailable.

Time is of the essence in dealing with some discipline issues, since the related hazard or damage may continue while the interventions and planning are under way.

Stages 1 and 2:

Proceed in a timely manner at discretion of staff and Head of School or their delegate.

Stage 3:

Once the Head of School or their delegate determines the matter requires a Stage 3 response, a plan shall be completed in 5-10 working days.

- a. If a suspension is deemed necessary, this may be implemented immediately by the Head of School or their delegate.
- b. If a decision is made to expel a child, a letter will be prepared for the parents/guardians including the following: steps taken in the investigation of the incident/issue, a list of the authorities contacted and policies reviewed, the decision and steps to appeal the decision.

Appeals

Parties involved may consult the [Complaints and Appeals Policy](#).

Definitions

The following definitions are intended to enhance understanding of this policy. They are descriptive only and not intended to be used for any legal actions:

Abuse

As defined in the Child Protection Policy, and the Inter-Ministry Child Abuse Handbook. Child abuse includes physical, emotional, and verbal neglect and/or abuse and sexual abuse.

Bullying

As defined in the [Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Management Policy](#). “Bullying...is a pattern of repeated aggressive behaviour, with negative intent, directed from one child to another where there is a power imbalance.” (The most widely accepted definition from the work of leading Norwegian researcher, Dr, Dan Olweus)

Harassment

As defined in the Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Management Policy.

Staff

Any individual who is employed by the Pacific Montessori Society, including an independent contractor who has entered into an agreement with the Society.