



## Montessori in Delta Society

# STUDENT MANAGEMENT & CONDUCT POLICY/DISCIPLINE POLICY

## Policy Statement

At BBMS we are committed to developing character in our students by embracing virtues and high personal standards for behaviour. The nature of the child plays an important role in the learning process. We affirm that education begins at birth and continues throughout life. While our emphasis is on our children, we provide a center of support for all to continue learning and developing toward becoming whole, balanced, and healthy individuals and families. We believe that wisdom can be cultivated and that it emerges from the ability to listen to both heart and mind. We nurture self-esteem. We affirm that self-esteem is a crucial ingredient for the full expression of a person's potential. We strive to base every interaction between community members on this principle, from how we foster self-discipline to respecting personal learning styles and stages of development. This is the very fabric of our community and our educational methods. We strive to provide a safe learning environment in which students take the necessary risks to progress and grow. Through feedback and self-evaluation, students learn from all experiences, both positive and negative.

Our goal is to develop community members who have the skills to create healthy relationships and work towards personal fulfillment. To achieve this goal, self-esteem, human dignity, and emotional well-being, as well as the ability to communicate and cooperate effectively with others, are valued at BBMS as highly as academic and material success. We teach our students to be attentive to their own feelings and those of others. We help them learn to solve conflicts effectively and fairly and to express their feelings in a respectful manner. The power of group dynamics and peer pressure is explored. Human relations and conflict resolution skills, nonviolence, leadership training and cooperative teamwork skills, and communication skills are all important elements in nurturing our students. Peace Education is as vital an element of our curriculum as mathematics and science.

We endeavor to provide a school environment that will promote and protect the physical and emotional well-being of our students and staff. Ultimately, we wish for every community member to be willing to accept responsibility for their behavior, their attitudes, and their experiences. The enormous reward that comes with accepting this



responsibility is to choose and create the type of person they wish to be, and the life they wish to live. In keeping with the true meaning of the word discipline, which is to teach, we prefer to model and encourage appropriate, kind and considerate ways to behave in various situations. In instances where student behaviour differs from our expectation we focus on recognizing the root of the anti-social behaviour. We understand that all behaviour is purposeful and a result of need fulfillment. Therefore by seeking to find alternative or more positive ways to meet those needs, we teach the students that they are valued and respected as people whose needs are important. We do not label children negatively in terms of their behaviour. Because our focus is on recognizing the goals of the student's behaviour, we instead look to find more appropriate ways for the students' needs to be met in a way that is respectful. Rather than focus on rules and the consequences for students breaking them, we prefer to teach students, beforehand, appropriate, kind and considerate ways to behave in given situations. As necessary we cue and remind students of appropriate behaviours before they forget. We use positive reinforcement whenever possible to acknowledge their progress, their contributions, and strengthen their character. We encourage and model ways to negotiate in conflict situations so that whenever possible everyone can achieve resolution and at the very least, everyone is heard. Our ultimate goal is to encourage self-discipline and self-motivation as the reasons for behaviour rather than fear or social pressure.

## **Policy Rationale**

While we are normally successful with a very wide range of students, we can never be right for every child. One of our greatest challenges is to be objective, compassionate, yet realistic in considering the needs of each child as a unique individual. When we fail despite our best efforts to work with the child to help him/her meet appropriate behavioural expectations within the school's fundamental ground rules, we sadly and reluctantly counsel the family to seek out another school setting in which the child can experience success.

## **Scope**

This Policy applies to all children attending Boundary Bay Montessori School.



## Policy Procedures

### 1) Conflict Resolution and Restorative Justice Process

The model of discipline that accurately reflects the core values of the blueprint of BBMS and is used by the teaching team is that developed by William Glasser called Choice Theory. See [www.wglasser.com](http://www.wglasser.com). Choice Theory is a methodology for adults and children alike that includes the following process:

Our students are taught the basic level of Choice Theory which includes:

- basic needs,
- needs versus wants,
- identification of behaviour,
- analyzing choices,
- creating a plan for quality conditions, and
- creating a class contract based on beliefs and modeling the core values of the BBMS Blueprint.

In addition to this we teach the children collaborative conflict resolution skills such as:

- self-awareness; positive thinking; open mindedness; fairness; the 7 Caring Habits (supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting, negotiating differences),
- taking time out to cool down,
- using "I" messages (e.g. "I feel disrespected when you speak to me that way"),
- practicing reflective listening,
- taking responsibility and being accountable, and
- brainstorming solutions (WIN/WIN).

And finally when a conflict occurs we seek to actively engage our students in the restorative justice process which includes:

- Invitation to all participants in order to begin the goal of repairing what trust has been broken.
- Seek Direct Accountability: In cases where certain individuals are responsible for causing harm, those people should be held accountable for their actions to the people they have hurt. Appropriate reparation will be expected.
- Reintegrate where there has been division: restorative action will help with reintegration and the repair of relationships.

- Strengthen the community and individuals to prevent further harm by asking “What needs to happen to reduce the chance of people being harmed again?” In this way, the focus is not on punishment but on how to create a healthier and safer community.

The stages that have been developed to address student behaviour in times of conflict are as follows.

The supervising directress will gather the students involved and in a circle, or face to face, actively engage in collaborative conflict resolution using the following process:

- Identify the problem using "I" statements.
- Let one child at a time explain the problem or incident.
- Ask the group what part they played in the incident.
- Ask the group to identify how they could restore peace.
- Ask the individual students whether they feel resolved.
- If not, ask the individual student to return when they are ready.

At the discretion of the directress, the parent will be informed of the incident and asked to support their child to come to a resolve. Parents are to be informed when:

- the incident involves teachers or other employees of BBMS
- the incident results in serious physical harm to the student or to another person
- the incident involves breach of conduct
- the incident(s) escalate to a point where the student reports feeling unsafe at school
- the problem is reoccurring without resolution being reached
- the incident is perceived as having an inflammatory nature

Information will be shared with parents as soon as possible, within a maximum of 24 hours after the incident is reported.

## 2) Breach of Conduct and Reporting Guidelines

### i. Definition

Breach of Conduct is physical or verbal aggression with the intention to harm that clearly creates an unsafe situation as is perceived by the supervising adult or the student.

This includes behaviour that:

- continues to escalate after adult supervisor is on hand to manage the situation, which includes defiance of authority and/or
- can be defined as bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, threatening or violent behaviours, and/or
- includes rage, which is distinctive from a temper tantrum.

ii. Classroom Safety

If a student reports feeling unsafe in the classroom, teachers will:

- Make a plan with student to address his/her safety needs.
- Work with any other students and teachers involved to restore safety.
- Check back with said student on an ongoing basis to ensure that the plan is working and the student feels safe.
- Inform parents if any conduct issues arise.

iii. Reporting Guidelines

During school hours, while at a school-related activity, or where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment, if a breach of conduct occurs that is witnessed by another child or a Directress, all involved parties will be removed from the public area and asked to discuss this behaviour with the Academic Director and the child's Directress. At this time the Directress will begin the conflict resolution process with all involved parties. All parties will be asked to engage in the restorative justice process which will include:

- Invitation to all participants in order to begin the goal of repairing what trust has been broken.
- Seek Direct Accountability: In cases where certain individuals are responsible for causing harm, those people should be held accountable for their actions to the people they have hurt. Appropriate reparation will be expected.
- Reintegrate where there has been division: restorative action will help with reintegration and the repair of relationships.
- Strengthen the community and individuals to prevent further harm by asking "What needs to happen to reduce the chance of people being harmed again?" In this way, the focus is not on punishment but on how to create a healthier and safer community. A plan will be made to prevent retaliation by the person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of conduct.



- The supervising adult will file a report to the Academic Director.

During school time if a student witnesses a breach of conduct they must report this to their Directress immediately. At this time the Directress will begin the conflict resolution process with all involved parties. All parties will engage in the restorative justice process as mentioned above.

If a student reports a breach of conduct by a teacher or adult employee of BBMS, the report must be brought to the immediate attention of the Academic Director to resolve the issue according to policies in this handbook.

All incidents will be reported to the Academic Director who will then, in consultation with the Supervising Directress and Class Directress, report to the President of the Board. This group will determine the necessity of filing a formal report to the Board of Directors. Suspensions will be reported to the Board of Directors of MIND.

iv. Monitoring Progress

If a breach of conduct is repeated by the same student then the Academic Director and Directress will begin formal meetings with the child's parents and begin a process of monitoring behaviour with the potential of zero tolerance and consequences such as the restricted freedoms and vigilant supervision.

At all times the Academic Director along with the offending student's Directress will develop the necessary consequences for the student's behaviour. It is the jurisdiction of the Directress and Academic Director to determine the suitability of the consequence and to judge the level of accountability that the offending student has taken responsibility for in managing his or her behaviour.

v. Suspension

A student can be suspended for a breach of conduct by the Academic Director. The student will be asked to go home and reflect on his or her behaviour. The Academic Director, the student's Directress and the parents will meet before the student returns to school to discuss the level of accountability that the student takes for his or her behaviour and to determine the readiness of the student to re-enter the program. The Academic Director will report all student suspensions to the MIND Executive, and inform them of the accountability plan and progress of the student in re-entering the BBMS program.



If a student is unable to fulfill these requirements to re-enter the BBMS community successfully and safely, after all breach of conduct policies and procedures have been exhausted, the Academic Director will report the situation to the MIND Executive, and the student will be required to be withdrawn from the school program. Parents remain responsible to fulfill all terms of their contract with BBMS, unless an amendment has been made by the MIND Executive.

vi. Withdrawal Procedures

While we are normally successful with our students, we can never be right for every child. We are objective, compassionate, yet realistic in considering the needs of each child as a unique individual and their placement in our school. When we fail, despite our best efforts, to work with the child to help them meet appropriate behavioural expectations within the school's fundamental ground rules, we counsel the family to seek another school setting in which the child can experience success. Parents will be notified of the requirement of their child's withdrawal in writing from the Academic Director. Should the parent/guardian not forward an email/letter of withdrawal within 2 weeks of the request, the Academic Director will conclude all student reports. All student records will be forwarded to the student's next school as required by the Student Records Requirements and Best Practices Policy.