



# The Montessori School of Pullman

115 NW State St, Suite 109  
Pullman, WA 99163



pullmanmontessori.org  
509.334.4114

## **Behavior Management and Anti-Bullying Policy**

It is important to establish a consistent behavior management program in order to help our children learn techniques for solving their disagreements and problems. Our goal is to teach skills through effective communication, modeling 'I' messages and reflective listening. This will allow the children to become less dependent on adults when encountering problems or conflicts. There will be **no physical discipline** (spanking, slapping, etc.) administered to any child at any time under any circumstance. The school adheres to the Washington State regulation forbidding corporal punishment. "Good discipline combines caring and fairness with control - Children imitate adult examples and tend to be cooperative with adults who combine caring with fair and steady rules" (1).

**Step 1:** When we begin our school year, performance guidelines will be stated to the children in a positive manner, and used consistently through the year, to communicate a respect for others and to encourage cooperation.

"We use a soft voice in our classroom."

"We return materials to their place on the shelf so they are ready to be used again."

"We all care for our room and the materials in it."

"We walk carefully around mats. Only our work is placed on the mats."

"We respect each other by not disturbing others when they are working." This may occur when a child chooses to work alone or with others and when children wait patiently, not interrupting, when a teacher is giving a presentation or another child is talking.

"We do not touch the work of others without asking first."

"We walk in the hallways or the classroom."

**Step 2:** When a child chooses to disregard our guidance and/or our school rules, behavior management measures will be taken in the form of repeating the rules and restating the boundaries to individual children when necessary. Choices are given to the children whenever possible. We actively listen if a child is upset (2). To assist the child in communicating their feelings, we try to interpret these feelings and help the child develop vocabulary for effective communication. The teacher will begin to document the behaviors, and share that they are doing this with parents.

**Step 3:** If Step 1 and 2 have failed, we will have the child remain by a teacher's side until the child is ready to make appropriate choices. We will have the child watch others for a good example. The teacher will continue to reflectively listen to the child's concerns.

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**Step 4:** If the problem continues, we will contact parents and express our concerns. A conference may be scheduled to exchange ideas for helping the child become aware of appropriate choices. Behavior documentation will be discussed with parents at this conference.

**Step 5:** If the behavior persists and the child continues to disrupt the classroom, destroys classroom property and/or harms, either physically or mentally another child, we will contact parents immediately and request a day away from school so the child becomes empowered to make appropriate behavioral choices. If the disruptive behavior continues, a second day may be requested. Parents may be asked to be on call to come pick up the child whenever the disruptive behavior occurs.

If there is a serious question of whether the child can function happily in this school, the school may set a limited 'probationary' period of up to four weeks to try to work out problems. At the end of the probationary period, the parents and teacher will hold another conference to make a decision as to what further action should be taken to best meet the needs of the child. At that time, it may be necessary to discontinue attendance at the school.

In extreme cases, for example, instances where the safety, health and security of the school community is threatened, the school may disenroll the child immediately. The parents/guardians of the child will be informed of the immediate disenrollment and the reason why in writing. The administrator will offer suggestions and alternative options to facilitate the disenrolled child's transition into another program, and/or for evaluation to see what services might be of help to the family.

The above steps are also used in our anti-bullying policy. Specific lessons will be introduced to KG and Elementary children to help them recognize the difference between rude, mean and bullying behavior. Bullying behavior is persistent, continues even after a child has expressed through words or actions that he or she wants the behavior to stop, is intentional and involves a power difference. Bullying can be verbal, (e.g. name-calling), physical (e.g. hitting), and/or relational (e.g. excluding/isolating a child). We will use the above 4 steps to manage bullying, including the final step of immediately disenrolling a child for behavior that threatens the safety, health and security of the school, children and staff.

I understand and accept the conditions of the above discipline policy.

Parent or Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1 Stone, Jeannette G., A Guide to Discipline, National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1985

2 Gordon, Dr. Thomas, Parent Effectiveness Training – P.E.T., Wyden, 1970