

## **Discipline at SWS**

Our aim is to provide a safe environment, conducive to learning, within which each child's full potential may unfold. Care for others, ourselves and our work is an integral part of learning. It is easier to learn in a disciplined environment. It is essential that the will forces be nurtured and that, in the child, they are tempered by a caring heart and clear thinking.

When children know clearly what is expected of them, they can relax inside these boundaries. Respecting ourselves, and striving to do our best, caring for others, keeping our immediate environment clean and orderly, and realizing that our deeds have consequences, all foster healthy habits of soul. The curriculum, designed to lead each child to recognition of individual humanness and mission in life, can only rest on a commonly shared vision of socially co-operative behaviour.

## **Approach**

We strive to provide firm, consistent, safe boundaries, and we expect all school rules to be followed. We prefer a positive reinforcement system and natural and logical consequences leading to self-determination, when possible. The use of strong visual images, stories, imagination and preventative measures, such as early and direct intervention, can minimize time detracted from teaching.

Teachers attempt to model appropriate behaviour so that students can learn respect, politeness and a caring attitude. Each child is valued. The faculty attempts to "hold" any child experiencing difficulties. We seek to discipline consistently in a manner that allows children to retain their self-respect and to learn responsibility. Consequences for misbehaviour vary according to age and temperament. For example, written tasks bring consciousness and provide focus for older children. Caring tasks counterbalance uncaring acts. Spreading sand in halls is counterbalanced by sweeping halls. Where possible, students will be helped to undo or put right what has been done.

## **Expectations**

As learning is our primary mandate and learning is a demanding and disciplined activity, we seek to provide an environment in which learning will flourish. Each teacher expects to be able to conduct lessons in an atmosphere of quiet, respect and cooperation. Thus, students are expected to arrive promptly, ready to work and dressed appropriately. They are expected to respect classroom materials and order, stay on task and work conscientiously. Students are asked to do their best to participate and cooperate in all classroom activities. Students must not interfere with the learning of self or others.

## **Disruptions to an Optimal Learning Environment**

Teachers understand that unclear expectations and lack of consistency on the teacher's part can interfere with learning. Lack of self-discipline, poor self-concept, lack of daily rhythm, tiredness, television, videos, insufficient breakfast and a host of other human events can hinder learning as well.

Small disruptions to an optimal learning environment include dawdling, coming late to class, talking to a neighbour, conversations or questions off topic, answering questions out of turn, interrupting, passing notes, fiddling with materials, being out of seat, sharpening pencils when inappropriate, going to the bathroom or getting drinks and being engaged in another activity not relevant to the present class.

Individual teachers determine their own strategies for dealing with small disruptions in their classrooms in ways that are fair and positive. If work is not done during class time, it may be necessary to retain a child at recess, lunch or after school to finish work or bring it to a satisfactory standard. Teachers communicate, problem-solve and share effective strategies. Teachers strive to keep objective observations (this may be in the form of a logbook) and inform other teachers involved about children's behaviour.

Large disruptions include yelling, rude or aggressive back talk, disrespect, swearing, total non-cooperation or non-participation, fighting and violence.

In a situation in which regular classroom discipline strategies break down, a three-step process, which can lead to student suspension, or in extreme cases, expulsion, is in place. (See below.)

## **Expectations of Student Social Behaviour**

Children are encouraged to be morally upright and to respect themselves, others and their environment. Children are to exhibit polite and respectful behaviour in word and deed at school and at all school functions. This includes respect for all, regardless of age, sex, race or religion. Respect for property is required, including land, boundaries, school equipment and common areas, such as library, bathrooms, hallways, playground equipment, natural vegetation and the vegetable garden. Respect for the social conventions surrounding behaviour as visitors, guests or audience is also required.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

- Respect the learning environment.
- Be on time for all lessons and prepared to work.
- Work conscientiously, remain on task and complete work.
- Participate and cooperate in all classroom activities.
- No yelling and rude or aggressive language is permitted.
- Exercise socially acceptable behaviour.
- Be polite and respectful to all people regardless of age, sex, race or religion. This includes behaviour in word and deed at school and at all school functions.

- Respect all property including land, boundaries, school equipment, gardens, buildings and personal property.
- Respect the social conventions surrounding behaviour as visitors, guests or audience at all school functions.
- Respect the authority of all teachers and other adults providing supervision.
- No swearing, spitting, lying, stealing.
- No teasing or name calling.
- No fighting, aggressive behaviour, bullying or violence.
- No exclusion of other children.
- No vandalism or graffiti.
- Respect the Daily Rhythm of Sunrise Waldorf School.
- Walk in halls.
- Eat in the classroom.
- Wear indoor shoes in the classrooms.
- Dress appropriately.
- Be outside before and after school and at recess and lunch recess.
- Share facilities with other students.
- Respond immediately to the bell and line up outside the classroom in an orderly fashion.
- Respect and Observe the Safety Rules.
- Stay on school grounds.
- Play safely without bullying, harassing, fighting, pushing, tripping or throwing objects which might hurt or injure another child.
- Roller blades and hockey games are permitted only on the covered play area.
- No climbing fences, roofs, water tank, trees or dumpster.
- No playing in parking lot, front of the school, washrooms or ECE play area.

- No potentially dangerous objects or substances are to be brought to school.
- No harmful or threatening behaviour is permitted.

## **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Behaviour which is harmful includes swearing, spitting, lying and stealing. Abusive or hurtful behaviour includes teasing, name-calling, fighting; and aggressive behaviour such as punching, kicking and throwing stones, rudeness, bullying or exclusion. It is against our rules for a student to involve an unwilling partner in play fighting or wrestling. Willful destructiveness or vandalism includes breaking school objects, carving or defacing school property, graffiti and throwing balls at school walls or roof.

Small incidents of the above mentioned behaviours are handled by teachers with appropriate responses, such as warnings or explaining consequences. Pedagogical stories are helpful in mirroring behaviour. Students may be required to repair what is damaged, replace broken materials, or work for the community. Teachers may confiscate inappropriately used hockey sticks, roller blades, handballs or anything used as a weapon or tool of defacement. Class teachers or parents may be notified. An incident report may be sent home for the parent's signature. Three incident reports within a school year may result in suspension.

Larger incidents of disrespect, fighting, vandalism and stealing may result in suspension or expulsion as outlined below.

## **Expectations Which Support the Daily Rhythm**

Daily rhythm gives children a feeling of security and stability; they know what to expect and feel the world is an ordered place.

Children are to be out of doors prior to school beginning (except children of early arriving faculty and staff who may stay indoors until 8:15 am), at recess, lunch recess and after 3:00 pm. They are expected to share playground facilities and respond immediately to the bell and line up outside their class door in an orderly fashion, ready for class. The teacher admits children to the classroom and inside shoes are worn. Children eat only while sitting at their desks in the classroom. Walking, not running, in hallways is expected. The bathroom is to be used outside of class lesson time or at the teacher's discretion, although the teacher will not deny bathroom breaks during class time unreasonably.

## **Safety Rules and Expectations**

Actions that endanger the safety of self or others will not be allowed. Safety rules are in place to prevent anyone from being hurt and to protect school property.

Children are to respect safe boundaries and to stay on the school grounds. There is no climbing of fences, roofs, water tank or dumpster. No playing is permitted in the parking lot, the front of the school or the ECE play area during recess, lunch hour or after school. Roller blades and hockey sticks are permitted only on the concrete area.

No potentially dangerous objects are permitted at school. Examples are war toys, guns, knives, ninja sticks, matches, lighters, firecrackers, caps, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or any other object or substance that is potentially harmful.

Behaviour that is harmful or threatening is not permitted. Examples are fighting, throwing hardballs or snowballs, high-sticking, slapshots and hitting stones or marbles with hockey sticks. Helmets are mandatory for roller blading and ice-skating, when permitted. Play-fighting or wrestling with an unwilling partner is not permitted.

Teachers will keep each other informed about dangerous behaviour that is seasonal or fad-like by posting specific rules in the faculty room and communicating directly to other involved teachers and parents.

Consequences for breaking safety rules include confiscating dangerous objects, children paying for and/or repairing damage and putting things right.

Suspension or expulsion is possible for serious or repeated offenses.

## Bullying

When an incident of bullying occurs...

1. Meet with the people involved.

The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This may include some bystanders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying and may include one or two 'neutrals' within the class. These 'neutrals' or 'truth sayers' are chosen because they are not afraid to speak up but are not on anyone's side. Hear from each person when happened. There is always more than one side to an incident.

2. The group is told about *the way the victim is feeling*.

These feelings could either be written or communicated by the victim to the teacher. The emphasis should be place on communicating to the group the situation the victim finds him/her self in. Generally with students under twelve these feelings are best spoken by the teacher. The victim may like to be present and contribute, but alternatively many not wish to be present.

At this stage there are two options:

- talking to the class could be considered. This is helpful particularly if the bullying is non-specific in focus and a majority of the class is involved.
  - however it may be more appropriate to limit the discussion to those immediately involved. What is important is to let the group know that you have confidence that together they can do things to make the situation better.
3. Ask the group for their ideas.  
Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier; guidelines and rules for problematic games or regularly occurring '*trigger situations*' could be mutually agreed. Be realistic; ask for perhaps *three main ideas* as to how the situation can be improved. Look for ways in which to realistically support the group's ideas.

#### 4. Communicate with Parents

The parents of the centrally involved children are informed of the situation and of the ideas the children are going to try and enact, and the parent's support is vital. It is helpful to *write a brief summary* of events up to now and send a copy to each of the parents. This helps avoid any misunderstandings that may arise.

#### 5. Followup

About a week later the teacher and students, including the victim, meet and discuss how things are going. This allows for the monitoring of the situation and keeps the children involved in the process. It is important to recognize the progress the children have made if you feel relieved or proud of them, tell them!

6. The incident is brought to the attention of faculty during the Thursday meeting (or sooner) so that all recess supervisors are aware of the centrally involved children.

7. Continued incidents of bullying may lead to an incident report with the attendant consequences. This is, to an extent, a discretionary matter dependent upon the child's age, attitude/temperament, and the particular situation.

In short, all incidents will be dealt with once the class teacher is notified of the situation. There are no easy answers to the problem. We are all working together to create a culture of respect. We can best show our children how to treat one another by treating fellow human beings with respect, courtesy and kindness – in all our everyday interactions

## **Early Childhood Education Discipline Policy**

Bearing in mind that children are unique individuals and that children's behaviour reflects their level of development, Sunrise Waldorf School has regular observations and Child Study of the children in our care. We also recognize that a child's experience in the family and certain cultural norms influence children's behaviour patterns. We establish trusting relationships with our families so that we can have open discussions about the impact of certain environmental influences such as television, on the health, behaviour and development of the young child.

Every attempt within the Early Childhood programs is made to create an atmosphere of security, trust, and comfort of the child. The space is designed and furnished in such a way as to foster good work and play habits within a relaxed setting. Schedule and routines provide a framework within which the children may gain confidence and trust in their own reality. The children can count on these routines and therefore are less likely to get caught up in challenging these consistent boundaries and rhythms. The children encounter regular weekly and daily rhythms and the celebrating of the yearly festivals.

### **Guidance Strategies**

Clear, consistent and simple limits are established. Straightforward explanations for limits are offered. Boundaries are stated in a positive rather than negative way.

-Focus is placed on the behaviour rather than the character of the child.

-Directions and explanations are given with a matter of fact and blameless, loving manner.

- Expectations are stated rather than posed as questions.
- Time is allowed for children to respond to expectations.
- Appropriate behaviour is reinforced by positive words and/or gestures.
- Tolerance is exhibited for a few minor incidents, noise, attention-seeking behaviour and clutter.
- Scanning and remaining aware of the whole supervisory area are practiced.
- Modelling of appropriate, respectful and loving behaviours.

## **Intervention Strategies**

- Distraction
- Redirection
- Gaining of a child's attention in a calm and respectful way with word, close proximity, touch or gesture.
- Reminding directly or by having a conversation with a colleague that is intended to be overheard by the child.
- Acknowledgment before setting limits.
- Modelling of problem solving and/or offering appropriate choice.
- Common sense, natural and logical consequences are provided.
- Limiting of the use of equipment can be used if the child is misusing it.
- The watching chair may be used, first by helping the child to come into balance with a situation and possibly as a removal for inappropriate repetitive acting out. Holding techniques are rarely used.
- Opportunities to help children know their "kindergarten ways" or "kind ways" are used.

## **School Property and Furniture Care Policy**

Students at the Sunrise Waldorf School are expected to respect school furniture and property. In the case of deliberate damage (graffiti, carving, breakage) or loss to school property, the parents of the student/s concerned will be notified and will be responsible to repair (restoring to original condition) or replace the lost or damaged property within a week of notification. The teacher of the student/s concerned in consort with the parent/s will also decide on a natural and appropriate consequence for the behaviour involved.

Failure to do so within the allocated time will result in the school immediately replacing the lost or damaged property and the parent/s will be asked to cover the costs accordingly.

## Removal from Class

If a child is sent out of class, he or she may be sent to another classroom with work to complete or may be asked to stand outside the classroom door or may be sent to the Quiet Room. The child may need to serve a detention after school or during recess due to inappropriate behavior. Students serving a detention may spend the time cleaning up around the school or may be given a written task to complete.

The Quiet Room is a supportive space for children who are experiencing difficulties within the classroom environment. The philosophy behind this room was first brought to us in our work with Kim John Payne, and in our striving to fully support the needs of all children.

It is the role of every teacher to create a welcoming and inclusive space within the class. Nevertheless, there are times when students experiencing difficulty are unable to bring themselves to the task at hand, or to participate positively in the group environment. In these moments of disruption, it is our aim to support individual students, to help them re-orient, while simultaneously carrying the needs of the class and an environment conducive to learning.

The Quiet Room offers a calm space for students to be until they are ready to return to their class. Numerous comforting and therapeutic activities will be available for children who need to re-orient. The faculty is using this room as a proactive tool and not a punitive or disciplinary space. In fact, it may be a child who would just like a quiet space to work who is sent to the Quiet Room.

When a student is in need of some quiet time for whatever reason, they may be asked to visit the Quiet Room. The student will be accompanied by an office staff member to the room and greeted by the teacher staffing the room at that time. While in the Quiet Room, the student will have the opportunity to settle and will be supported by the teacher to find a quiet activity that will help them to ground. When the child has settled, they will make a plan to return to their classroom. This will be agreed upon with and written down by the teacher. Again the student will be helped back to their classroom by someone from the office. There, the classroom teacher will help the child re-enter in a successful way.

At Sunrise Waldorf School, we are committed to addressing the needs of all our students. This means to support children in the classroom and also to give extra care and help to those who are having difficulty in a community environment.

## Suspension and Expulsion

### Suspension

Sunrise Waldorf School may suspend students whose behaviour/attitude is harmful or threatening to others or themselves. The Sunrise Waldorf School recognizes that day to day corrections and minor disciplinary reprimands are normal. This policy addresses behaviour beyond the normal day to day routines of school life. The school recognizes that flexibility is required in meeting individual behaviour and developmental needs.

1. Recognition of a problem: The class teacher recognizes a problem or the specialist teacher recognizes a problem, reports it to the class teacher and a mutual course of action is decided upon.

2. Action: The teacher meets with the child. The child is told that improvement must take place. The child is allowed one (1) warning. The child is told clearly that after one warning the parents will be informed. An Incident Report is completed and filed with the office.
3. If the inappropriate behaviour occurs a second time, another Incident Report will be completed for the student's record and will be sent home with the child for the parent's signature. The Incident Report will indicate that another incident may result in suspension.
4. If the inappropriate behaviour occurs a third time, the class teacher discusses with the Pedagogical Committee (or available representatives of the Committee) the need for suspension. If suspension is recommended, the class teacher contacts and informs parent(s).

#### GUIDELINES:

1. Suspension of students will only be given by the class teacher.
2. Concerns from specialist teachers and support staff will be received by the class teacher and reported to the Faculty for discussion as deemed necessary by the class teacher / specialist teacher.
3. Criteria for suspension will be as follows:
  - A. Repeated inappropriate behaviour towards other students or staff. Inappropriate behaviour is deemed as:
    - interaction through physical conflict such as fighting, bullying or directly striking another person (punching, hitting, kicking, scratching).
    - interaction through verbal conflict such as swearing or disrespectful language.
  - B. Intentional disrespect shown to any teacher such as striking, swearing, lying, talking back, disobedience.
  - C. Stealing, vandalism or any other illegal activity.
  - D. Continual incompleteness of assignments.
  - E. Continual non-participation in classroom activities and/or disruptiveness preventing others from learning and/or participating.
  - F. Substance abuse; illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco.
4. Suspension may be implemented in cases of prolonged disciplinary and/or behavioural difficulties. In severe circumstances a class teacher can suspend a child immediately, upon consultation with the Pedagogical Committee.
5. During the disciplinary process all consequences such as detention and suspension must be clearly communicated to both the child and parents.
6. The class teacher must document in anecdotal note form the disciplinary process including events leading up to and throughout implementation of the following suspension procedures, as well as dates of meetings with the child and parents involved.
7. It is the class teacher's responsibility to bring any discipline problems to the Faculty for discussion or advice at any stage of the procedures. We accept that as a Faculty we work together, supporting each other when difficulties arise regarding discipline.

8. The amount of time that the child is suspended from school is determined by the class teacher in consultation with the Faculty and the parents.
9. Repeated suspension can take place, and can lead to expulsion.
10. Immediate suspension can occur for malicious intent or illegal activity.

Examples of Behaviour that Warrants Suspension:

1. Extreme disrespect
2. Rude or aggressive back talk
3. Total non-cooperation
4. Violence
5. Fighting
6. Vandalism
7. Substance abuse; illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco

Suspension Process (within 1 school year)

**FIRST INCIDENT:** Teacher calls parent(s) to pick up the child. The teacher completes an incident report which is sent home. A copy of the incident report is kept in the child's file.

**SECOND INCIDENT:** Teacher calls parent(s) to pick up the child. The teacher completes a second incident report which is sent home. A copy of the incident report is kept in the child's file.

**THIRD INCIDENT:** Teacher calls parent(s) to pick up the child. The teacher completes a third incident report which is sent home. The teacher and the Grade School Department discuss the need for expulsion. The teacher contacts the parents to inform them of the department's decision.

## **Expulsion**

Students will be asked to leave in cases of prolonged disciplinary or behavioral difficulties that disrupt the class on an ongoing basis, or if fruitful learning is impossible.

Expulsion results when teachers find that the class as a whole is suffering from the behaviour or attitude of a particular child, whose demands upon the teacher exceed the teacher's ability to be available equally and fairly to all students. Before asking that a child leave, the teacher will have:

- Informed parents of concerns
- Kept anecdotal notes of incidents, language, conversations with dates
- Brought the child to the Faculty as a whole
- Sought help from specialists (extra lesson, remedial, etc.), as appropriate
- Had other teachers observe in class
- Obtained reports from specialty teachers

Behaviour that warrants expulsion includes:

1. Prolonged disciplinary problems

2. Ongoing disruptions
3. An attitude which is extremely negative and thus inhibits fruitful learning
4. Substance abuse -possession or use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco
5. Extreme violence or vandalism
6. Repeated suspensions