

STUDENT WELFARE POLICY

This policy is informed by:

- CMS Student Welfare Policy 2007
- CMS Duty of Care Policy (*revised 2017*)
- CMS Sunsmart policy 2006
- CMS Suspension or Exclusion Policy 2006
- CMS Behaviour Management Policy 2015
- CMS Child Protection Policy
- CMS Grievance Policy
- CMS Nutrition Policy
- CMS Progression and Transitioning Policy 2015

Statement:

The Student Welfare Policy is based on the structure of the community at Canberra Montessori School, in that it is reflected in the culture, values, policy, procedures and educational programs that develop and promote the intellectual, physical, social and emotional wellbeing of each and every child.

Every teacher has the responsibility for the welfare of all students enrolled in the school (*Duty of Care*). The school maintains the duty of care for all students whilst they are entrusted in its care.

All stakeholders within the school, including parents and carers, are expected to support the school's philosophy and policies on student welfare. Any action taken against a student whilst outside the school's jurisdiction, but which is intended to enforce the school's values, must remain within the school's guidelines laid out in this policy. The school does not accept the use of any form of corporal punishment on a student by any person at any time.

Student Welfare encompasses everything the school community does to meet the personal and social needs of the students and to enhance their well-being. This precept involves recognising, valuing and developing each student as a total and unique person in the context of society.

Rationale:

- Parents and families have the prime responsibility for the welfare of their children.
- The general community shares the responsibility for the welfare of young people.
- Schools, as part of the general community, have a fundamental role in student welfare.
- Student Welfare is basic to education and is a responsibility of all members of staff.
- There is a need for the school to develop, implement and evaluate regularly its Student Welfare Policy and Procedures.

Beliefs:

At Canberra Montessori School, we believe that every student:

- has the right to feel safe, valued and happy
- should act responsibly and accept responsibility for their own actions
- should strive to achieve their potential
- support each other through a spirit of friendship and co-operation

Specific Practices & Procedures:

Aims:

Through the development of the Student Welfare Policy and Procedures, Canberra Montessori School will help students to develop:

- an enjoyment of, and satisfaction from, learning
- an ability to communicate effectively
- a coherent set of values to guide behaviour
- personal and social responsibility for their actions and decisions
- self-worth and dignity
- self-reliance
- a sense of cultural identity
- a feeling of belonging to the wider community
- a caring and responsible attitude towards others
- an ability to form satisfying and stable relationships

Outcomes:

Through the structure, practices and relationships formed through Montessori practices and within the Student Welfare Policy and Procedures, Canberra Montessori School will contribute to the general personal development of students by providing opportunities for them to:

- gain the satisfaction associated with challenge and achievement
- assist students in their feelings of belonging
- encourage students to explore their emotions and feelings in a personal and team context
- develop understandings and skills in communication and inter-personal relationships
- develop a realistic and comprehensive self-concept
- enhance their self-esteem
- develop their interests and abilities
- develop their personal values within a framework of broadly accepted community values
- develop their skills in decision making
- positively value cultural differences
- be caring and supportive of others
- contribute positively to the life of the school community

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Principal will be responsible for:

- providing leadership and direction
- providing staff support and opportunities for professional development
- encouraging a caring climate within the school
- liaising with parents, other support organisations and the community regarding educational policies and programmes

The staff will be responsible for:

- providing challenging and interesting learning experiences
- seeking to enhance the self-esteem of all students
- being sensitive to the welfare needs of all students
- providing support and guidance for all students
- acting as a role model for the children

The parents of the school will be responsible for:

- supporting the values of Canberra Montessori School
- participating in the philosophy and practices of Montessori schooling
- supporting the School's Student Welfare Policy
- encouraging their child/ren's interest in all aspects of schooling

The students of the school will be responsible for:

- actively participating in all aspects of school life
- being sensitive to the needs of others
- supporting and following the School Rules
- supporting the initiatives of the staff in promoting a healthy environment within the school culture.

General Strategies:

- All children respond to different behaviour management strategies. Therefore, any behaviour problems that arise will be treated on an individual basis.
- Children appreciate guidelines and limits. These will be clearly outlined at all times and staff will use positive techniques to emphasise to children these expectations must be met.
- At all times, each child will be encouraged to grow and strive for self-control (internal locus).
- The environment should always be planned to facilitate considerate movement.
- Staff need to plan patterns of active and restful activities to prevent over- excitement.
- Transition times need to be carefully managed to allow children to re-settle quickly to a new activity.
- The dignity of the child will always be preserved.
- All children will be helped to realise that they have choices and the ability to control themselves and that all people have a right to be treated with kindness and respect.

- In order to help alleviate any behaviour problems that may arise, staff are encouraged to maintain close communication with parents at all times. Consistency in behaviour management within the school is essential for children to feel safe and secure.
- Every teacher has the responsibility for the welfare of all students enrolled in the school.
- Staff should feel free to utilise the expertise of other professionals in the field should a child's behaviour be such that intervention is required. These may include the Director – School Administration, the Principal and, external specialists or health professionals.
- Children will be referred to by name at all times.
- Children should be encouraged to develop independence where they are capable of completing a task on their own, but should be assisted to master tasks where they lack the confidence or skills.
- Staff should model positive behaviour and appropriate language when speaking to children and other adults. A mutual respect between staff and children should be developed at all times.
- At all times, staff should help and guide children in making sensible choices, to co-operate and to be creative.
- Staff provide opportunity for children to reflect on their behaviour.
- When children are having trouble with conflict resolution, staff should model/teach appropriate conflict resolution.
- When discussing a child's behaviour with the child, the child should not be labelled (*e.g. 'you are naughty'*); label only the behaviour (*'your behaviour is...., what you are doing is....'*).
- Use 'do's' rather than 'don'ts' and give brief explanations.
- Class Directors should ensure they make direct contact with every child in their care every day. Children are more likely to respond to expectations when they sense that teachers know and like them.
- Every interaction with a child is an opportunity for learning and this should never be taken for granted or under-estimated.
- Staff should always try to acknowledge and accept children's feelings of anger, frustration or jealousy.

The following behaviour by staff is not permitted:

- corporal punishment or any type of physical punishment including hitting, spanking, beating, shaking, pinching or other measures which produce physical pain
- abusive, profane or derogatory language, including yelling and belittling any form of public or private humiliation including threats of physical punishment
- any form of emotional abuse including threats of physical punishment
- Withdrawal of food, rest or opportunity to use the toilet.
- Physical restraint of children will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and then only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation (*see CMS - Behaviour Management Policy*).
- Staff must remain calm in all situations.
- Encouragement, positive feedback and reinforcement for appropriate behaviour are the preferred methods at all times.

- Whenever issues arise, staff are urged to take time to listen to the child and ascertain the facts and background to issues and concerns before deciding on the appropriate strategy for resolution.
- All children will be encouraged to use and demonstrate good manners.
- Appropriate social skills will be modelled and role-played on a consistent basis.
- Staff will always be sensitive to the different cultures and child rearing practices of the families in the school and to their feelings about the discipline of their children.

Code of Behaviour:

Rationale:

Canberra Montessori School believes the school is a place of education where each child has the right to learn and grow in a supportive environment among people who are caring and co-operative. The school's Code of Behaviour asserts that appropriate behaviour is taught not as a separate curriculum item, but as an integral part of the daily learning process. The Code of Behaviour focuses on primary prevention and early intervention strategies such as assertiveness, conflict resolution, anger management and peer mediation. We aim to develop and promote resiliency and the enhancement of positive social behaviours and relationships.

The Code of Behaviour is based on a set of rights and their related responsibilities. To ensure that students understand their rights and responsibilities, the school teaches the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities as a primary prevention strategy.

All students have the right to:

- be treated with kindness and courtesy
- express feelings and opinions assertively
- work and play in an atmosphere of harmony and co-operation
- feel secure and to be safe in a caring and supportive environment
- expect that school rules are fair, consistently implemented and respect the rights of all involved
- be valued for their individuality, including that of race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity
- learn in a supportive atmosphere

The following responsibilities support these rights:

- treat others with courtesy, kindness and respect
- listen to others with mutual respect
- maintain a safe and secure school environment
- model and support school rules
- develop responsibility for their own actions
- value others for their individual differences
- work to achieve personal best whilst allowing others to do the same

Aims:

Throughout daily participation in Montessori Practices, we aim to:

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- determine and pursue acceptable forms of behaviour
- provide a secure school environment which maximises opportunities for learning and safety
- promote self-esteem and respect for others
- encourage children to accept responsibility for their own actions and decisions
- appreciate that effective education and behaviour management are possible only when the home and school complement each other's approach
- have our children understand and accept the consequences of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- understand that a flexible approach is needed to take account of age, individual and cultural differences
- determine triggers for unacceptable behaviour
- understand patterns associated with unacceptable behaviour

This will be achieved by:

- discussing rules with children to ensure that they are fully understood
- expecting acceptable standards of behaviour
- being consistent in enforcing rules and safety regulations throughout the school
- developing rapport, mutual respect and good manners
- fostering self-discipline, independence and initiative, by giving choices suitable to each child
- ensuring children are aware of the consequences of unacceptable behaviour
- developing open and collaborative communication between the home and the school
- exhibiting appropriate management of unacceptable behaviour

Procedures for Acknowledging Acceptable Behaviour:

- Give encouragement and positive feedback and reinforcement
- Establish a positive relationship with each child
- Take time to listen to the child and to ascertain the facts and background to issues and concerns
- Ensure disapproval is directed towards the child's actions and not the child
- Relate the consequence to the offence and avoid negative confrontation
- Acknowledge children for effort and improvement
- Provide opportunities for the children to gain recognition of their achievements both within the classroom and the school
- Teach values and attitudes as an integral part of the curriculum, and acknowledge students for displaying these values and attitudes

Procedures when Behaviour is Unacceptable:

A key component of Canberra Montessori School's philosophy is teaching about and using logical consequences to address behavioural problems. A logical consequence is based on goodwill and not retaliation. This is concerned with present and future behaviour and differs from punishment in that logical consequences are:

- related to the behaviour

- respectful of all parties
- of reasonable expectation
- relationship-building

Most forms of unacceptable behaviour should be dealt with by the Classroom Director.

Sanctions may include:

- loss of privileges
- loss of free time
- providing a verbal or written apology
- loss of freedom in the classroom
- necessary close proximity to the Classroom Director or Assistant

Should the behaviour be serious or consistent enough to cause concern then the following procedures will be followed:

- discussing the problems with the student and reaching an agreement for future behaviour.
- monitoring and providing feedback to students on their behaviour.
- making contact with the child's parents to outline concerns and to involve them in assisting with the modification of exhibited behaviour/s.
- through the Director – School Administration, referring the child to external agencies.
- *(See Chain of Referral CMS document)*

There is no corporal punishment at Canberra Montessori School. In addition, students should never be sent from the room unaccompanied or be asked to sit in an unsupervised area (*e.g. outside the room*), unless they are in clear view of the Classroom Director. Students may be needed to be escorted, when required to go from the classroom to sit with the Director – School Administration.

Where the behaviour of the student remains unacceptable after this process, or where a single behavioural act is deemed by the Principal to put others at risk, suspension or expulsion (see Suspension or Expulsion Policy) may be considered. In such cases, the school will ensure any disciplinary process is undertaken with procedural fairness. The normal process followed will ensure the student:

- knows the allegations relating to the matter and any other information which will be taken into account when considering the matter
- knows the process by which the matter will be resolved
- has the opportunity to respond to the allegations
- knows how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.

In all such matters, the student's parents will be kept fully informed of the process and will be given the opportunity to support the student at every stage.

If the matter is likely to result in a suspension or expulsion of the student, the Principal will inform the Board Chair or their Delegate, who is the final arbitrator in the school's Grievance Policy.

School Code of Behaviour in Practice:

All students in the school will:

- follow the instructions of teachers and others in authority
- be fair to themselves and others
- complete all required work carefully and to the best of their ability
- behave in a responsible, polite and courteous manner
- behave in a manner that demonstrates respect for themselves and others
- behave in a manner that keeps themselves and others safe at all times
- respect and care for school property and the property of others
- observe the school's general dress standards
- accept their responsibilities as members of the school and wider community

School Rules:

The following rules exist for the safety and wellbeing of children within the care of the staff and the school community.

- students will stay within the school grounds at all times
- students must remain in a supervised environment
- students must move safely and considerately around the school at all times.
- each classroom Director develops classroom rules in a collaborative way with the students each year.

• Approved by:	Date:	Next Review Date:
Principal	1/2/2023	1/2/2025