

BRYANT WOODS MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S HOUSE DISCIPLINE POLICY

The purpose of the Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House Discipline Policy is to promote a positive learning environment that—

- encourages respect for all members of the Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House community,
- maintains order in the classroom, and
- supports the positive development, normalization¹ and socialization of the child.

At Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House, we value—

- Respect for ourselves, others and the environment;
- Honesty;
- Courtesy and good manners;
- Empathy for others and respect for differences among people and cultures;
- Accepting responsibility for personal decisions and actions;
- Working cooperatively with others, which includes listening, sharing opinions, negotiating, compromising, helping the group reach consensus, and taking a stand;
- Seeking one's share of the responsibilities and the work load;
- Creating a balance between the needs of individual students and families and the needs of the school population as a whole; and
- Pride in our school.

The Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House Discipline Policy is subject to the authority of the Director/Head of School, who may at their discretion, deviate as necessary to support the goals of this policy and maintain the integrity of the classroom.

¹ Maria Montessori developed the concept of *normalization* to describe the process by which each child acquires certain personality characteristics that lead to success in the classroom and throughout life. A "normalized" child will love learning, be kind to others, develop concentration and good work habits, and become independent. Our goal is to create and maintain an environment in which each child can successfully reach this level of normalization. Normalization of the classroom begins with the modeling of the appropriate behavior by the teacher combined with a high level of respect for each student.

Policy Tenets

- Children are disciplined in a positive manner at Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House.
- We encourage the development of self-esteem, self-direction and cooperation.
- We do not spank or otherwise physically, or verbally, punish children.
- The environment in a Montessori classroom encourages positive behaviors by providing a variety of activities for a child to engage in.
- We encourage self-discipline through "work" (a Montessori term for the various activities in the classroom – the term "work" simply implies the importance of these activities to the children).
- Rules are stated from a positive point of view. Dialogue is encouraged by asking the children to express their feelings. Conflict resolution is encouraged by providing specific words that will facilitate problem solving on their own.
- Disruptive, disrespectful, destructive and harmful behaviors are not tolerated. Ground rules are stated along with what consequences the child can expect if the behavior continues. We are careful to let the child know that it is the child's behavior that is unacceptable, not the child.
- Repeated behaviors will be brought to the attention of the Director/Head of School and are subject to the authority of the Director/Head of School.
- Either the teacher or the Head of School will contact the parent/s (or legal guardian) to request a meeting to discuss the problem and an appropriate plan of agreed upon corrective action(s).
- If a child is asked to leave the environment, there will be no refund of tuition for the day(s) of suspension.
- If a child is permanently dismissed, the parent(s)/legal guardian will be responsible for tuition for the rest of that month.
- Efforts will be directed at maintaining students in the school setting.
- Every effort will be made to involve parents, as soon as is practicable, if there is an issue with the behavior of a child.
- Parents must recognize that the Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House staff's expertise is in Montessori education. Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House believes that a child in an environment of love, trust, and respect will gain self-discipline and the desire to learn and succeed in a positive way. Unusual behaviors may be beyond a child's control. Therefore, Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House may suggest the parents/guardian seek support from a pediatrician, an educational psychologist or an Office of Special Education/Student Services program (i.e. - Child Find).

Parent/Guardian's Role in Supporting Positive Behavior

Modeling

A parent is the most important teacher in a child's life. Children observe and imitate the behavioral responses that are used by the significant adults in their environment. Parents who are respectful and kind to others, especially their own children, are likely to see that same behavior develop in their children. Demonstrating a variety of healthy responses to frustration and set-backs, as well as modeling effective problem-solving techniques and non-judgmental communication are especially valuable to young children who are still learning to establish their own self control.

Discussion

While children absorb a great deal by observation, discussing ways to show respect, build trust, show empathy, manage anger, and practice forgiveness can help a child build successful relationships.

Reinforcement

Montessori philosophy does not advocate external rewards for desired behavior, as this tends to reduce intrinsic motivation. Acknowledging and praising positive behavior is always important and will help shape a child's behavior.

Communicate Significant Changes/Events to the Staff

Changes in a child's home life may affect his/her behavior and performance at school. Please notify the office and your child's teacher if any significant changes occur, such as:

- Extended vacations or business trips by a family member.
- Child staying somewhere other than home (relative/friend's house) for more than a day or two.
- Loss of family member, including pets.
- Moving; and/or
- Change in family environment (separation, divorce, new partner, new baby);

** This information will be strictly confidential.*

If you understand and agree to adhere to the Bryant Woods Montessori Children's House Discipline Policy, please sign where designated and return the signed policy to the school.

Student's Name _____

Parent/Legal Guardian's Printed Name _____

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature _____

Date _____