

Sample Overview of Discipline

(in a parent handbook)

_____ School uses the *Responsive School Discipline* approach. The goals of this approach are to ensure that children:

- Feel physically and emotionally safe in school so that they can learn at their best.
- Learn the skills for working and learning cooperatively with others.

Our schoolwide rules are:

Work hard and allow others to work hard.

Listen carefully and speak kindly.

Take care of school property.

The adults at _____ School take time to model and teach children how to translate these rules into action in different situations. At the beginning of the year, we introduce rules and behavior expectations and guide students in practicing them. Using respectful words and tones of voice, we remind children of these expectations. When children behave positively, we let them know that we noticed. These actions let children know what the expectations are and help them stay motivated to meet those expectations.

When children misbehave, the adults at school handle the misbehavior firmly while preserving the child's dignity. Our first step is to stop the misbehavior quickly and simply (for example, with a brief word or gesture). If needed, we take further steps to help the child regain self-control, fix any problems caused by his or her mistake, and get back to productive learning.

In deciding how to handle students' misbehavior, we take into account how severe the misbehavior is and how likely it is to happen again. We may:

- Simply give a reminder or tell the child to do something different.
- Have the child sit closer to the teacher or other adult (often just being closer to an adult helps children remember what they're supposed to do).
- Use "take-a-break" (the child goes to a distraction-free space in the room for a little while to regain self-control).
- Limit the child's choice of activities for awhile (for example, blacktop games only at today's recess; try field games again tomorrow).
- Guide the child in fixing problems caused by his or her mistake (for example, helping the custodian clean up if she or he made a mess in the bathroom).

When a student needs additional supports, we may:

- Use buddy teacher take-a-break (the child goes to a distraction-free space in another teacher's room for awhile to regain self-control).
- Use private take-a-break (the child goes to a supervised nonclassroom place, such as the counselor's office, for awhile to regain self-control).
- Have the child stay for a longer period of time in the supervised place (in-school suspension).
- Have the child spend a period of time at home (at-home suspension).
- Meet with the child and/or parents to find other solutions.

When a child is asked to stay home from school, a parent must accompany the child to school the next day for a re-entry meeting with the teacher and an administrator. This meeting is typically held within the first hour of the day.

We at _____ School strongly believe that children want to and can meet expectations. We value partnering with parents to help students do well in school and feel good about going to school.