

Behavior Guidelines

The quality of life at (insert name of school) is based on students and teachers working together in a spirit of mutual trust and responsibility. Rules exist so that everyone can work together, feel safe, and be glad they are in school. Three basic rules keep the atmosphere of the community pleasant: respect yourself, respect others, and respect the community.

We expect all members of the (insert name of school) community to be well behaved and considerate of others at all times; appropriate language and behavior in front of the school, on school trips, and outside in the yard matter as much as behavior inside the building. Students are expected to respond politely to reminders and requests from all faculty and staff, not just the adults they know well.

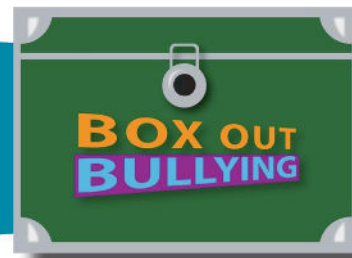
Five Rights That Belong to Everyone:

1. The right to be treated with courtesy and respect.
2. The right to a safe learning environment free of disruptions.
3. The right to one's property.
4. The right to one's good name.
5. The right to one's physical space and safety

The following violations of major school rules will result in disciplinary action:

- Violence or threatening violence to harass or intimidate others
- Profane, abusive, or disrespectful language
- Reckless behavior that endangers oneself or others
- Cheating or plagiarism in academics
- Theft, vandalism, or graffiti
- Harassment, sexual harassment, or bullying
- Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or dangerous implements





Harassment and Bullying

(Insert name of School) takes a strong stand against harassment and bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is a prerequisite for all student learning, and the school takes seriously any behavior that interferes with a student's sense of safety and security or the school's ability to educate its students in a respectful, peaceful environment. Demonstrating civility and respect and not tolerating harassment or bullying is expected of all members of the Montessori Family School community.

It can sometimes be hard to tell the difference between teasing, harassment, and bullying. Teasing usually involves two or more friends who act together in a way that seems fun to all the people involved. Often there is some reciprocity, with students teasing each other back and forth, but it never involves physical or emotional abuse. It is possible for teasing to get out of hand – and feelings to get hurt – yet still not constitute either harassment or bullying.

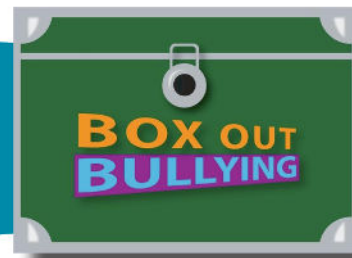
Harassment is defined as gestures, words, or acts (whether written, verbal, graphic, electronic, or physical) that are reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. The definition of harassment is three-fold:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students;
2. Adversely affecting the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the pupil, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and
3. Being based on a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristics or on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have such characteristics.

Often, but not always, bullying is harassment taken to the next level. Dan Olweus, generally recognized as a pioneer and founding father of research on bullying problems, says that "a person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself." This definition of bullying includes three important components:

1. Aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions;
2. A pattern of behavior repeated over time; and
3. An imbalance of power or strength.





Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment or bullying may still be prohibited by school rules and common courtesy.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments that are sexual in nature; physical conduct such as assault, blocking normal movement, or interference with work directed at the individual because of gender; or retaliation for having reported the harassment. Teachers discuss this policy with the older children in age-appropriate ways and assure them that they do need not to endure any form of sexual harassment.

Disciplinary consequences include any of the following:

- Speaking with parents and/or the Head of School
- After school detention
- Service to the school
- Suspension from school
- Dismissal from school

Discipline is handled on an individual basis. Teachers may ask a child to leave the group or lesson if the student is being disruptive or breaking classroom rules. If a student cannot participate in class activities because they have been asked to leave the group repeatedly, either the teacher or the Head of School will confer with a student's parents. Suspension and dismissal are reserved for breaking a major school rules. Students suspended from school may be placed on behavioral probation as a condition of their return. That means any further violation of school rules puts the student at risk for immediate dismissal from the school.

The Rights of Students and Parents Involved in Disciplinary Matters

It is the right of students and their parents to:

- Be informed of the policies and rules regarding student behavior and discipline;
- Be informed in writing of the misbehavior and the incident during which it occurred;
- Present his/her version of the facts; and
- Have a conference with the teachers.

