

Student Discipline

Discipline Philosophy

“A healthy social life is found only, when in the mirror of each soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the whole community the virtue of each one is living.”

Rudolf Steiner

Classroom and schoolwide discipline, like discipline in parenting, can be a sensitive subject for many. At Madrone Trail, it is our aim to imbue our academic instruction with a healthy and holistic instruction in social and emotional skills through the fair, equitable, and consistent application of sound discipline. In doing so, priority should always be given to the individual worth and welfare of each child, as well as a concern to integrate disciplinary practices into the education of the willing, feeling, and thinking of the whole human being.

As a community of practicing educators based upon the principles of Waldorf education, we place utmost value upon the freedom of the child to explore and learn in ways that they find individually meaningful. At the same time, we affirm the necessity for an orderly education environment wherein each child can receive developmentally appropriate instruction from their teacher in a way that encourages cooperation and the building of healthy social-emotional habits among their peers, such as a concern for others, the ability to listen and ask questions, and behavioral self-regulation.

In this way do we see the fruits of discipline born out in our daily tasks as educators insofar as each child becomes empowered by the community to become their fullest self, enriching the community in return with their unique individual gifts.

Responsibility of the Teacher

Within the framework established in the following policy, it is the responsibility of the teacher to establish and clearly communicate classroom and community expectations to the children entrusted to their care. There are many variables which might affect how this responsibility is expressed over the course of a child's relationship with their teacher, and the teacher may be with the children for several years. Great care must always be taken on the part of the teacher to consider the age and development of the child in communicating rules and expectations, as well as correcting behavior and engaging parents or guardians in the discipline process.

While individual pedagogical styles and class-specific rules will depend on the teacher, it is the expectation of the Madrone Trail community that the teacher will always:

- Speak of and to the child in a way that is calm, edifying, and professional.
- Clearly communicate rules/expectations in an age-appropriate way.
- Address disciplinary violations firmly and decisively according to the established school policies.
- Respect student privacy in all communications concerning the child.
- Involve parents and administrators in serious disciplinary matters.
- Consider the developmental and pedagogical purpose of disciplinary consequences with respect to the individual child, including those who receive Special Education or 504 services.
- Model classroom and community expectations in their interactions with all students, parents, visitors, and staff.
- Encourage every student to learn respect for all life, healthy conflict resolution skills, how to share a common space and property, and the value of holistic growth in character over extrinsic rewards for merely “being good.”

Student Code of Conduct

At Madrone Trail, we strive to create a safe, caring, and nurturing environment for all. We expect that all members of our community, including the children, will:

- Treat one another as they would like to be treated.
- Respect school property and equipment.
- Resolve conflicts in a way that is mutually honoring of our shared humanity and individual dignity.

As students at Madrone Trail, the children in our care are also expected at all times:

- To follow directions from teachers and staff the first time they are given.
- To participate attentively and productively in classroom instruction.
- To abide by rules established and clearly communicated by legitimate school authorities, whether this be in the classroom, on the playground, or at any school-sponsored gathering or activity.
- To refrain from knowingly committing, instigating, or taking part in any activity that endangers the physical, emotional, and/or mental well-being of peers and/or school personnel (including but not limited to violence, unwanted physical contact, and targeted harassment at school or online).

Response to Repeated Infractions or More Serious Incidents

It is expected that most, if not all, children will at some point require correction or redirection in the classroom, on the playground, or elsewhere. At Madrone Trail, our staff are committed to managing all such instances with grace, fluency, and composure, in such a way that minimizes disruption and ensures

the safety of everyone involved.

Notwithstanding our greatest efforts, repeated instances of minor yet disruptive behaviors as well as more grave incidents will require some disciplinary measure beyond routine redirection or a gentle reminder. A discipline policy should never be understood as a ledger of crimes and associated punishments, but rather as a pedagogy intended to develop in children a sense of responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and healthy social and emotional habits. As such, the following scale of disciplinary 'zones' of response is not intended to be an exhaustive framework that applies to every incident regardless of context, but is to be followed and applied according to the discretion and sound professional judgment of staff, teachers, and administrators.

Green Zone

An incident will be considered in the 'green zone' if it involves a non-disciplinary response to a particular physical, social, or emotional need that requires the removal of the student from the classroom. Examples of green zone behaviors/incidents but are not limited:

- Feeling physically unwell.
- Taking a sensory 'break.'
- Speaking to school social-emotional wellness staff.

Yellow Zone

An incident will be considered in the 'yellow zone' if it involves a disciplinary response to repeated but non-threatening misbehavior or non-compliance with the student code of conduct. Examples of yellow zone behaviors/incidents include but are not limited to:

- Repeatedly talking out of turn.
- Refusal to be seated.
- Leaving the classroom without permission or 'walking out.'
- Skipping class
- Defiance toward responsible school staff.
- Profanity
- Possession of prohibited items or technology on campus.
- Dress code violation

Response to a yellow zone incident might involve one or more of the following, to be determined at the discretion of the class teacher and administrative staff:

- Loss of privileges/detention
- In-school suspension

- Reseating
- Notice sent home to parents.
- Reflective writing
- Restorative circle
- Confiscation of prohibited item(s)
- In case of a dress code violation, the student will be asked to modify or adjust their clothing in an appropriate and respectful manner.

Teachers may exercise their professional judgment in documenting yellow zone violations. However, no repeated yellow zone violations may be escalated to red zone violations without appropriate written documentation in the form of a communication to the child's parent or guardian (e.g. email record or parent communication call log).

Red Zone

An incident will be considered in the 'red zone' if it involves a disciplinary response to repeated or threatening misbehavior that violates the student code of conduct by putting staff, students, or school property in jeopardy. Examples of red zone behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Repeated instances of profanity.
- Fist fighting
- Violent and physically dangerous emotional outbursts.
- Unwanted physical contact with another student or staff.
- Vandalism
- Bringing a weapon to school (e.g. pocket knife)
- Repeated dress code violations.
- Repeated possession of prohibited items or technology on school property or at a school function.
- Possession of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or other controlled substance on school property or at a school function.

Any 'yellow zone' type behaviors that remain uncorrected and continue to be repeated will be escalated to a 'red zone' response if three or more incident referrals have been issued.

Response to a red zone incident may include many of the same measures as a 'yellow zone' incident, with the following possible additional responses, to be determined at the discretion of the class teacher and administrative staff:

- Immediate removal from the classroom, in-school suspension.
- Out of school suspension or expulsion*
- Mandatory conference with parent/guardian.

In addition, all red zone violations will require an incident report to be filed by the teacher with the student's academic records.

Zero Tolerance

Madrone Trail will not tolerate physical aggression, violent threats verbal or written, or any kind of menacing behavior that involves physical intimidation. All such incidents will be treated as major violations of the student code of conduct and may be considered grounds for expulsion.

Notice Regarding Bullying-type Behavior

Madrone Trail staff are to be vigilant at all times in order to identify and/or forestall any and all bullying-type behaviors among students. It is also important for parents/guardians to assist the school if they discover evidence that bullying-type behavior or harassment may be taking place on school grounds or off-campus between students, whether in person or online. These behaviors will generally involve targeted harassment or intimidation by a student or group of students toward one or more of their peers.

However, what is popularly construed as 'bullying' typically occurs within the context of complicated social dynamics that might make it hard to identify readily. It is also important to emphasize that a victim of bullying might need support in articulating the problematic behaviors that are putting them at risk (e.g. 'gaslighting'). Therefore, resolving incidents related to bullying-type behavior demands a whole-community response. If a parent/guardian is concerned that their child is experiencing bullying at school or off-campus/online, they should contact the child's class teacher who will then coordinate a conference with administration and social-emotional support staff in order to develop a response plan.

Communication Policy Regarding Discipline & Student Safety

Out of respect for our staff and the onerous demands placed upon their time and energy, we ask parents/guardians to make a good faith effort to resolve disciplinary concerns and disputes at the lowest possible level before escalating to supervisors, prioritizing direct, in-person communication so long as this remains a safe and realistic option. Parents/guardians are always free to reach out to teachers by other means, bearing in mind that teachers reserve the right to establish individual availability via electronic communications such as phone and email.

Concerns that are not satisfactorily resolved after appeal first to the teacher and then to the administrator may be brought to the board of directors via the public complaint process outlined in the MTPCS board policies.

Teachers will acknowledge your communication promptly, but please allow up to two full school days for a thorough response or resolution. The teacher may wish to investigate the incident and contact the concerned parties independently before deciding on a firm disciplinary procedure. If contact between teachers and parents/guardians has been established and the teacher has not managed to resolve the matter to their satisfaction, parents/guardians should contact the teacher's immediate supervisor or

administrator. Teachers may request administrative support at any time during the process. Parent communication that is hostile, threatening, or that constitutes harassment will be referred directly to an administrator for review and mediation.

Reporting Threats to Community Safety

Any member of the Madrone Trail community who receives knowledge of a credible and imminent threat to the physical safety of a student or number of students should immediately contact an administrator. Administrators will reserve the right to involve the child's teacher in formulating a disciplinary response.

Gun-Free Zone

The campus of Madrone Trail in its entirety is a Gun-Free Zone. Firearms carried in the open or concealed anywhere on one's person or in a vehicle are absolutely prohibited.

Notice Concerning School, District Policies and Oregon Law

As a charter school within the Medford public school district, Madrone Trail is subject to most Medford school district policies concerning discipline, as well as all Oregon laws pertaining directly to public schools and associated disciplinary policies and procedures.

In a case involving an emergency situation relating to health and safety where there is a serious risk that substantial harm will occur, procedures may be postponed and the student immediately suspended from school.

If the student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), School Board Policies J.GDA and J.GDA-AR, should be followed

There may come a time when despite repeated interventions, plans of assistance, and suspensions, the child continues to exhibit behavior that is totally disrupting the class and or threatening the well-being of fellow students. If this situation arises, it may become necessary to talk about expulsion or finding an environment better suited to the needs of the child. Continuous violation of school rules may be grounds for expulsion.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

ORS 339.240-250

ORS 582-021-0065