

RMCS SCHOOL COMMUNITY CODE OF CONDUCT

revised 08.15.12

I. POLICY STATEMENT

River Montessori Charter School is a place which promotes values that are in keeping with the School's Mission. All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe, and feel safe, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that intimidate or put at risk the safety of others or oneself. This includes behavior that may be considered intentionally anti-social.

For the purpose of this Code of Conduct, "School Community" comprises the director, guides, staff, learning specialists, program directors, students, parents, guardians, step-parents, relatives, friends, supporters, caregivers and invitees of the School, who attend the School, or elsewhere, for the purpose of visiting, viewing, participating, supporting or being present for any official activity, whether learning or social, held by or for the benefit of the School and its students.

The School Community Code of Conduct sets clear standards of behavior which are expected of members of the School Community. It specifies the consequences for any member of the School Community who does not comply with those standards of behavior, whether those persons are on the School's campus, in transit to or at another location for the purpose of any School-authorized events or activities.

2. BACKGROUND

Dr. Maria Montessori integrated a code of conduct into her curriculum emphasizing grace and courtesy. Behavior in a Montessori classroom is no different in our homes or the social community; respect and care for each other, our environment, and ourselves.

The following are the principles which provide the framework for the River Montessori Code of Conduct:

HONESTY

Honesty in all matters is the basic expectation at River Montessori. Trust, an outgrowth of honesty, is essential to relationships that hold our community together. In the face of social pressures, truthfulness can sometimes be difficult to maintain; however, honesty is the quality that we value the most in our students.

KINDNESS

We expect that all River Montessori students will treat others with consideration both inside and outside the classroom. Students' treatment of each other must be respectful at all times, whether or not an adult is present. River Montessori encourages students, faculty, and parents to accept, tolerate, and welcome differences.

DISCIPLINE

The Montessori approach to conduct is based in self-discipline. We understand that

students test limits as they grow and that they will have challenges. Our discipline system is based on the philosophy that, if a child is supported in learning self-awareness and honesty, his or her straightforwardness and ability to communicate is the first step in accepting responsibility for inappropriate behavior or mistakes.

Every student at River Montessori has a right to learn and thrive in a school atmosphere that is conducive to academic achievement and social growth. Any behavior by a student that threatens to disrupt the learning process or pose a danger to others is unacceptable.

In the event a student is unable to comply with classroom rules and appropriate behavior, the student will be liable for Breach of Conduct and subject to the actions outlined in section 8 of this document.

With this in mind:

- All members of the School Community are to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the School Community. Active and engaged members are aware of their rights but, more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.
- Members of the School Community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve any conflict.
- Insults, disrespect, and other hurtful acts disrupt learning and teaching in the School Community, and are a direct contradiction to the School's Mission and Values. Members of the School Community have a responsibility to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility to all others.

Parents play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of School staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill this responsibility when they:

- Show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- Communicate regularly with the School;
- Help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for School;
- Ensure that their child attends School regularly and on time;
- Promptly report to the School their child's absence, late arrival or early departure;
- Become familiar with the Family Handbook;
- Encourage and assist their child to learn and practice healthy social skills;

- Work with School staff in dealing with disciplinary issues.

3. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

As a minimum, all members of the School Community are expected to behave with respect, civility and in the manner of a responsible citizen. This means, all School Community members must:

- Respect all applicable Federal and State laws;
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- Respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is a disagreement;
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of their disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state;
- Respect the legal and moral rights of others;
- Show proper care and regard for School property and the property of others;
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need;
- Respect persons who are in a position of authority;
- Respect the need of others to work in an environment of learning and teaching.

4. SCOPE

River Montessori's School Community Code of Conduct is intended to provide members of the School Community with guidelines for the effective development of positive relationships within the School Community and, as expressed in the introduction, to assist in promoting the values that are in keeping with the School's Mission.

This document is then essentially a guide for all members of the School Community about the standards of behavior which are acceptable in the School environment or when attending any official, learning or social function or activity of or relating to the School or in any location at which the School is represented.

This School Community Code of Conduct is a guide for acceptable standards of behavior that extend beyond the immediate family to include guardians, step-parents, relatives, friends, supporters and caregivers of students at the School.

5. GENERAL CONDUCT

School Community members are expected to:

- support the Director, Guides and School staff in the development of a learning community based upon the Montessori Pedagogy;
- abide by the School's policies;
- acknowledge that the Director has the ultimate responsibility to implement these policies;
- work with the School teaching staff to deal promptly with areas of concern;
- treat all members of the School Community with respect and courtesy;
- acknowledge and affirm success in individual and School achievement.

6. PHYSICAL SAFETY

In particular, all School Community members must not:

- use any object (whether as a weapon or otherwise) to threaten or intimidate any other person; or cause injury to any person by the use of any such object.
- be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with, alcohol or illegal drugs. The exception(s) is when, in the normal course of festivities, alcohol is made available to members or guests of the School community.

All School Community members must:

- not cause, inflict or encourage others to verbally abuse, threaten or inflict bodily harm on another person by any physical aggression;
- seek staff assistance, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully.

7. RESPONSIBILITY FOR OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Any parent or School Community member who invites a relative, friend, support, caregiver or other person to be present at any official learning or social activity held by or for the

benefit of the School and its students must at all times be responsible for that person and ensure they act at all times in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

8. BREACH OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

The consequences to a member of the School Community for breaching this Code of Conduct will be as determined at the Director's discretion. These consequences include any one or more of the following:

1. The School may ban any member of the School Community from attending at any school sponsored extra-curricular activity or social/fundraising event.
2. The School may ban any member of the School Community from being on the School grounds in general.
3. The School may direct that any parent may only communicate with members of teaching staff through a nominated School representative.
4. In the case of extreme or prolonged breach of this Code of Conduct by a parent, the School may terminate the enrolment of the child of that parent.
5. The School may take such other steps as it may in its reasonable discretion determine appropriate according to the nature of the breach.

9. RIGHT OF APPEAL

Please refer to the Grievance Policy, available in the Family Handbook.

10. EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed as necessary.